
A Thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the Degree of Master of Philosophy
In the Faculty of Humanities
2014

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The research was carried out at Cliff College
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Final Word count including footnotes: 50,908
ABSTRACT

The rise of missionary activities in Sub-Saharan Africa eventually led to the emergence of Pentecostalism and Pentecostal churches in that region including the Church of Pentecost in Ghana. In a culture where there are strong emphasis on spirit activities and their impact on the physical world, Pentecostal doctrines of Spirit baptism and power along with other Pentecostal liturgies have made Pentecostalism attractive to Ghanaians. With branches in over eighty nations across the continents, the Church of Pentecost is a model example of an African Pentecostal church which has contributed significantly to understanding Pneumatology within the African churches, both at home and in the Diaspora. This paper examines the Lukan concept of Spirit baptism and power in church praxis by undertaking research on the Church of Pentecost and specifically its Birmingham branch. The thesis begins by exploring Spirit baptism as power for service/witness from a Lukan perspective. This leads to investigating the concept of Spirit and Power in the Ghanaian socio-cultural context. The study shows how the quest for power in the Akan cultural and social praxis has influenced church praxis. Particularly, the paper demonstrates the continuation of beliefs and practices among Ghanaians in the Diaspora, both culturally and in church praxis. The paper argues that though the church praxis differs from the Lukan concept, there still remains a positive amalgamation of Spirit and power between church and culture.

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17 January 2014
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis has been made possible by the help and support of so many people. Time and space will not permit to mention all of them. I am indebted to Dr Ben Pugh, my supervisor who has helped me through my undergraduate studies and encouraged me to undertake this research paper. I thank Dr Stephen Skuce for his invaluable contribution towards the end of my thesis and all the staff and peers at Cliff College for their support and contributions. I want to express my appreciation to my father Rev Dr Opoku Onyinah for his wonderful and incessant support throughout the course of my studies. God bless you Paapa. I also want to thank mum and the entire Opoku Onyinah family for their prayers and support. I am grateful to Trish Waller, Debbie Walker and Sarah Duncombe for patiently proofreading the various drafts of this work. My thanks go to my colleague and friend Rev Dr Lord Elorm Donkor who has supported me throughout my undergraduate studies and offered great help during this research. I am grateful to Deacon Martin Kyere of Church of Pentecost Coventry, Pastor Edmund Appiah and the entire Birmingham District of the Church of Pentecost for their patience and encouragement during my time of study. I am greatly indebted to my wife, Angela, and my sons, Kirk and Josiah for their patience, understanding and support whilst conducting this study. Finally, I want to thank God, the Supreme Being for bringing me this far.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

AIC: African Independent/ Indigenous/ Initiated Churches
AJPS: Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies
APC: African Pentecostal/Charismatic
CoP: The Church of Pentecost
BCoP: Birmingham Church of Pentecost
IRM: International Review of Mission
Exchange: Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research
BTB: Biblical Theological Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture
CTJ: Criswell Theological Journal
JPT: Journal of Pentecostal Theology
JSNTS: Journal Supplement of New Testament Studies
JSOT: Journal Study of Old Testament
JPT: Journal of Pentecostal Theology
JEPTA: the Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association
JRA: Journal of Religion in Africa
PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society of Pentecostal Studies
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

As an African Pentecostal living in Britain, the concept of Spirit and power remains central to my beliefs. Specifically within Ghanaian cosmology the word power, denotes supernatural ability that appears to strengthen the inner being and fosters a sense of authority and victory over demonic influences. Moreover, a spiritually powerful person is said to have access to the Holy Spirit or the spirit world. For the African Christian and in particular Pentecostals, the power that comes from the Holy Spirit is essential for effective and successful living. Furthermore, from my Pentecostal background there have been frequent messages, conferences and retreats with the theme of ‘Spirit and Power’. In many African Pentecostal churches both indigenous and in the Diaspora, members are encouraged to pray in the power of the Spirit, dance in the power of the Spirit and preachers are encouraged to preach in the power of the Spirit. Thus the theme of ‘Spirit and Power’ pervades every part of the service of most African/Ghanaian Pentecostal churches.

This brings into focus the ongoing debate on the purpose of Spirit baptism and the promise of power in Luke-Acts. This debate which arguably began with Dunn’s thesis in 1970 has had various scholarly, pastoral and lay contributions over the last four decades.¹ The crux of Dunn’s argument is that Pentecostals have construed a theology of Spirit baptism and power which to some degree is scriptural but on the main flows from their personal experiences. Menzies,² along with other Pentecostal scholars has argued with Dunn over these issues, pointing to scriptures such as Acts 2, 8, 19 as proof of Spirit baptism being subsequent to salvation and significantly for the purpose of witnessing. Herein lies the crux of the matter: Has the Ghanaian concept of Spirit and power in church praxis emerged as a result of Lukan Pneumatology or is there an underlying

cultural influence to Ghanaian Pentecostal approach to Spirit baptism and Power?

1.2 The Problem and Hypothesis
For the Ghanaian, to achieve success in life one needs to have recourse to supernatural power or to ‘spiritually powerful persons’ such as the traditional priests for guidance. The belief in malevolent and benevolent powers means that people often run to these traditional priests who are thought of as having contact with the spirit world to seek protection and favours. In Ghana, like in most parts of Africa, life revolves around religion and the relationship between the spirit and physical worlds. Evil is understood to be real and tangible and expresses itself in everyday events and mishaps such as accidents, unemployment, illness, witchcraft, financial difficulties, and barrenness.

Since 1828, when the Basel Missionaries arrived in Ghana, there has been a rise of other successful missionaries. However, to all intents and purposes, these western missionaries along with the mainline churches, though propagating a gospel message of hope yet failed to address the cultural and social needs of the people.³ The prominent Ghanaian sociologist, Professor Kofi Busia, succinctly puts it this way:

Those who have been responsible for the propagation of the Christian gospel in other lands and culture have not shown sufficient awareness of the need for an encounter between the Christian religion and the cosmology of the peoples outside European culture and traditions. It is this which has made Christianity either alien or superficial or both.⁴

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Busia is not alone in his observation. S.G Williams supports this conclusion when he bemoans the failure of western missionaries’ ability to deal with the African primal religion and the belief in spirits.\(^5\)

This study attempts to investigate the concept of Spirit and power in Luke-Acts and how the promise of Spirit and power has impacted Pentecostalism in Ghana using the Church of Pentecost as a case study. Against this background, the branch of the church in Birmingham has been chosen as the subject of the study. The underlying question here is ‘how does the concept of Spirit and power translate in church praxis using the Church of Pentecost Birmingham branch in UK as a case study’. Three hypotheses have been formulated for this purpose:

1. The praxis of the Church of Pentecost is similar in all its branches across the world.\(^6\)

2. Underlying the Ghanaian cosmological and socio-religious beliefs is the concept of power as essential for good and successful living.

3. Underlying the praxis of the Church of Pentecost is the belief in the power of the Spirit as essential for effective Christian life and ministry.

1.3 Significance and Aims of the Study
Since Anderson’s work, \textit{Moya}, the place and importance of understanding pneumatology within African Pentecostalism has been widely discussed.\(^7\) Anderson follows on from Hubert Bucher’s work on Spirits and Power among the Shona people of southern Africa which deals with the tensions between traditional African cosmology and Christianity.\(^8\) In the last two decades, doctrines and practices of indigenous African Pentecostal

\[\text{References}\]
\(^5\) S.G Williams, \textit{Akan Religion and the Christian Faith} (Accra: Ghana, University Press, 1965), pp.152-164.\(^\)

\(^6\) It must be acknowledged that though the practices are similar the case study cannot be generalised. A naturalistic generalisation may be made by virtue of cultural and doctrinal background. However this case study is specific to CoP in Birmingham.


\(^8\) Hubert Bucher, \textit{ Spirits and Power: An Analysis of Shona Cosmology} (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980)
churches and the rising trend of their branches in the Diaspora have attracted wide discussion.⁹

This work is primarily to test a biblical concept in practical church life. That is:

i. To investigate in what way the Church of Pentecost interprets Spirit baptism as power and how this translates in their church praxis.

ii. Investigate the extent to which the biblical and cultural concept of Spirit and power has had on this understanding.

This thesis concentrates on the Birmingham Branch of the Church of Pentecost. The key question is, ‘How are Ghanaian Pentecostals living their lives in relation to their understanding of Spirit and power?’ A clear understanding of African Pentecostals’ concept of Spirit and Power, albeit limited to the Church of Pentecost, will not only benefit the church in expanding its teachings on the purpose and impact of Spirit baptism, but it will also help the western church in understanding members of their congregation who are from African descent or origins. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute and bring a fresh angle on the ongoing research on African Pentecostals understanding of the Holy Spirit and specifically how culture has influenced this belief.

1.4 Methodology

Clough defines research as

The investigation of an idea, subject or topic for a purpose. It enables the researcher to extend knowledge or explore theory. It offers the opportunity to investigate an area of interest from a particular perspective.\(^\text{10}\)

If research provides such an in-depth knowledge and contributes to knowledge then the methodology by which such research is conducted is hugely important. Before conducting a research project, a researcher faces many questions not least the most effective way in approaching the research. Bryman notes that the most effective way of researching and choosing which research methodology to employ largely depends on the question being asked.\(^\text{11}\) In clarifying this position, Payne cautions that methodology should not be confused with method. Methodology forms the bridge between theory and field work whilst method deals with the specific tools of the research.\(^\text{12}\)

This thesis deals with a theory and the function in practise. Bryman describes this as a deductive approach to research.\(^\text{13}\) By deductive approach, Bryman describes the relation between theory and research whereby research data is used in testing an existing theory.\(^\text{14}\) In this context, I intend to test the concept of Spirit and power in Luke-Acts by gathering existing and new data within church praxis. I intend to do this by engaging in field work and using the Church of Pentecost Birmingham as a case study. According to Patton, field work is the central activity of qualitative research inquiry.\(^\text{15}\) Thus, since the bulk of this study involves

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field work, I have chosen to use the qualitative research approach as opposed to the quantitative. Though it must be said that there are elements of quantitative research methods involved in the work.

Patton explains that the type of questions asked determine the type of approach and answers obtained. For example,

If you want to know how much people weigh, use a scale. However if you want to know what their weight means to them and how it affects them, you will need to ask them questions about their experiences and hear their stories. 16

This paper goes beyond simply collecting data and analysis. The author lives with the experiences of the interviewees, and listens to their stories. It is a reflection of why and how they believe in a theory and concept. 17

I took a qualitative approach to this work because firstly my aim is to explore the concept of Spirit and power in church praxis without predetermined judgments. This will be discussed in detail in chapter 3. Secondly, to investigate by experience and personal observation as well as interviews how a biblical theory translates into everyday life. Thirdly, my aim is to provide a detailed analysis using a case study approach to test a theory.

I observed Birmingham Church of Pentecost (BCoP) for a period of over 16 months from Easter 2012 to August 2013. My observation started earlier because of my association with the church since its inception in 2000 and also since my intention to engage in this research began in 2011. Although a minister with Elim Church, during this period I was involved with BCoP on regular basis. I attended over fifty services, participated in some of them and simply observed other services.

16 Patton, Qualitative Research, p.13.
Three research methods were employed in this case study. Participant observation, questionnaires and interviews. May explains that participant observation is engaging in a social scene in order to experience and explain a theory or principle.\textsuperscript{18} In this study, the author was involved in and participated in some of the services. Payne describes participant observation as:

\begin{quote}
Data collection over a sustained period by means of watching, listening to, and asking questions of people as they follow their day to day activities while the researcher adopts a role from their setting and partially becomes a member of the group in question.\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

Though the majority of the observation was done in the central branch of the church, visits were made to other assemblies during the period for clarity and comparison. Most of the observations were done when the church had ‘joint services’.\textsuperscript{20} Questionnaires were used to gain an elaborate insight into the members’ understanding of Holy Spirit baptism. They were intended for those members who were not particularly confident with interviews and those who were unable to stay behind after the services for interactions. Questionnaires however proved most challenging out of the three methods partly due to peoples’ reluctance to write and or return forms taken home to complete. The delayed responses in returning questionnaires meant that interviews were mostly used in getting the members’ understanding and concept of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{21} Most of the members seemed more interested to have semi-structured interviews and conversations. Hence numerous conversations and semi-structured interviews were conducted during this period.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{19} Payne and Payne, \textit{Key Concepts in Social Research}, p.166.
\textsuperscript{20} This when all seven assemblies of the Birmingham District of the church come together. See chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{21} See Appendix 4 for questionnaires.
\end{flushright}
Due to Data Protection and Confidentiality, first name pseudonyms are used for the members who were interviewed in the church.\footnote{www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/policies/data-protection-policy-071205.accessed 11th August 2013.} Names of pastors and other contributors however are given in full as they granted permission to do so. In analysing the data, I employed the social anthropological approach.\footnote{For a detailed look at the social anthropological approach, see Bruce L. Berg, \textit{Qualitative Research Methods, 7\textsuperscript{th} ed} (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2009), pp.338-342.} By participating and interacting with the church, I gained in-depth understanding of how the members and leaders interpret the concept of Spirit and power. From observations, participation and interviews, I was able to analyse, identify and explain the behavioural regularities as well as their concepts and understanding of their social, spiritual and cultural world. In this context, data collection and analyses was done simultaneously as themes emerged from observations and interviews.\footnote{Catherine Dawson, \textit{Introduction to Research Methods, 4\textsuperscript{th} ed}. (Glasgow: Bell & Brian, 2012), p.119.} Significantly, though CoP practices are similar in all their churches this case study is specific to the Birmingham branch of the church and therefore cannot be generalised to other churches.

1.5 Structure of the Work

This first chapter introduces the background and sets the tone of the work. Chapter Two, deals with Spirit baptism as power for service. In chapter Three, I investigate the emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana. I explore the socio-religious and cultural practises of the Akan people who are the largest ethnic group in Ghana and their religious practices. By identifying their religious beliefs and practices, this paper moves on to show the reasons why Pentecostalism became attractive to Ghanaians and to discuss any similarities between Ghanaian Pentecostal praxis and the Akan indigenous worship practices. The underlying theme here is how Spirit and power plays a central role in the social, religious and cultural context of Ghanaians. Chapter Three ends by introducing the Church of Pentecost UK and Birmingham.
Chapter Four is the pivot of the entire thesis. It deals with the field work carried out in the Birmingham branch of the Church of Pentecost. This chapter brings together the observations, interviews and questionnaires carried out. It is a direct response to having a first-hand closer look into the practices of the church. Chapter Five is a deductive chapter. It is aimed at deducing and analysing the impact and effect of Spirit and power as a biblical concept on a culture already saturated by the same concept of Spirit and power but in a different context. Finally Chapter Six summarizes and draws conclusions on the study.

1.6 Limitations of the Study
Though the nature and purpose of this study contributes immensely to the ongoing debate on African Pentecostalism as well as Pentecostalism in the African Diaspora, it is limited by emphasis and scope. This research has concentrated solely on the theme of Spirit and power using Pentecost as the platform. The space limit in this work means that the wider role of Spirit and power has not been examined within church practice. Some of these include the power of the Spirit in the cross, sanctification, eschatology and in other areas.

Again, it is limited by virtue of its scope. The research is carried out on one church and predominantly on one branch of the church. However, to all intent and purposes, a detailed analysis on one branch of the church brings a closer and deeper understanding of the Ghanaian understanding of Spirit and power. Furthermore, it gives the European/British indigenous churches great insight into understanding African cosmology and how to engage with the Africans in their churches on matters relating to Spirit and power.
Chapter 2
Spirit Baptism and Power: The Lukan Debate

2.1 Introduction

The discussions surrounding the role of the Spirit and to be precise, Baptism in the Holy Spirit (BHS)\(^\text{25}\) in Luke-Acts have gone on for decades and seem over debated and exhausted. Since Dunn’s thesis in 1970,\(^\text{26}\) the discussion has stretched over decades and many voices have been heard over this period. Pentecostals and in recent years Charismatics have joined in the debate to attempt to dissect and in many ways disagree with Dunn’s argument. The key Pentecostal voices including Penney,\(^\text{27}\) Shelton,\(^\text{28}\) Stronstad\(^\text{29}\) and Menzies\(^\text{30}\) see the role of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts as essentially prophetic and missiological.

Dunn\(^\text{31}\) and others including Kummel,\(^\text{32}\) Stott\(^\text{33}\) Wenk,\(^\text{34}\) and Turner\(^\text{35}\) have to some degree, successfully posited and countered this missionary position and argued for a wider recognition of the socio-ethical and soteriological work of the Spirit in Luke-Acts. There is no need to repeat

\(^{25}\) Baptism in the Holy Spirit, henceforth abbreviated as BHS in this thesis.


\(^{28}\) James B. Shelton, \textit{Mighty in Word and Deed} (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), passim.


\(^{30}\) Menzies, \textit{Empowered for Witness}.


\(^{32}\) Kummel, \textit{Promise and Fulfilment}.


each scholar’s contribution towards the subject in this thesis for two reasons. Firstly Atkinson has with remarkable brevity and skill, summarised the key debaters in his recent work.36 Secondly, this thesis is limited to and is within the scope of BHS and Power debate and therefore does not focus in depth on the wider soteriological role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts and elsewhere in the New Testament as a whole.

Three key events are discussed here: i. Luke’s infancy narratives, ii. Jesus’ baptism followed by his speech at Nazareth and iii. Pentecost and its implications. On the surface, these key events may appear biased towards the power element of the Spirit; however, these events, particularly Jesus’ experience at the Jordan followed by his speech at Nazareth and the disciples experience at Pentecost are widely seen as parallel events with phenomenal implications.37 As Sanders rightly notes, if these events are viewed by Luke as the work of the Holy Spirit through Jesus and his disciples, then Luke 4:18 which summarises the Nazareth episode is programmatic for Luke-Acts.38 Against this background a detailed discussion into what the Spirit was doing in these episodes and its implications is necessary. For the most part, the discussion in this chapter centres on Dunn and Menzies as the key proponents of the soteriological and power emphasis on BHS respectively.


Since Luke-Acts is widely accepted as two volume work from the same author, Luke’s intentions must be considered against his two volume work.39 Luke purports to give a detailed account of events in his gospel

37 There is a general consensus on the fact that parallels exist in Luke-Acts as they are on the question of the unity of Luke and Acts as a single work. The observation of these parallels depends upon this prior assumption. e.g. M.C Parsons, ‘The Unity of the Lukan Writings: Rethinking the Opinion Communis’ in With Steadfast Purpose: Essays on Acts in Honor of Henry Jackson Flanders, Jr, Keathley, N.H., (ed.), (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 1990), pp.29-53.
(Luke 1:1-4). However, it is uncertain the extent to which Luke had his gospel in mind when he wrote Acts.\textsuperscript{40} Loveday notes that ‘all that can be stated with certainty is that as a narrative, Acts presents itself quite clearly as a ‘second volume’, that is, as a continuation of a story already half-way through’.\textsuperscript{41} Though this does not settle the unity of Luke-Acts, it provides not only a bridge between the gospel and the early church but essentially Acts is a continuation of the ministry of Jesus through the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples in the early church.\textsuperscript{42} In his work on New Testament hermeneutics, Fee suggests that in order for one to understand the author’s intentions, ‘One must consider the original setting, the word of God in the original setting and the word for our situation’.\textsuperscript{43}

In adopting Fee’s model for this work, it appears that Luke writes to his recipient(s) with a seeming awareness of retrospective and prospective events as well as an awareness of the political situation at the time. In its original setting, the book of Acts is a follow up to Luke’s Gospel with not only the delay of the \textit{parousia} in mind but Luke is also aware of the realities of dealing with the Roman Empire at the time.\textsuperscript{44} Caird observes that the great fire of Rome AD 64 and the subsequent destruction of the Temple in AD 70 led to unimaginable persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. The legal status of Christians changed and their umbrella of protection was taken away from them.\textsuperscript{45}

The resulting feature was persecution and execution of the ‘Jesus followers’. Moreover, Jewish polemic against Christians emerged and

\textsuperscript{41} Loveday, \textit{Acts in Its Ancient Literary Context}, p.25.

The second step in Fee’s model, points to the word of God in the original setting. For Luke’s audience, a community has emerged since the resurrection and ascension of Christ.\footnote{The discussion surrounding Luke’s audience is not conclusive. Though Theophilus is named as the recipient, there are ongoing discussions as to Jewish, Greek or Hellenistic audience.} This community is mostly Jewish, nevertheless there is a growing number of Gentiles among them. There are conflicts of adherence to the Law and questions surrounding the identity of this new community or people of God.\footnote{Luke does not however use the word ‘church’ ekklesia, but he uses the word ‘people’ to describe this new community. A new community from the old ‘Israel’ but characterised significantly by the Holy} Jervell notes that Luke’s main interest here is ‘to demonstrate the church as the one and only true Israel, the unbroken continuation of the people of God in the time of the Messiah-Jesus’.\footnote{Jacob Jervell, New Testament Theology: The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.4.}

What is God saying in Acts? Several key themes emerge: Luke is careful to show that the ministry of Jesus carries on through the enabling power of
the Holy Spirit in the ministry of the disciples.\textsuperscript{52} In his work on Acts, Stott builds on this theme of theology from history and describes Acts as ‘the continuing words and deeds of Jesus by his Spirit through his apostles’.\textsuperscript{53} Arguably, the theme of universal salvation runs through the book of Acts from the day of Pentecost. Yet this theme does not begin in Acts but in the infancy narratives of the Gospel of Luke.\textsuperscript{54} The church’s mission is empowered by the Holy Spirit, and the life and worship of the new community is entirely shaped by the Spirit.\textsuperscript{55}

Luke is also concerned to show that Stephen, Peter, Paul and the other disciples’ defence before the Sanhedrin, Felix, Festus and Agrippa illustrates not only the validity of the gospel in the face of political and religious persecution but also the power of the Spirit in Christian apologetics in the midst of persecution.\textsuperscript{56} Again, this theme of faithful witnesses begins with Jesus during his trial in the gospel of Luke. Luke is therefore aware of the Christians’ suffering for Jesus and shows that the weapons of fighting back are in reliance on the promise of the Holy Spirit and the power and inspiration he brings.\textsuperscript{57} And in reference to the Law and Judaism, although the new community is characterized by the Spirit, the synagogues continue to be a focal point of preaching and fellowship. Hence Luke shows continuity between Christianity and Judaism and God’s purpose for Israel as a witness to the nations.\textsuperscript{58}

In the third step of evaluating the author’s intentions, Fee points to the relevance of the word for our situation today. It is here that the debate is elevated to a new level hence the over-arching debate regarding the

\[52\text{ Acts 2:1-39; 3:16; 14:3; Stott, Acts, p.33-34.}\]
\[53\text{ Stott, The Message of Acts, p.34.}\]
\[55\text{ Jervell, New Testament Theology, p.4.}\]
\[57\text{ Walton, ‘The State They were in: Luke’s view of the Roman Empire’, p.34.}\]
historical value of Luke-Acts against its theological importance. Fee opines ‘if these words are going to be God’s word to us, then we must first of all hear what God’s word was to the original recipients’. He continues that by being aware of what God said to the original recipients, ‘we learn to recognize the contemporary settings to which it should be addressed’.

The question must be asked whether Luke intended his readers to simply have accurate historical documents or a theological document that has relevance to the contemporary age. The answer arguably lies in the opening chapter and prologue of Acts. The leading question in Acts 1:6 where the disciples asked Jesus about the timing of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel does not only provide readers with a theological discourse on Israel’s place and witness to the nations. According to Montague, the question has to do with the delay of the parousia and the restoration of the kingdom after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem which vexed second generation Christians.

The restoration of the kingdom is central to the Jews. Though nothing is said of the timing, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit a few days later is arguably designed as the fulfilment of the promise. As Jervell notes, the subject of the whole work of Luke is ‘the things which have been fulfilled among us’. Put another way, Luke deals greatly with ‘promise and

50 Fee, Gospel and Spirit, p.8
61 Fee, Gospel and Spirit, p.9.
fulfilment' in his work.  

The central theme is that the promise of universal salvation has now been fulfilled. People from different nations are being saved and added to the number of believers. The people of God are not Israel as in its nationalistic state but a people characterized by the Holy Spirit. Significantly the promise of the father in sending the Holy Spirit has been fulfilled. The Spirit has come and significantly, ‘power’ has been given to the disciples to embark on the assignment given them by Jesus (Lk.24:49; Acts 1:8).

Thus, among other things, Luke’s intentions can be summed up as follows: firstly to encourage his readers and Christians everywhere of their place in God’s redemptive plan in the midst of religious, political and social opposition. Secondly, to assure them that the promise regarding the Holy Spirit has been fulfilled at Pentecost. Thirdly, he writes to exhort these new Jesus followers to continue confidently in their ‘faithfulness and witness in God’s salvific project’ in the midst of persecution. Luke hopes that all his readers will be aware of Jesus’ presence and power through the Holy Spirit and continue the ministry of Jesus until the parousia. Menzies rightly concludes that against this background, Luke challenges his readers to be partakers of missions through the enabling power of the Spirit.


Within the opening verses of Acts, Luke swiftly introduces his readers to the work of the Holy Spirit. Here, the Holy Spirit is not mentioned in isolation but with reference to power. This is not the first time in Lukan writing that the Holy Spirit is mentioned within the context of power.

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64 This fulfilment scriptures are seen in Lk.1:32ff, 54, 68ff; 2:11, 38; 2:30-6; 4:21; Acts 2:28-29, 13:17, 25, 3-362
65 Achtenmeier et al., Introducing the New Testament, p.266.
68 Acts 1:8
69 See Luke 1:17; 4:14-18; 4:36;7:14-16; 9:1; Acts 6:3; 15:28; 20:23). One can only assume that the Biblical references to the Spirit’s manifestation in the lives of Jesus and his disciples were a result of the Spirit’s power. Although this is not explicitly mentioned. See Turner, Luke and the Spirit, pp.112; Atkinson, Baptism in the Spirit, pp.82-85. Turner
Consequently, though the phrase Spirit and power is not used frequently in Luke-Acts, Peter’s speech in Acts 10:37 succinctly describes the ministry of Jesus as one that was inspired by the Holy Spirit and power.

2.3.1 The Spirit in the Infancy Narratives

Arguably, the narratives in Luke1-2 focus on the coming of the era of salvation in the miraculous conception of John and Jesus. John is presented as the Spirit-filled prophet whilst Jesus was to be filled with the Spirit from his mother’s womb. Mary’s mode of conception appears to accentuate the creative role of the Spirit in Jesus’ birth (Luke 1:35). In Luke 1:34, the angel says that ‘the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you’. Here Luke is seen as following the ‘traditional account’ and attributes the miraculous conception to the creative work of the Spirit. This creative role of the Spirit is widely seen even among Pentecostal scholars as the soteriological function of the Spirit in Luke’s account of Jesus’ conception.

Although the virgin birth and its surrounding narratives, especially Mary’s prophetic ‘Magnificat’ (Luke 1:46-55) and Simeon’s prophecy in Luke 2:29-32, appear to have a link between the Spirit and salvation, it is contentious to consider Luke’s overall pneumatological content as

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2 Helmut Koester, Introduction to the New Testament: History, Culture and Religion in the Hellenistic Age (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), p. 314. This is shown by the way in which Luke portrays the close relationship between the prophecies defining the ministries of John and Jesus. John is said to fulfil the eschatological Elijanic role as presaged in Malachi 1:15-15; 4:5-6 whilst Jesus is to take up the messianic throne and kingship promised to King David (Luke 1: 32-33). Thus, for Luke, the Spirit of prophecy in the Old Testament functioned primarily to bear witness to the coming Messiah.


4 This is on the basis that Luke used the Q (Quelle = Source) account.


soteriologically centred. Consequently to conclude that the Spirit’s role in Mary’s pregnancy is purely soteriological can be a gross methodological error. The infancy narratives cannot be limited solely to soteriological importance. A further examination of the Lukan infancy narratives suggests that although the Spirit is creative in Mary’s conception, his work in inspiring prophecy is central. In particular, Luke depicts Simeon’s prophecy as the climax of God’s redemptive activities and the anticipation of future salvation. The narration of Spirit inspired utterances of Zechariah, Mary, Simeon and Anna in the infancy narratives arguably describe the charismatic activity of the Holy Spirit.

Stronstad opines that ‘more important than these outbursts is Luke’s description of the prophetic Spirit given to John as the Messianic Herald.’ Stronstad continues, ‘The identification of the Spirit in the life of John is the key to Jesus’ Spirit-anointed charismatic ministry.’ In this context, Luke presents John along with the other pious men and women in the infancy narratives as people filled with the Spirit for prophetic utterances about the coming of salvation. They are witnesses to the Saviour and his salvation ministry. It is important to note at this point that Menzies and Stronstad do not denigrate the Spirit’s role in salvation. They argue for a wider recognition of the Spirit’s work in inspiring prophecy and charismatic activity even before the birth and ministry of Jesus. Luke’s introductory sequence can therefore be understood in terms of prophetic witness to the Messiah.

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76 Stronstad, *Charismatic Theology*, p.37.
77 This is seen in the events surrounding the unborn baby John, Elizabeth, Zachariah, Simeon and Anna. Cho, *Spirit and Kingdom*, pp.139-140.
2.3.2 The Spirit and Jesus at Jordan

In Luke’s work, the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the conception of Jesus is not a single unique occasion but the source of Jesus’ growth and effectiveness in ministry (Luke 2:40). Although Jesus grew in wisdom, Luke describes his water baptism and the descent of the dove as a key moment in his life. Dunn,\textsuperscript{82} following Büchsel\textsuperscript{83} argues that the voice from Heaven with the words ‘You are my Son, whom I love’ is a distinct mark of Jesus’ messiahship (Luke 3:22).\textsuperscript{84} Dunn is supported by Barrett,\textsuperscript{85} Marshall\textsuperscript{86} and others\textsuperscript{87} who explain the Jordan experience in the light of messianic rather than empowerment reasons.\textsuperscript{88}

Dunn acknowledges that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God from birth; however, he conversely asserts that ‘there is also a sense in which Jesus only becomes Messiah and Son at the Jordan’.\textsuperscript{89} Dunn builds on Conzelmann’s thesis which discards any prophetic or empowering role of the Spirit and instead posits a three stage epochal distinction in Luke’s pneumatology. Conzelmann and later Dunn championed this epochal paradigm of the Spirit’s role in history as the era of the Old Covenant, the era of Jesus, and the era of the Church.\textsuperscript{90} Thus, for Dunn, this event marks the era of the Spirit’s work in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God.

\textsuperscript{82} Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, p.28.
\textsuperscript{83} F. Büchsel, Der Geist Gottes im Neuen Testament (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1926), p.167.
\textsuperscript{84} Dunn, Baptism, 28-29; also see Dunn, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, p.28;
\textsuperscript{89} Dunn, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, p.28.
It is a new age and a paradigmatic experience of the Spirit in eschatological sonship.\(^{91}\)

Menzies does not denigrate the significance of the Jordan event as a crucial stage in salvation history. Nevertheless, for Menzies, this event marks Jesus’ pneumatic anointing for mission and not a filial relationship with his Father or his initiation into a new age.\(^{92}\) Menzies rightly counters Dunn’s argument and posits that the Jordan experience may be spoken of as signalling the beginning of Jesus’ ministry but not of his messiahship.\(^{93}\) It appears that Luke’s account of the Jordan experience reflects an original adverbial reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in empowering Jesus for service.\(^{94}\) While Matthew and Mark present John the Baptist as the baptizer, Luke makes no mention of John and places more significance on the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus as a dove in bodily form (Luke 3:21).\(^{95}\) Arguably, the descent of the dove on Jesus was a demonstration of the anointing wrought by the Holy Spirit, to equip him for service.\(^{96}\) This is an event which is arguably paralleled to Pentecost with the descent of the Spirit on the disciples.

Essentially, the prophetic utterances during the infancy narratives seem to affirm Jesus’ messiahship. Furthermore Lukan infancy narrative expressly depicts Jesus’ sonship both in terms of Davidic heritage and the title Son of God (Luke 1:27, 32; 2:4, 11). Again, Jesus himself appears to be fully aware of his unique relationship with the Father prior to the Jordan event (Luke 2:49). Thus, Dunn’s assertion that the Spirit’s role at Jordan was for Messianic anointing and confirmation of sonship needs to be challenged and Menzies is right in his challenge of Dunn.

\(^{93}\) Menzies, *Development*, p.152.
\(^{95}\) Shelton, *Mighty in Word and Deed*, p.47.
2.3.3 The Spirit of the Lord is on me: the work of the Spirit in the ministry of Jesus

Closely linked to the Spirit’s work in baptism is the Spirit’s demonstration of authority and power in the temptation that followed the baptism event. For Luke, the power of the Spirit can be seen in Jesus’ response to this test of his Sonship.\textsuperscript{97} Jesus overcomes the suggestions of Satan not by performing miracles but by the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. The implications of the phrase ‘led by the Spirit’ are vital in the ministry of Jesus because not only on this occasion but the whole of his ministry was in the Spirit’s power.\textsuperscript{98} Following the temptation Jesus returned to Galilee to begin his ministry in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:14). It is in Nazareth where Jesus makes a profound assertion of his ministry (Luke 4:16-19).

Crucial to Luke 4:18-19 is not just Jesus’ acknowledgement of the Spirit, but his affirmation of the reasons for the Spirit upon him. Jesus alludes to Isaiah 61:1-2 and reads:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.\textsuperscript{99}

A closer look at this passage highlights the difference but yet important redaction of the original text in Isaiah 62:1-2. In Luke 4:18 Jesus reads Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2 and appropriates it to himself. However, Luke appears to have edited the original quotes to suit his progressive pneumatological intentions.\textsuperscript{100} Luke replaces the second line of Isaiah 61:1b ‘He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted’ with ‘He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners’. Moreover, the repetition of the verb \textit{Kheruxai} in Luke 4:19 and the replacement of its Hebrew equivalent \textit{arql} in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{97} Geoffrey Bingham, \textit{The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit} (Blackwood: New Creation, 1985), p.35.
\item \textsuperscript{98} Bingham, \textit{The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit}, p.15.
\item \textsuperscript{99} (Luke 4:18-19).
\item \textsuperscript{100} That is, the Spirit given primarily for divine utterances.
\end{itemize}
Isaiah 61:2 is significant. The verb Κηρύξαί does not only highlight the proclamation ministry of Jesus, but it also parallels with the verb εὐαγγελίζασθαι used in Luke 4:18, thus Luke 4:18 can be paraphrased as: ‘to preach good news to the poor, captives, blind’ and ‘to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour’.  

In Luke 4:12, ‘Jesus full of the Spirit returned from Jordan’ and ‘Jesus returned to Galilee in the ‘power of the Spirit’ Luke 4:14 are set against the proclamation and preaching ministry of Jesus. Although, Luke does not specifically attribute the miraculous to the Holy Spirit, yet the immediate supernatural occurrences that result from Jesus’ preaching ministry is evidence of the Spirit’s work (Luke 4:35-40; cf. Acts 10:34). These resulting miracles could point to the Isaianic jubilee references where the blind receive their sight and the oppressed are released.

The ‘Beelzebub’ controversy in Luke 11:14-28, is arguably a dramatic allusion to the work of the Holy Spirit in the miraculous ministry of Jesus. Consequently, Lane notes that ‘...in the face of the claim that he is possessed by an unclean spirit, Jesus affirms that he possesses the Holy Spirit’. Although Luke prefers to use the phrase ‘the finger of God’ in contrast to ‘Spirit of God’ in Luke 11:20, Mason and Barclay accurately maintain that for Jesus, the Spirit of God and the vivid phrase ‘the finger of God’ denotes an organ of power that belongs to the Holy

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102 R.B. Sloan, The Favourable Year of the Lord (Austin: Scholar Press, 1977), pp.112-115. Sloan argues that the inclusion of the year of the Lord’s favour refers to the Jubilary incidents in Isaiah and Leviticus where liberty was proclaimed throughout the Land. Though Luke is not against this theme, his main emphasis is on the preaching ministry which results in deliverance and freedom to the captives.
In this setting, the Spirit’s power in Jesus’ ministry is evidenced by his healing, exorcism and miracles. Overall, Luke’s interest appears to be fixed on presenting the Holy Spirit as the power behind Jesus’ preaching and charismatic ministry.

A key text in this passage is Luke 4:21, where he says ‘Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing’. Agua is succinct and accurate in his observation, ‘Jesus indicates himself as a prophetic figure, the Messiah anointed by the Spirit and a herald of the kingdom of God’. Thus the Spirit was on Jesus to empower him to fulfil his messianic ministry. This same power was promised to the disciples to enable them to fulfil their mission.

2.3.4 The Spirit and Pentecost

In Luke-Acts, the climax of the Spirit’s work in terms of its universal appeal can arguably be seen on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Luke describes the events that happened on Pentecost as the outpouring of the Spirit promised by Jesus before His ascension. For many Pentecostals, this event described in Acts 2:1-39, is the *sine qua non* of Pentecostalism. The phrase ‘Baptism in/with the Holy Spirit’ has its roots firmly established and traced to the Day of Pentecost when the Spirit came upon the disciples. Macchia notes, ‘I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that this understanding of Spirit baptism has imprinted itself on the Pentecostal psyche as the crown jewel of Pentecostal distinctive’. Put simply for Pentecostals regardless of the interpretation of this event, Pentecost implies power for service.

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However, Dunn and others, see Pentecost as primarily a confirmation of the disciple’s conversion and initiation into God’s kingdom. With references to Acts, Stronstad provides a strong argument that the Spirit came upon the disciples at Pentecost not as a source of new conversion but rather as a source for effective witness. Stronstad perhaps offers a wider and stronger argument than Menzies on this particular event because whereas Menzies limits the Spirit at Pentecost to empowerment for prophecy, Stronstad includes empowerment not only to prophesy but to equip believers for charismatic activities and divine service. Stronstad is supported by Gunkel and Haya-Prats, with the latter providing a solid foundation for Menzies’ pneumatological works.

2.3.5 Spirit Baptism and Power: why was the Spirit given at Pentecost?

In his two volume work Luke concludes his gospel with instructions from the risen Jesus to his disciples to wait for the promise of the Father, and subsequently until they are clothed with power. This instruction comes after Jesus commanded them to preach repentance and forgiveness and to be witnesses to all nations. The underlying question here is: why is μυροσναζάμυν, ‘power’ associated with the promise of the Spirit (Acts 1:8)? For Menzies, the answer is adumbrated in the Lukan text. The Spirit was given to enable prophecy and mission. Though Luke is not explicit about the Spirit’s work in the disciples prior to Pentecost, they seem to have momentarily experienced the power given to Jesus for his ministry. Turner

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113 Stronstad, Charismatic Theology, p. 79.
rightly describes this as Luke’s ‘cautious hint of the Spirit’s work in the lives of the disciples’ prior to their Pentecostal reception’.  

In Luke 9:1, Luke applies the word ‘power’ which is not used in the other Synoptic Gospels or Q account in Jesus’ instructions to his disciples. In Mark, Jesus gave his disciples authority over evil spirits (Mark 6:7), whilst in Matthew Jesus gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and heal diseases (Matt.10:1). However, Luke adds ‘He gave them power and authority’ (Luke 9:1). Turner cautions that the idea that Luke used the word ‘power’ and not authority should lead his readers to consider the concept of Spirit and power as interrelated. This instruction to ‘preach and heal’ succinctly summarises Jesus’ ministry in Luke-Acts (Luke 4:18-21; cf. Acts 10:38). Furthermore, Jesus’ ability to cast out demons in Luke 4:36, is interpreted by the crowd as his authority and power over evil spirits.

Luke also connects Acts 1:5 with John’s prophecy regarding baptism in the Spirit and fire (cf. Luke 3:16). In Acts 1:5, Jesus refers to John’s prophecy that ‘He [Jesus] will baptize with the Holy Spirit’. Notably, the word fire has been omitted from John’s original prophecy. Marshall suggests that the term ‘fire’ has probably been replaced by ‘power’ in Acts 1:8, which is a result of BHS. The connecting phrase ‘...you are my witnesses’ in Luke 24:48 and Acts 1:8 is key. This brings into focus the Servant Songs of Isaiah’s prophecy and Israel’s mission to the world. If this allusion to the Isaiah prophecy in Isaiah 49:6 is correct as noted by Polhill and others, then it is arguably connected to the servant Songs in

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118 This is on the basis that Luke used and relied on Q (German ‘Quelle’ = Source) for his gospel.
118 It is poigniant that in comparison to the synoptists, Luke avoids the title ‘Baptist’ for John. He sees John’s role more as a witness than a baptizer.
Isaiah 43:10, where once again the phrase ‘You are my witnesses’ is connected to God’s commissioning of his servant. Thus for Luke, power is essential in fulfilling ministry. The Holy Spirit gives ability to embark on missions through his power. The Holy Spirit was therefore given to enable the disciples to receive power for proclamation, divine utterances and charismatic activity including healing, exorcism and miracles.

2.4 Implications of Spirit Baptism and Power in Acts

The coming of the Spirit was at Pentecost and Luke describes it as the occasion where the Spirit was poured out on the disciples to equip and empower them for their missionary task. The effects of Pentecost were immediate and visibly inspiring. Filled with power from the Holy Spirit, the disciples faced their community proclaiming the message of the resurrection with accompanying signs and wonders. Acts amply illustrates the immediate, subjective and often visible manifestations of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit inspired the disciples and gave them power to preach the gospel in a powerful and intelligible manner.

Through the power of the Spirit Stephen engaged in authoritative apologetics with the unbelieving Jews that eventually led to his death (Acts 6-7). Subsequent to Stephen’s death, Phillip ventured out to preach the good news in the regions of Samaria (Acts 6:3-5; 8:4-8). Moreover, whilst the work of the Holy Spirit is recognized in Peter’s reluctant witnessing to the Caesarean military household, Paul and his companions set about preaching the gospel, healing the sick and performing miracles throughout Roman Asia (Acts 14:3).

123 Penny, Missionary Emphasis, p.58; Turner, Power from on High, p.300.
The apostles had tremendous faith beyond the ordinary to perform signs and miracles.\textsuperscript{127} Luke sums up the manifestations of the Spirit’s gifts and supernatural as thus ‘Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles’ (Acts.2:43).\textsuperscript{128} Paul also points to the signs and wonders that accompanied his ministry as evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit at work within the believing community (Acts 14:3; 15:12). These events are indicative of the fact that the gifts of prophesy, healing, working of miracles, faith and other supernatural phenomena were manifesting in the early church and contributed immensely towards its growth. Luke describes the presence of the Spirit, his gifts and the supernatural manifestations as a mark of power.\textsuperscript{129}

2.4.1 Peter

Luke records that Peter, who was previously timid, preached to a crowd of which about three thousand were converted (Acts 2:14-31). Furthermore, those who were baptised in the Spirit spoke in different tongues (Acts 2:4), others spoke the word of God boldly (Acts 4:31), and some did extraordinary miracles (Acts 19:11). Remarkable miracles were performed by the power of the Holy Spirit through the apostles as they preached the gospel (Acts 14:3). Central to all these manifestations is the inspired preaching of Peter and the apostles. The signs and wonders were visible evidence and a demonstration of the power of God in their proclamation. Following the healing of the crippled beggar in Acts 3:1-11, Peter’s courage before the Sanhedrin is remarkable as he boldly defends the gospel. Peter is again filled with the Spirit in order that he can be fully equipped to make his defence (Acts 4:8). Horton observes that the Sanhedrin here is the same group that had previously condemned Jesus to death, thus it was only through the power of the Spirit that Peter was enabled to speak so courageously (Acts 4:1-22).\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{128} Bridge, \textit{Signs and Wonders Today}, p.150.
\textsuperscript{130} Stanley M. Horton, \textit{What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit} (Missouri: GPH, 1976), p.150
Arguably, Peter and the early apostles regarded the reception of the Holy Spirit as empowerment to continue the preaching ministry that Jesus began (Acts 6:4). Beyond Acts, Peter’s understanding of the Spirit is apparent in his epistle, where he affirms the Spirit as Spirit of prophecy (1Pet. 1:1-11) and the inspirer and power of the gospel (1:12). Peter’s words regarding the Spirit in his first epistle are in line with Luke’s account of Peter’s ministry through the Holy Spirit in Acts. That is, the Spirit inspires proclamation of the gospel and prophecy.

2.4.2 Paul

Paul’s call to ministry is late in comparison to Peter, yet similar to Jesus and Peter, Paul is filled with the Spirit before he commences his task of proclaiming the gospel. Formally a chief persecutor of Christians, Paul encountered Christ in the most dramatic of circumstances and having been filled with the Holy Spirit, began to preach the good news. Concerning Paul’s conversion, Ananias declares that he ‘...has been sent so that Paul may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 9:17). Menzies argues that here, the Spirit is presented as the principal element in Paul’s missionary call to preach to the Gentiles. Like Jesus and Peter, Paul is filled with the Holy Spirit to speak the word of God and confront evil (Acts 13:9-11). Stronstad parallels the Spirit empowered ministries of Peter and Paul as follows, both are filled with the Spirit (Acts 2:4; 4:8; 4:31, cf. Paul in Acts 9:17; 13:9; 13:52), they receive guidance from the Spirit (Peter in Acts 10:19-20, Paul in Acts 13:1-2; 16:6-7; 21:4, 10-11) and they are both instruments for the gift of the Spirit (Acts 8:15-17; 19:6). In Acts 26:1-23, Paul introduces and applies to himself, a cluster of Old Testament prophecies in a manner similar to Jesus in Luke 4:18. It appears that from Luke’s perspective, Paul is a prophet who fulfils the prophecies concerning the Servant of Yahweh and the Gentiles. This is seen in the contrasts in Luke 4:18-19 and Matthew 12:18-21. In Matthew,

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131 Menzies, Development, p.260.
132 Stronstad, Charismatic Theology, p.66.
Jesus quotes the Servant’s mission to the Gentiles from Isaiah 42:1-4. In contrast, Luke selects Isaiah 61:1-2 which seems to omit the mission to the Gentiles. Luke is undoubtedly aware that although Jesus brought salvation to everyone it was the early apostles and notably Paul who took the gospel to the Gentiles. Paul is therefore paralleled with Jesus and crucially, the same Spirit who empowered and anointed Jesus’ ministry to proclaim God’s kingdom to the Jews, anointed and empowered Paul to proclaim salvation to the Gentiles. Like Jesus and Peter, Paul is aware of the Spirit’s role in empowering believers to participate in Jesus’ ongoing prophetic and proclamation ministry.

2.4.3 Charismatic activity and Prophecy

In Acts 8:15, Peter prays for the Samaritans to receive the Spirit. The narrative indicates that the Samaritans’ had already believed the preaching of Philip who had previously been described as full of the Spirit (Acts 6:—5). In this episode, there seem to be some charismatic evidence of Spirit baptism hence Simon’s reaction (Acts 8:18-19). Dunn points to the soteriological nature of the gift of Spirit by asserting that the Samaritans were not really Christians until they received the Spirit. Despite Dunn’s assertion, it is clear that there was nothing lacking in Philip’s preaching or the Samaritans’ conversation (Acts 8:12).

Dunn’s argument does not only impugn the Samaritans’ faith as false but it also denigrates the ministry of Philip and the message he preached. The Samaritans conversion and their reception of the Spirit were followed by visible evidence. Though the evidence that characterized their reception of the Spirit is not clearly stated, Luke suggests that it was so dramatic to the point of astonishing even Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:18, cf.13:4-12; 16:16-

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133 Montague, Holy Spirit, p.298.
134 Montague, Holy Spirit, p.298.
18; 19:11-20). Hence there seem to be evidential signs, albeit proclamation or visible manifestation, that characterized their reception of the Spirit.


Additionally, the outpouring of the Spirit on the Ephesians in Acts 19 is followed by prophecy and glossolalia (Acts 19:6). These believers had received John’s baptism but not Spirit baptism. Dunn’s argument that these Christians fall short of their full salvation experience because they had not received the Holy Spirit is unpersuasive. Paul is aware of the Spirit’s role in salvation (Romans 8:9; Galatians 3:2-4), however he appears to enquire not of their faith in Jesus but of the power that comes from the Spirit baptism to enable inspired proclamation and charismatic activities.

Subsequently, Paul does not only baptise them in the name of the Lord, he also prays for them to receive the Holy Spirit. It seems that Paul was satisfied when he heard them speak in tongues and prophesy. Luke has again made his point; proclamation is at the heart of ‘Spirit baptism and

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137 Menzies, Spirit and Power, p. 53; Shelton, Mighty in Word and Deed, p.130.
138 Contrast Turner, Baptism in the Spirit, p.14, who suggests that they were accepted and cleansed by the Spirit.
140 Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, p.54; so, O’Neil who posits that Acts 19:1-7 is a reconstruction of two separate incidents where in the first event, the Ephesians were not yet saved. O’Neil ‘The Connection between Spirit baptism and the Gift’, pp.101-102.
power’. The Ephesians had now received the power that comes with the gift of the Spirit to proclaim God’s mighty acts. Lee accurately notes that Luke’s focus on these passages does not point explicitly to Gentiles being equipped by the Spirit to witness. However, Luke appears to be consistent with inspired proclamation and charismatic activity, whether it is *glossolalia*, prophecy or witness subsequent to reception of the Spirit (Acts 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 19).

2.5 Conclusion

Whilst it is difficult to critically evaluate Luke’s entire pneumatology within the space limit of this chapter, I have looked at four key events and examined Luke’s intentions and intended message. It has been seen that Luke portrays Jesus as the anticipated Messiah full of the Spirit. For Luke, Jesus’ birth and life can be summed up as Spirit empowered. I have also shown that on the whole, although Luke does not precisely define and describe each occasion of the filling of the Spirit as intended for missionary purpose, the foundation established at and before Pentecost provides enough evidence to support the missionary claim.

Jesus acknowledged the Spirit on his life as empowerment for service. He further gave his disciples authority and power to engage in their mission. Significantly and crucial to this thesis, Jesus promised his disciples power when the Spirit comes on them. For Luke, Pentecost is a key moment in the redemptive plans of God’s kingdom because, on that day the Spirit was given to the church. Furthermore power had become available to all believers for proclamation, prophecy, divine utterances and the miraculous. In order words anyone who is baptised in the Spirit is expected to continue the missionary work of Jesus in word and deed.

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Chapter 3: The Origins and Growth of the Church of Pentecost

3.1 Introduction
Having looked at Pentecost as a pivotal moment in Christian history, this chapter discusses the rise of Pentecostalism, the emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana, its impact on the people and the origins of the Church of Pentecost. In doing so, it examines the cultural, social and religious background of the Akan people of Ghana as an example of the general Ghanaian culture. The purpose of this section is to lay a foundation for the field work in the subsequent chapter.

3.2 The Rise of Pentecostalism
Atkinson notes
If humanity’s history on this earth continues long enough, then perhaps it will look back at the twentieth century and judge that church history’s greatest single phenomenon was the extraordinary appearance, rise, growth and spread of world Pentecostalism.  

Atkinson aptly summarises the important place Pentecostalism has taken not only in Christian history but world history. The general consensus places Pentecostal origins at the turn of the twentieth century though various revival movements had been sighted and recorded prior to that era.  

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142 Atkinson, 
began with Charles Fox Parham, who was a firm advocate of Spirit baptism accompanied by the initial evidence of speaking in tongues,\textsuperscript{144} whilst others attribute the Pentecostal revival to William Seymour, a student of Charles Parham.\textsuperscript{145}

Parham developed the doctrine of Spirit baptism initially evidenced by speaking in tongues after Agnes Ozman, a student at his Bible College, began to speak in tongues when hands were laid on her to receive the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{146} This incident led Parham to dogmatize the teaching of ‘speaking in tongues’ as the evidence of Spirit baptism. Dayton asserts that although there were experiences of speaking in tongues in the Church, they were neither marginalized nor accepted. Thus the phenomenon of speaking in tongues was not unknown at the time yet it was not widely recognized.\textsuperscript{147}

Parham’s initial evidence doctrine attracted many Christians who had a deep hunger for a revival of the outpouring of the Spirit similar to Pentecost in Acts 2. Among such people was William Seymour who received baptism of the Holy Spirit with evidence of speaking in tongues. Seymour who came from the Holiness Christian background believed that sanctification and Spirit baptism was synonymous.\textsuperscript{148} However, Seymour at this point acknowledged that although the Spirit had sanctified believers, they had not yet received the means of divine empowerment which


\textsuperscript{147} Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, p.177.

\textsuperscript{148} ‘Second Blessing’ theology, sometimes referred to as justification and other times entire sanctification. Wesley preferred to call this doctrine ‘Perfect Love’. W.E. Sangster, The Path to Perfection (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1943), p.27.
resulted in the manifestations of speaking in tongues and witnessing which come with Spirit baptism.\textsuperscript{149}

Under Seymour’s leadership the Azusa Street revival set in motion a global Pentecostal movement, which has become the dominant missionary form of Christianity since the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{150} The key element in both Parham and Seymour’s theology and practice was the belief that the Holy Spirit empowered believers for proclamation. Such proclamation included prophecy, preaching of the gospel, \textit{glossolalia} and \textit{xenolalia}. For Parham, \textit{xenolalia} (the ability to speak an unlearned yet identifiable language) and \textit{glossolalia} (speaking in strange tongues) represented the seal of divine enablement and power in Christian missions for service.\textsuperscript{151}

Whilst acknowledging the work of Parham and Seymour, Hollenweger, Cerillo and Anderson among others argue that the origins of Pentecostalism cannot be confined to North America but to multiple locations and individuals.\textsuperscript{152} This is because there are recordings of Pentecostal revivals in Latin America which date back to 1858, in India (Mukti Revival, 1905-7) and others.\textsuperscript{153} Recently, Anderson has referred to the origins of Pentecostalism as polynucleated and argued for the recognition of Pentecostalism as a multidimensional missionary movement.\textsuperscript{154} Although Anderson makes four central assumptions

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{149} Synam, \textit{Century of the Holy Spirit}, p.96
\textsuperscript{151} Hollenweger, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p.21.
\end{quote}
regarding the origins of Pentecostalism, he acknowledges that the Azusa Street revival was pivotal in the creation of ‘… a distinct Pentecostal identity’.155

From a slightly different perspective and without denigrating the other revivals, Robeck has argued incessantly for the recognition of Azusa Street as the birth place of Pentecostalism.156 For Robeck, the proliferation of missionaries and missionary activities that sprung from Azusa Street makes it plausible to assume that Azusa Street is the birth of the global Pentecostal movement.157

Speaking from an African context, Ogbu Kalu a prominent Nigerian Pentecostal scholar observes that ‘…there had been charismatic ministries which had no link to Azusa Street but emerged in the pressure of primal religion and culture of the Christian message’.158 Kalu is right in his observation however, as both Anderson and Robeck have noted, as early as 1908, two years after the Azusa street revival started, there were congregations in South Africa and West African countries such as Liberia which were linked to Azusa Street.159 Thus, although the root of modern Pentecostalism cannot be strictly confined to North America, it is credible to assume that to a large extent, events in Azusa Street shaped the Pentecostal movement as it is known today.160


157 Robeck,Jr., ‘Launching a Global Movement’, pp.47-62


160 Hollenweger, Pentecostalism, p.397.
3.3 The Emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana

One cannot be certain of the date or beginnings of Pentecostalism in Ghana, however, it is safe to assume that the rise of what can be seen as Pentecostal churches was evident in the early twentieth century. Since then, Ghanaian Pentecostalism has blossomed to the point that Omenyo depicts Christianity in Ghana within the context of Pentecostalism.161 Before classical Pentecostalism came to Africa as a whole, there were charismatic activities seen in the lives of people frequently referred to as ‘prophets’.162 These ‘prophets’ emerged from the lower strata of society with little or no education and theological training yet according to Kalu, ‘…they tilled the soil on which modern Pentecostalism thrives’.163 Notable among these people were William Wade-Harris of Liberia,164 Simon Kimbangu of Congo,165 Joseph Babalalo of Nigeria166 and Joseph Appiah of Ghana.167

For their followers, these men and their practices represented the presence and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit similar to the disciples’

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162 The phrase classical Pentecostalism and Pentecostal activities in this paper refer to churches that advocate Spirit manifestations such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, ecstatic prayer, healing, witness and evangelism. C. Johns, Pentecostal Formation. Pedagogy among the Oppressed (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), p. 87; Hollenweger, Pentecostalism, p.18.
and early church experience after Pentecost. In the case of Kimbangu, Martin notes,

As far as the followers of Kimbangu were concerned, nothing less than a new Pentecost had come. The Holy Spirit had evidently descended on Simon Kimbangu and had given him authority to heal and preach.

These prophets were usually associated with African religious traditional worship and often labelled as ‘traditional priests’. Their charismatic activities such as ecstatic noise, singing, jumping and their ability to prophesy made some people identify them with traditional priests. However, it is their reliance on the Holy Spirit as well as their biblical preaching that distinguished them from their traditional counterparts.

In Ghana, the visit of William Wade-Harris notably described as ‘the Black Elijah’ in 1914 was significant. His ecstatic and charismatic style of worship was to him and his followers, a Spirit-filled alternative to the mainstream evangelical Church’s inability to embrace the Holy Spirit. Such was the impact of Wade-Harris’ ministry that people were said to be receiving baptism in the Holy Spirit. One such case was Casely Hayford, a leading barrister who was a Methodist. After receiving what he believed to be the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he described and concluded that Wade-Harris’ ministry ‘...is not a revival. It is Pentecost’.

The rise of these practices and prophets led to what is known as the Spiritual Churches in Ghana otherwise known as African Initiated Churches (AIC) or African

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168 Hollenweger, Pentecostalism, p.59.
172 Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, p. 271.
Instituted Churches. These are locally known as ‘Sunsum Sore’ (Akan) or ‘Mumu Solemo’ (Ga), meaning Spirit Churches.

Onyinah describes the mainstay of these prophetic churches and practices as healing and exorcism. For them and their followers, the power of the Spirit was present in their lives to heal the sick and cast out demons. However, in Ghanaian Christianity, due to the ritualistic practices of these prophetic movements they are regarded as neither Pentecostals nor Charismatics hence their exclusion from the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC).

Omenyo has attempted to clarify Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic movements by grouping them into five main strands.

1. The Spiritual/Prophetic Churches (AIC)
2. The Classical Pentecostal Churches
3. The Neo-Pentecostal Inter-Denominational Fellowships
4. Charismatic Renewal Groups in the mainline churches
5. The Independent Charismatic Churches.

According to Omenyo, this is the chronological order in which the churches and movements sprung up in Ghana. In this chronological order, the Church of Pentecost (CoP), which is the focal point of this study, is one of the churches that emerged from the Classical Pentecostal strand, a strand


So Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p.x.

Asamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics, p.19; Baéta, Prophetism in Ghana, passim.


that saw the emergence of the three apostolic churches.\textsuperscript{179} Omenyo is however quick to add that no single typology can be perfectly comprehensive because African Pentecostalism is constantly evolving.\textsuperscript{180} Recently, Anderson has highlighted the fact that the Neo Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches (NPC) are not fundamentally different from the Holy Spirit movements and the so-called ‘prophet-healing’ and ‘spiritual churches’ that preceded it in African Initiated Churches but it is a continuation of them in very different contexts.\textsuperscript{181} Furthermore, according to Anderson ‘The Spirit Churches have much in common with the classical Pentecostals and their history is inextricably tied up with them’.\textsuperscript{182} It is clear that for Anderson there are similarities within the NPC’s, Spirit Churches and classical Pentecostal churches.

Overall, to accurately define Pentecostalism is a futile exercise as Yong concludes ‘It is difficult, if not well-nigh impossible, to essentialise Pentecostalism conceptually’.\textsuperscript{183} Yet, one thing is common in all these strands and that is the belief, practice and manifestations of Spirit activities in their church praxis. Larbi describes this as ‘Drinking from the same theological melting pot’.\textsuperscript{184} The core of these activities include speaking in tongues, prophecy, ecstatic praise accompanied with jumping, shaking and clapping as well as loud prayers. Though the practices and style of worship of these movements may vary, the connecting feature is their emphases on the Holy Spirit in all their endeavours.\textsuperscript{185}

\textsuperscript{179} The three apostolic churches were the Apostolic Church of Gold Coast (Ghana), Christ Apostolic Church and Ghana Apostolic Church, later CoP.
\textsuperscript{182} Anderson, \textit{An Introduction to Pentecostalism}, p.105.
\textsuperscript{184} Larbi, \textit{The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity}, p.79.
Crucial to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit especially in the classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana is the power he brings and works through his people. This power is seen in proclamation: speaking in tongues and prophecy, authority over evil that is; healing, deliverance and exorcism. Furthermore, power is seen in recourse to divine protection and favour and ability to succeed in life.¹⁸⁶ Fundamentally, their understanding of the power the Holy Spirit brings has not just derived from biblical concept but their cultural, social and anthropological settings.

3.4 Spirit and Power: The Ghanaian Concept before the Church of Pentecost

An understanding of the concept of Spirit and power in the Church of Pentecost requires background knowledge of the Ghanaian concept of spirits and cosmology. Kalu rightly asserts that ‘People appropriate the gospel from their cultural world views’.¹⁸⁷ De Waal Malefijt states that ‘the religious symbolism, sacred images, mythical ideologies and cultural behaviour are not significantly detached from culture’.¹⁸⁸ Thus in order to grasp the concept of Spirit and power in the church’s praxis, it is essential to understand the concept of spirit within the Ghanaian context.

Ghana presently comprises over seventy ethno-linguistic groupings and over one hundred ethnic groupings of which the Akan people are considered to be the largest. Other prominent ethnic groups include the Mossi, the Ewe, and the Ga. Formerly known as the Gold Coast, Ghana gained independence from the British in 1957 after being a British Colony for over one hundred years (1844-1957).¹⁸⁹ In Ghana, the ‘Asante kingdom,’¹⁹⁰ part of the Akan ethnic group was one of the well organised and established kingdoms not only within the Gold Coast at the time but within Africa as a whole. Boakye-Yiadom notes that the early Asante

¹⁹⁰ The Asante kingdom is the largest of the Akans.
kingdom had arguably developed their ‘...basic social and cosmological institutions’ prior to the arrival of the Europeans. Pobee rightly observes that ‘Religion is all-pervasive in the Akan society’ and as the largest ethnic group in Ghana, suffice to say that a closer look at their concept of spirit will shed light on the Ghanaian outlook as a whole.

3.4.1 The Akan Concept of God, Spirit and Power
Arguably Akan pneumatology is derived mainly from the Akan understanding of the spirit world. Contrary to some Western characterisations of African understanding of God and the Holy Spirit, the Akans believe in a personal ‘Supreme Being’. Due to the vast nature of the Akan religious tradition, this section discusses the parts relevant to this thesis. The Akan concept of the spirit, spirit world and power is hierarchical in structure. First is the Supreme Being. This Supreme Being, ‘Onyankopon’ or ‘Onyame’ the creator and supplier of grace ‘odomakoma’. He has the final authority of the universe and significantly every good thing comes from him. He is most powerful and controls all events in the universe. Mbiti sees this ‘Supreme Being’ as ‘God’, the one who sits on top of the hierarchy of power beneath whom are the spirits, lesser gods and human beings. Second is the lesser gods or ‘abosom’. Pobee notes that the most potent among the spirits of the Akan religion are the lesser gods and the sacrifices offered to them. Though Pobee is right in this Akan belief, he fails to explain the origin of the belief and concept of these lesser gods. The belief is that though this Supreme Being was closer to people, he was disturbed and pushed further away by the persistent hammering of a pestle.

194 Pobee, Toward an African Theology, p.46.
196 Pobee, Toward an African Theology, p.46.
by a woman who was pounding *fufu*. Onyinah rightly asserts that ‘if the Polish anthropologist Malinowski’s argument that “Myth is a concept of reality” finds any place in Akan culture, it begins here’. In this story, the Akan religious tradition has its own story of the origin of sin reminiscent of the Genesis account of the woman and the serpent in the Bible. Essentially, though the Supreme Being retreated to Heaven, he did not abscond from mankind entirely. He has since delegated his power to the *abosom* who act as God’s representatives on earth.

According to McCaskie, these *abosom* otherwise known as ‘spirit sons of God’ manifest their power through the sky, rivers, trees, animals and other objects of nature. The *abosom* do not live in these objects however, they are consulted at these specific locations. The classification of the location of these *abosom* is in line with Kalu’s observation of the relationship between deities and communities through ecology. According to Kalu, since religion is relational to community and culture, one of the key areas in which the Supreme Being relates to his people is through ecology.

Onyinah gives a vivid description of the activities of lesser gods and spirits in his work on witchcraft and demonology in Ghana. The powers and activities of these *abosom* are instantaneous. It is seen as both beneficial and dangerous. Long life, procreation and good fortune is said to be a result of obedience to the Supreme Being through one of these gods whilst premature death, misfortune and disaster was attributed to sin and disobedience to these spirits.

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197 Fufu is a staple diet of the Akans which is prepared by a pestle and mortar. Onyinah, *Akan Witchcraft*, p.63.
200 T.C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre Colonial Asante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 109; Forest spirits known as *Mmoatia*. Tree spirits *Sasabonsam*, vindictive trees known as *Sasandua* and earth spirit is *Asaase Yaa*.
Thus a battle of the gods had begun. People were consulting these deities such as river gods, forest gods and rock gods for healing and protection. They went there to seek for power to be able to do what their neighbour could not do. The more powerful a person became through affiliation with these gods, the wealthier and more secure they were. This power is seen in authority over evil and evil spirits, healing, recourse to divine protection, wealth, and the ability to succeed in life.204

This search for power was both good and evil and leads to the third and fourth elements in the hierarchy of spirits which is the belief in ancestors and the use of talismans ‘asuman’. The ancestors are honoured and respected. However the talismans are objects such as wristbands, necklaces, small pieces of stone which are believed to inherit powers from the gods and the deities. People wear the talismans for protection and good luck.205 The final part of this hierarchical structure is the okomfo, traditional priest/prophet, who acts as a mouth piece for the gods and ancestors.

The okomfo is the mouthpiece of the unseen abosom. Onyinah aptly notes that ‘Though security and protection is not always assured, the Akans came under the tutelage of these spirit forces’.206 Hence any alternative to this power must provide the same or more potent protection from evil spirits and evil consequences as well as provide wealth, health and happiness.207 Essentially, power is perceived in the okomfo’s words: that is prophecy and authority over evil including exorcism. The abosom are also believed to have power to invoke vengeance upon those they perceive as deserving.208

205 Pobee, Ghana’s New Christianity, p.83.
206 Opoku Onyinah, ‘Pentecostal Exorcism’, p.76.
208 McCaskie, State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante, p.119.
Though caution must be taken against generalisation, to the Ghanaian, the threat of being confronted by evil spirits and supernatural forces means that one needs a more potent power to counter any negative influence. Furthermore the traditional understanding where persons with wealth are held in high esteem serves as a catalyst for people to seek any spiritual assistance available to succeed in life. Pobee rightly asserts that for the Akans, the Supreme Being is the most potent force. He has the final authority in every situation. The challenge however has been how to access the power and activate the power of the Supreme Being in their lives.

3.4.2 Spirit Possession and Akan Traditional Worship: The Akan Parallel to Holy Spirit Baptism

Among the Akans, the *okomfo* is known to be the one in whom the *abosom*, spirit of the gods dwells and communicates. The *okomfo* is thus the mediator between the unseen spirits and the people. In some cases, the *obosom*, forcefully possess the *okomfo* in order to warn the people of impending dangers. However, in most cases possession takes place at the request of the *okomfo*. This is done on the day of *Abisa*, ‘Consultation’, where people travel to the *okomfo* for guidance. The process of possession is significant. The *okomfo* dances to music, usually loud drumming, singing and shouting from the people. During such possessions, the *okomfo* is known to be the one in whom the *a bosom*, spirit of the gods dwells and communicates.

209 These are usually demonstrated and expressed in Ghanaian maxims and music. Some of these include *sika ye mogya* (money is blood), *sika kasa* (money talks), *wo ho kyere wo a nnamfo pa wo* (you lose friends when you go bankrupt). Also reflected in N.K Dzobo, *Ghanaian Proverbs: Guide to Conduct* (Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast, 1973).


211 I use this subtitle with careful thought. Not only is it an unfair comparison but it is also treading on heresy. However, I believe for the traditional Akan person, the manifestation of spirit possessed person was not much different to the prophets in the prophetic movements.


213 These unseen forces include the Supreme Being, gods and the ancestors.

214 This is day when people gather to hear from the gods through the Traditional Priest. Onyinah describes this in detail in his work. ‘Pentecostal Exorcism’, pp.42-43.
activities, the *obosom* takes possession of the *okomfo’s* mind and personality and then the *okomfo* begins to utter words, express symbols and display ecstatic behaviour.\(^{215}\)

Krings opines that there has been evidence where the *okomfo* utters strange words and languages unknown to him but understood by the people he is speaking to.\(^{216}\) Conversely, the *okomfo* receives instructions which are sometimes unintelligible to the people thus requiring an interpreter to decipher the meaning to the clients. This is reminiscent of events at Pentecost when the disciples were accused of being drunk and speaking strange words (Acts 2:11-13) as well as Parham’s view of xenolalia and glossolalia. These ecstatic manifestations; rhythmic swaying of the body usually to the tune of music, hand-clapping, leaping, dancing, poignant cries and at times shouting are crucial to the spirit possessed priest. Firstly, it is believed that the spirit must be activated to come and dwell in the priest; Secondly, uttering of words that includes accurate predictions of future events are signs for the gathered crowd to believe that the *okomfo* has power and supernatural ability. This is also a sign of the *okomfo’s* credibility and part of the reason why people listen to him or her.

On examining these practices, Fink concludes that ‘It is hard to decide whether this involves psychical powers or an increased perceptivity of the medium, or independent spiritual forces, telepathy or a combination of these’.\(^{217}\) The belief of the people is that their priest has been possessed by the spirit *abosom*, to do them good. Three significant observations need to be made at this point. First, the local name for the traditional priest *okomfo* is imperative. It is derived from ‘*kom*’ which means to prophesy,

\(^{215}\) Gabriel Bannerman-Richter, *The Practice of Witchcraft in Ghana* (Sacramento: Gabari, 1982), p.46; Onyinah, ‘Pentecostal Exorcism’, p.42. This was also confirmed in an interview with Pastor Acquah, April 27\(^{th}\) 2013, Manchester, United Kingdom.


and ‘fo’ which means a person. Thus okomfo refers to a person who prophesies.

Second, the manifestations that characterise the moment or process of possession are remarkable. There are loud noises, clapping of hands, drumming and other ecstatic manifestations. Such practices were seen in Seymour’s Azusa Street years, and are seen in the church today, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Thirdly, the evidence of the power of the spirit on these priests is pertinent. For them, the supernatural manifestations of uttering divine words, such as predicting future events (prophecy), performing exorcisms and healing the sick are all bona fide signs of the spirit possessed priest.

There now emerges a pattern of the Akan concept of Spirit and power reminiscent to Pentecost and the manifestations that occurred thereafter. The prophetic utterances of these priests upon receiving the spirit seem to mirror Luke’s description of Spirit-filled people characterised by prophetic utterances in Luke-Acts. Furthermore the accompanying results of healing and setting the oppressed free are seen in both contexts. These socio-cultural and religious practices surprisingly were practised before the emergence of classical Pentecostal churches and crucially before the arrival of western missionaries in Ghana.

3.5 The Origins of the Church of Pentecost Ghana

By 1937, at a time when CoP was not yet established under the name of CoP but Ghana Apostolic Church, Christianity had spread considerably in Ghana. Since much work has been done on this subject, this paper will limit itself to the origins of CoP.²¹⁸

The Church of Pentecost traces its origins to 1937 when the missionary pioneer, James McKeown and his wife Sophia arrived on the shores of Ghana, then known as the Gold Coast. However, prior to McKeown’s arrival the roots of the church can be traced further back to a Pentecostal movements which started during the intervening period of the two World Wars. Classical Pentecostal churches emerged in Ghana shortly after events in Azusa Street. The Assemblies of God (AG) and other denominations such as the Church of God in Christ and International Pentecostal holiness were active in the early days of Ghanaian Pentecostalism.

3.5.1 Peter Anim: the foundations of the Church of Pentecost

Another major force that contributed to the spread of Pentecostalism in West Africa was Faith Tabernacle Church, USA. The main teaching of the Faith Tabernacle Church was divine healing through absolute faith. In 1917, Peter Anim, a local Presbyterian, claimed to have been healed from a longstanding ailment through reading and believing the divine healing teaching expressed in the magazine called Sword of the Spirit. Anim subsequently started a church that became affiliated to the Faith Tabernacle Church in the USA. In 1922, he adopted the name Faith Tabernacle and by 1925 Anim’s Faith Tabernacle church had branches in large parts of the Gold Coast particularly in the Akan suburbs.

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222 Bredwa-Mensa, ‘The Church of Pentecost in Retrospect’, p.4-5.
223 Some of these suburbs include: Pepeadze, Abura Aboase in the Central Region, Bibiani in the Western Region and Atosu, Sekyere and Banko in the Ashanti Region. Cf. Bredwa Mensa, ‘Church of Pentecost in Retrospect’, p.4.
There was a significant turn of events in 1926, when Peter Anim discovered the teachings of the Holy Spirit in another magazine this time, by the Apostolic Faith Church in the USA. These readings enlightened Anim and the leadership of his church on the personality and manifestations of the Holy Spirit as well as other Christian doctrines such as sin, salvation and eschatology. However, it was Anim’s desire to know more about the Holy Spirit that prompted anxiety in the Faith Tabernacle Church in the USA. Anim had received healing and embarked on a healing ministry however, he desired power that comes with baptism of the Holy Spirit. Essentially Anim’s request to know more about the Holy Spirit was rejected and he was subsequently expelled from having any association with the Faith Tabernacle Church in the USA.

It is unclear exactly why the church in USA declined Anim’s request. Was this a power struggle, mistrust, or simply prejudice? Anim notes:

I was faced with the necessity of contending for a deeper faith and greater spiritual power than what my primary religious experience was able to afford, and I began to seek with such trepidation to know more about the Holy Ghost.

Larbi has suggested that perhaps the church in USA had heard of the ambivalent nature in which some prophets in Africa and Gold Coast were practising in the name of the Holy Spirit and power. Consequently the Faith Tabernacle Church viewed the glossolalia experience that accompanied Spirit baptism as satanic.

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224 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p.103. It seems that this Apostolic Faith Church that separated itself from William Seymour in 1908. Anderson, Introduction to Pentecostalism, p.41.
225 Kalu, Pentecostalism p.5. Kalu explains that some western missionaries were reluctant to share certain doctrines because of power and control.
228 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p.101.
Anim eventually joined the Nigerian leader David Odubanjo and made contact with the Apostolic Church in the UK for a representative to teach them more about the Holy Spirit. Anim’s contact with the Faith Tabernacle and Apostolic Church had been through correspondence. Anim subsequently met with representatives from the Apostolic Church in Nigeria through collaboration of David Odubanjo. The events that followed were crucial in the establishment of the Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast.

3.5.2 Peter Anim, Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the Apostolic Church

On Anim's return to the Gold Coast, he preached incessantly on BHS until a breakthrough occurred in 1932. A member of his church, Stephen Owiredu, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Brekumanso, a village near Asamankese while he was praying for his sick child. This was followed by Anim’s own sons who also received the BHS. Subsequently, in August and September of 1932, the Faith Tabernacle church organised prayer meetings at which a number of people received BHS including women who prophesied and spoke in tongues. News of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit spread to the Faith Tabernacle churches in the Central, Ashanti, Western and Eastern Regions where members and other local Christians dashed to experience this phenomenon.

In 1935, after Peter Anim and his Faith Tabernacle Church received George Perfect and subsequently the Missionary Secretary of the Apostolic Church in Bradford, UK, to Ghana, Anim and his leadership requested for a resident missionary who would help establish and

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232 It is poignant that in the history of the church, the Regions mentioned are predominantly Akan regions.
consolidate the doctrines and precepts of the Apostolic Church on the Gold Coast. It is uncertain why Anim felt the need to request for a resident missionary, given that he was effectively ministering in the power of the Spirit and seeing fruits. Reflecting on this and other similar associations, Kalu notes that, it was common for African churches to connect with Western world for prestige, legitimisation as well as funds and resources. It is observed that prior to the arrival of a resident missionary, Anim’s organisation had spread across many regions of the Gold Coast.

Larbi has shown that before McKeown’s arrival, Anim’s movement had a strong emphasis on prayer, belief in divine healing without any recourse to medicine, strong evangelistic ethos and BHS with evidential tongues. Thus it can be argued that although there had been missionary activities in Ghana in the early twentieth century, Peter Anim can be reckoned as the native father of classical Pentecostalism in Ghana.

In 1937, James McKeown and his wife Sophie were sent as missionaries to Anim’s Apostolic Church in the Gold Coast. McKeown settled in well with Anim and the Apostolic Church, however, significant doctrinal differences began to create division between them. Though McKeown and the Apostolic Church in UK believed in divine healing, it was Anim’s added stipulation of complete abstinence from medicine either curative or preventive that appeared to cause a stumbling block for McKeown. The issue of ‘divine healing only’ eventually caused Anim and his followers to end their affiliation with the Apostolic Church in 1939. Anim subsequently

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named his church Christ Apostolic Church whilst McKeown maintained the Apostolic Church Gold Coast.237

3.5.3 James McKeown: Towards the Church of Pentecost

Following the split, McKeown relocated to Winneba in the Central Region and continued with extensive evangelism. Under McKeown’s leadership, the Apostolic Church grew tremendously with branches emerging all over the country. Bredwa-Mensah notes that the period 1939 to 1953 was characterized by intense growth both spiritually and territorially.238 It was during this period that the headquarters of the church was moved from Cape-Coast to Accra (1948). By 1952, the Apostolic Church was effectively in all the regions of the Gold Coast. However with such rapid growth came many challenges and in 1951, McKeown prophesied:

From the branches of [the tree] there hangs fruit. But there are still birds in the air, and they want a place to rest. There are snakes in the grass and they want the little birds, so they have to climb the tree. There are many insects-they want the fruit. There are diseases carried by the insects that feed off the life of the fruit. Can God preserve and keep that which has been planted from all these evils?239

McKeown foretold of the impending crises and challenges that beset the church. McKeown’s church invited the Latter Rain movement to Ghana. Events following their visit eventually led to the dismissal of James McKeown from the Apostolic Church, with its mission office in Bradford.240 On hearing of McKeown’s dismissal, the Ghanaians invited him to lead them. This led to a break from the Apostolic Church. Thus, there were two Apostolic churches in Ghana: The Ghana Apostolic Church and the

237 Christine Leonard, A Giant in Ghana: 3,000 Churches in 50 years, the Story of James McKeown and the Church of Pentecost (Chichester: New Wine Press, 1989), p.32.
240 (For vivid description of this, see Onyinah, Pentecostal Exorcism, pp.133-136, 144-147).
Apostolic Church of Ghana. In the midst of these squabbles emerged the demand for an African Chairman. Eventually, on the 1st August 1962, the Ghana Apostolic church changed its name to The Church of Pentecost (CoP).

3.6 Spirit and Power: The Legacies of Peter Anim and James McKeown on the Church of Pentecost

It has been seen that though James McKeown is the accepted and recognised founder of CoP, Peter Anim played a pivotal role in laying the foundations for McKeown. Since both Anim and McKeown were influenced by the Apostolic Church’s emphasis on Holy Spirit baptism and power, it is imperative to investigate their teachings and doctrines they left in the church.

3.6.1 Peter Anim: Spirit Baptism as Power for Mission

The era of Peter Anim was characterised by the drive and desire for Spirit baptism with evidential tongues. This is in line with Anderson’s observation that ‘Speaking in tongues was the most distinctive and central preoccupation of early Pentecostal experience’. Thus from Pentecost to Seymour’s Azusa Street and to Anim, most Pentecostal preachers recognised Spirit baptism followed by glossolalia as the status quo and a sine quo non for Pentecostals. Anim did not only believe and preach BHS with evidential tongues but he also taught that the power that comes from the baptism was for witness.

Anim was convinced of this new phenomenon after he witnessed the outpouring of the Spirit during his visit to Nigeria. Though it took a

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241 It is said that Pastor G.Wood a local Ghanaian pastor came up with the name. This was a true test to McKeown’s commitment to embrace not only the culture, but the people as well. Egyir Paintsil, Accra, ‘Ghana Apostolic Church Now Known as the Church of Pentecost,’ July 28, 1962; Larbi, Pentecostalism, p.162.

242 Anderson, Pentecostalism, p. 190.

considerable amount of time for Anim to personally see this experience on the Gold Coast, his reception of the Spirit baptism was a turning point in his ministry. In an event which mirrors the Azusa street revival where Seymour had seen these phenomena at Charles Parham’s church, Anim and his church were now experiencing not only Spirit baptism but also other supernatural phenomena such as prophecy, healing and deliverance, similar to the early church post Pentecost. In fact, Anim reportedly believed that his new found experience was a continuation and a passing of the baton from the early Pentecostals. Anim frequently appealed to Acts 1:8 and stressed the importance of Spirit baptism and power as essential for witnessing.

In his work on African Pentecostalism, Kalu observes that ‘Naturally, the early Pentecostals traced their genealogy to a recovery of the character of the early church’. Outside the New Testament, Spirit baptism has been associated with power as early as 1870 when the Holiness teacher Asa Mahan taught that the purpose of BHS was to empower the believer to preach, pray, worship and sing spiritual songs. This same theme was later picked up by revivalists such as Dwight L. Moody, R. A. Torrey and J. Wilbur Chapman who believed and taught that BHS is primarily an empowerment for mission. Bredwa Mensa rightly opines that though miracles and other supernatural manifestations such as prophecy and speaking in tongues were evident, the underlying factor in this new found experience was ‘power’ and ‘witness’. This experience was so convincing that people left their work and travelled up to 160 miles to experience and receive this BHS.

Notable among them was James Kwaku Gyimah of the Presbyterian Church who received Baptism of the Spirit and was subsequently

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244 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 101.
245 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p.102.
246 Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p.7
248 This is seen in the work of Dayton, Theological Roots, pp. 100-101.
250 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p.104.
dismissed from his Presbyterian church. He was labelled a lunatic due to his ecstatic joy and manifestations yet he persevered in his quest to lead others to Christ. He subsequently won over some of his colleagues in the Presbyterian Church who also got baptised in Spirit and started a new fellowship. Though they did not merge with Anim's Faith Tabernacle Church, the Asamankese group occasionally shared fellowship with Anim.

This era was so phenomenal that it was referred to as 'The Holy Ghost Dispensation' by Anim's group and resulted in numerical growth.²⁵¹ For Anim and his group, BHS meant power for service. As Menzies notes, 'Luke declares that we should expect to be a community of witnesses, empowered by the Spirit of Pentecost. This expectation is missiological rather than soteriological in nature, for it is defined by the character of the Pentecostal gift.'²⁵² This was the case in Anim's ministry as people got saved, they were baptised and they went out to evangelise. There are many other accounts of people who left their jobs after their Spirit baptism experience and planted churches in other areas.

What marks Anim's era as great is that Anim found a new form of power through prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit.²⁵³ Unlike the traditional priests, Anim's power was power not in the context of authority over evil spirits and for prosperity although it may be included therein, but essentially, power to witness and become partakers of the command of Jesus given to his disciples. This was arguably a paradigm shift.²⁵⁴ It appears that Peter Anim had succeeded in presenting BHS as power not only for healing and protection but effectively for evangelism.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Walker, 'The Pentecost Fire is burning', p.88.
²⁵² Menzies, Spirit and Power, p.100.
3.6.2 Anim: Spirit and Power: Prayer and the Miraculous
For Anim’s group, the Spirit and the power was not only for missionary activity but essential for the works of miracles. Seeking power for service was tantamount to seeking power for healing, exorcism, deliverance and significantly having power over evil spirits. This was done through effective prayer. In a seminar on early Pentecostalism in Ghana, Koduah notes that to be Pentecostal in the early decades of the 20th century meant power over evil spirits.256 This power was attractive to new and prospective believers who saw that the Power of the Holy Spirit was more potent than that of the abosom.

3.6.3 Spirit and Power: Power for Divine Healing
Anim also left a strong legacy on divine healing in the church. Subsequent to receiving his own healing through divine means, Anim believed that anyone could be healed without need for medication. During Anim’s era, most indigenous people had no recourse to medicine. Like most African countries, in 1933, approximately 75% of Ghanaians had no access to proper health care.257 Most of the medicines were traditional herbs and the belief that the herbs were influenced by the traditional priests made Christians reluctant to take them.

According to Macchia,

By making healing an important aspect of the church’s mission, the Pentecostal movement became a haven for those who were dissatisfied with the decline of emphasis on healing in the mainstream evangelical churches.258

Macchia’s observation about global witness is relevant for the Ghanaian context. Anim’s emphasis on divine healing thus attracted more converts to the church and many people who attended his church testified to receiving divine healing.\(^{259}\) This is a trait of Pentecostal churches as Dayton notes,

More characteristic of Pentecostalism than the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit, is its celebration of miracles, of divine healing as part of God’s salvation and as evidence of the presence of divine power in the church.\(^{260}\)

This was the case in Anim’s church and more members were added as a result of receiving their healing. Overall, Anim’s legacy can be summed up as: Spirit baptism as power for witness, prayer, divine healing and the miraculous. This Spirit baptism is evidenced by speaking in tongues and endowment of power for the miraculous.

3.7 Theology of James McKeown: McKeown’s Church of Pentecost

Leonard notes that McKeown did not have any theological training or missionary background. Furthermore, his lack of writing and his view on education as trivial to ministry meant that a systematic theology of McKeown could not be successfully obtained. However, accounts of interviews and witnesses during his ministry provide key areas that shaped and characterised his ministry.\(^{261}\)

3.7.1 One God

McKeown believed in the triune God, Father, Son and Spirit. He laid emphasis on God as the one who has power to change lives. McKeown’s belief in God is essentially very similar to the traditional belief in the Supreme Being (\textit{Onyakopong}) as the supreme one. In an interview with

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\(^{259}\) Larbi, \textit{Pentecostals}, p.100.

\(^{260}\) Dayton, \textit{Theological Roots of Pentecostalism}, p. 115.

\(^{261}\) Some of these interviews and witnesses include; Breidenbach, ‘Maame Harris Grace Tani and Papa Kwesi Nackabah,’ Debrunner, \textit{Christianity in Ghana}, p.326; Leonard, \textit{A Giant in Ghana}, p.270.
Norman Christie, McKeown notes that though the indigenous Ghanaian sought to worship God, their understanding of God as transcendent meant that they viewed God from the periphery.\textsuperscript{262} McKeown therefore taught that God was not as far from his people as the Akan concept made him out to be. Furthermore, and most importantly, God had reconciled humanity to himself through the death and resurrection of Christ.

This was arguably McKeown’s greatest challenge: That is, to present Christ as the High Priest. Since in the Akan concept, God communicated to the people through the traditional priests (\textit{okomfo}) via the \textit{abosom} or ancestors. McKeown had the task of preaching Christ as the only and perfect mediator between people and the Supreme God. Thus his message was centred on Christ and the crucifixion.\textsuperscript{263} He preached forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, righteousness and his second coming.\textsuperscript{264} The power of Jesus was thus more powerful to transform lives and bring about the healing and protection from evil forces that people sort fervently from the lesser gods and traditional priests.

\subsection*{3.7.2 Holiness}

McKeown’s theology and teaching on holiness was arguably what attracted many criticisms of his ministry both prior to and subsequent to his early encounters with the local structures. Onyinah notes that one of McKeown’s favourite scriptures on holiness was Hebrews 12:14b ‘without holiness no one will see God’.\textsuperscript{265} It seems that though McKeown opted to contextualise the gospel, he struggled with what he saw as the ‘ungodly’ lifestyle of the people.\textsuperscript{266}

\textsuperscript{262} Interview by Norman Christie in Onyinah, ‘The Man James McKeown’, p.64.
\textsuperscript{263} This was in accordance with earlier Pentecostal preachers. Faupel, \textit{The Everlasting Gospel}, pp.28-32; Dayton, \textit{Theological Roots of Pentecostalism}, pp.19-21.
\textsuperscript{264} Onyinah, ‘The Man James McKeown’, p.79.
\textsuperscript{265} Onyinah, ‘The Man James McKeown’, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{266} Some these included his preaching on ‘one man one wife’ Onyinah, ‘The Man James McKeown’, p.79.
Again McKeown saw the polygamous life style and the telling of lies as unhealthy.\textsuperscript{267} Although McKeown had resigned from the Apostolic Church in UK, he remained faithful to their doctrine and ethical rigours that shaped him. The Apostolic Church in UK was known for their strict organisational structure and early Methodists’ discipline in matters of moral behaviour, ethics and holiness.\textsuperscript{268} Thus, members of the church who were seen in questionable places such as local bars and public houses along with those known to be engaged in perpetual sin were excommunicated from the church.\textsuperscript{269}

The implications of McKeown’s strong emphasis on holiness made the CoP stand out as a church recognized for its uncompromising attitude towards immorality. Asamoah-Gyadu, an African scholar and a Methodist minister, asserts that:

> The Ghanaian public image of the CoP is that of a Church which is making up for some of the failures and weaknesses—particularly in the area of morality—which have come to be associated with the Sunsum sorè [Spiritual churches] and even the traditional mission churches.\textsuperscript{270}

The teachings of McKeown were thus reminiscent of the early Methodists teaching on perfect sanctification. Another implication of McKeown’s emphasis on holiness is the legacy it has left in terms of worship. A key song for the Women’s Movement in the church is based on holiness. In its English translation, the song is summarised as, ‘As you walk along life’s journey remember to be holy unto the Lord’.\textsuperscript{271} Furthermore, the official greeting of the Women’s Movement carries the same message. The leader

\textsuperscript{267} Oninyinah, ‘The Man James McKeown’, p. 82.
\textsuperscript{269} Interview with Opoku Oninyinah, 26 February 2013. cf. Oninyinah, ‘The Man James McKeown’, p.79.
\textsuperscript{270} Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Renewal within African Christianity; p.126.
\textsuperscript{271} Music Committee, \textit{Church of Pentecost hymn book} , 3rd Edition (Accra: Pentecost Press Ltd, 2010), no. 1136
or minister shouts ‘Holiness!’ and the members respond ‘Unto the Lord’. Prophet James Amaniampong, a current member of the Executive Council of CoP concludes that, above other reasons, it was the doctrine of holiness that set the Church of Pentecost apart from its contemporary churches at the time.272

3.7.3 Baptism in the Holy Spirit

McKeown’s strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit and specifically baptism in the Spirit was evident from the outset of his ministry in Ghana and has left a lasting legacy. McKeown was sent to Ghana at the request from Anim to know more about the Holy Spirit. Thus, remaining true to his Pentecostal roots, McKeown maintained and taught the Holy Spirit and Spirit baptism as essential for Christian living and ministry. He stressed on the Holy Spirit as a person not a force. This was crucial because in the indigenous setting, the spirit was perceived as a ‘spirit-force’ and not a person.273

Anderson observes that though in theory, African Pentecostalism recognises the person of the Holy Spirit, in practise they turn to speak of the Spirit in terms of power and force.274 This is arguably due to lack of biblical teaching from the onset rather than deliberate deviation. McKeown’s task was to present the Holy spirit not as a ‘spirit-force’ but as a person who comes to the aid of another. McKeown further postulated that ‘Once we have a strong set of people who really know Jesus and the Holy Spirit, everything else will follow’.275

In his interview with Debrunner, McKeown explained his belief and teachings on the importance on the BHS and its impact on Christians.276 Pastor Vanderpuije, McKeown’s driver during the latter stages of McKeown’s ministry, shed light on this when he told of a story of McKeown’s visit to the CoP’s headquarters in Accra. According to Pastor

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272 Interview with Prophet James Amaniampong, CoP minister, 2 April 2013.
273 For further discussion in this area, Anderson, Moya, chapter 1.
274 Anderson, Moya, p.23.
275 Leonard, A Giant in Ghana, p.76
276 Debrunner, Christianity in Ghana, p.325.
Vanderpuije, on McKeown’s arrival at the headquarters he asked the staff whether they had been baptised in the Holy Spirit. McKeown believed that BHS must be accompanied by speaking in tongues, righteous living, proclamation of Christ and signs and wonders.

Here, McKeown’s strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit mirrors not only that of Paul to the Christians in Ephesus (Acts 19), but also the early Pentecostals. The evidence of speaking in tongues and proclamation is reflected in the writings and doctrines of other prominent Pentecostals such as Spittler, Menzies, Stronstad and Shelton. Spittler, the North American Pentecostal, for example, notes, ‘Pentecostal success in mission can be laid to their divine personal religious experience’. By this, Spittler points to the importance of Spirit baptism as an experience that shapes and characterizes Pentecostals. Members were prayed for to receive BHS, encouraged to speak in tongues and significantly to be witnesses of what they had experienced.

Like Anim, McKeown taught and practiced Baptism in the Spirit evidenced with signs as power for missions. McKeown also believed and taught the manifestations of the power of the Spirit in healing and the miraculous. Significantly McKeown did not subscribe to Anim’s doctrine of divine healing only. Furthermore McKeown added prayer as a key component of the power element. Thus in McKeown’s CoP, the members prayed for power from the Holy Spirit, they prayed to receive power for missions and they prayed to remain holy in the light of his emphasis on holiness. Thus for both McKeown and Anim, Spirit baptism and the power the Holy Spirit brings to believers is vital. It is power for witnessing; performing miracles and especially in McKeown’s case, power to effect holiness.

278 See chapter 1 for discussion on this.
3.8 The Church of Pentecost Today

Since its inception, the church has experienced tremendous growth over the years. A survey in 1993 by the Ghana Evangelism committee revealed that the CoP was the largest protestant church and the most attended church in Ghana. Furthermore, Kalu and Leonard regard the church as the largest in Ghana and one of the largest in West Africa whilst Anderson concludes that the CoP is the largest classical Pentecostal church in Ghana. At their last council meeting in May 2013 the chairman of the church reported that the overall adult membership of the church was 2,252,228.

In an interview with the current chairman, Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah alluded to the fact that the growth of the church is largely due to the teachings and understanding of the Holy Spirit as director of missions. Yet, Onyinah was quick to add that his vision for the church was not entirely about power but rather, about holiness. In his first five year term (2008-2013), Onyinah has picked up on McKeown’s teachings on holiness and emphasised the closeness of God ‘the Supreme Being’ to his people, his love for them, and the need for the people to relate to him as father and the imperative to become like him. Onyinah postulated further that the church expects its members to be active in evangelism and to start branches of the church wherever they are.

This concept of mission and evangelism is seen in the constitution and tenets of the church taught to everyone who desires to be a member of the

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281 Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, p.8
284 Apostle Opoku Onyinah, Church of Pentecost ,State of the Church of Pentecost at the 40th General Council Meeting of the Church of Pentecost, 8th May 2013 , Accra.
285 Interview with Opoku Onyinah, 26 Feb 2013.
286 This is seen in Opoku Onyinah’s vision for his first term of five years as chairman of the church. The themes that he chose for each year supplemented and built on the vision. His overall vision is ‘Bringing God closer to the people’. Opoku Onyinah, *Notes on Vision 2013*, (Accra, 2008).
287 Interview with Opoku Onyinah, Feb 26, 2013.
church. The constitution declares that ‘All believers in Jesus Christ are entitled to receive, and should earnestly seek the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire according to the command of the Lord’. It goes on to say that, ‘…with this experience comes power to preach and bestow gifts of speaking in tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance’.\textsuperscript{288} This assertion is reminiscent to Menzies’ assertion that the power of the Spirit is primarily for missions.\textsuperscript{289}

3.9 Church of Pentecost in the United Kingdom

The emergence of the Church of Pentecost in United Kingdom (UK) has been primarily due to the mass migration of Africans into the West. Van Dijk rightly opines that ‘Pentecostal groups have become part of the process of migration of Ghanaians to the West’.\textsuperscript{290} Apostle Samuel Boateng, one of the pioneers of the CoP in UK, commented that the emergence and spread of the church to UK and its various cities is largely due to the migration of not just Ghanaians into the country but essentially members of the Church of Pentecost.\textsuperscript{291} Recent works of Asante\textsuperscript{292}, Elorm-Donkor\textsuperscript{293}, and Walker\textsuperscript{294} among others have dealt extensively on the formation of CoP UK.\textsuperscript{295} This paper focuses primarily on the church in Birmingham and in particular the role of Spirit and power in the church praxis. The church which began with a prayer meeting by four migrant members of the CoP in 1986 has grown to over 8770 adult membership across United Kingdom in 2012.\textsuperscript{296} In 2008, the church which was formally

\textsuperscript{288} Larbi, _Pentecostalism_, p.278
\textsuperscript{289} Menzies, _Spirit and Power_, p.100.
\textsuperscript{291} Telephone Interview with Apostle Samuel Opoku Boating, 05 April, 2013.
\textsuperscript{292} Samuel Osei Asante, ‘Missions Challenges to the Church of Pentecost in England. An Analysis of How the Church of Pentecost may adjust some of its practices in order to win both Ghanaians and other nationalities (Blacks and whites) living in England’, _MA Dissertation_, Regents Theological College, Nantwich, (June 2004).
\textsuperscript{294} Walker, ‘The Pentecost Fire is burning’, (2010).
\textsuperscript{296} The Church of Pentecost, UK, National Report, 2012.
known as Elim Church of Pentecost officially became CoP UK after obtaining its own charity status.\textsuperscript{297}

3.10 Conclusion

It has been seen that though the origins of Pentecostalism is credited to events in and surrounding Parham and Seymour, Pentecostal activities have been recognised in different parts of the world in different forms. The emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana coincided with the Ghanaian traditional concept of Spirit and power. Ghanaian cosmology which mainly derived from the Akan cosmological understanding became a pivotal part of the culture. The people’s quest for power to protect them against evil and provide good will for them became a platform to build on with the introduction of Pentecostalism. The African Initiated Churches along with their prophets to a large extent provided an alternative to the power sought by the people from the \textit{okomfo} and the traditional priests.

The arrival of western missionaries provided a stern challenge to the traditional system. It was men such as Peter Anim, and subsequently James McKeown who ultimately shaped Ghanaian Pentecostalism and the Church of Pentecost. Both men played a key role in emphasising the power of the Holy Spirit and Spirit baptism as essential for Christian living and growth. They both laid emphasis on power as the ability to witness and holiness as life transforming power. It is against this background that the CoP has spread throughout 86 other countries in the world including the United Kingdom.

\textsuperscript{297} Chapter 4 will deal with the origins and growth of the CoP in Birmingham.
Chapter 4: The Case Study: The Church of Pentecost
Birmingham

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the formation of the Birmingham branch of the CoP (BCoP) and its growth. Significantly, this chapter has a closer and critical look into the church praxis, with specific interest in matters surrounding the Holy Spirit and power. The chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, the chapter analyses the formation, foundations and make up of BCoP. Secondly, this chapter discusses the information gathered during the fieldwork through participant observations, interviews and questionnaires. Thirdly, a closer look into the role the Holy Spirit plays within the church services will be analysed. This will enlighten and give an inductive approach into the discussion surrounding Spirit and power in CoP. It is hoped that this chapter will reflect an authentic character and understanding of a direct translation of Spirit and power in the CoP as a whole.

4.2 The Birth of CoP Birmingham

The Church of Pentecost UK (CoP UK) flourished since its inception in the 1987. However this growth was confined only within London and its suburbs. In the year 2000, Apostle Opoku Onyinah, whilst undertaking his doctoral studies, began a house group in his student flat in Northfield, a suburb of Birmingham. Kalu is right in his observations that most migrant churches are began by lay members who then invite the mother church to send the clergy after it is developed. However, in this case Onyinah was already a recognised Apostle within the ranks of the CoP at the time of the inception of the church.

298 The plan and initial suggestion to begin a branch of CoP in UK came in 1986. However, it was in 1987 that the association or fellowship started. It started under the name Pentecost Association in the United Kingdom and Eire. Then in 1993 it became Elim Church of Pentecost before finally in 2008 it became formally known as Church of Pentecost UK. Opoku Onyinah, ‘Background Information to the Formation of PAUKE/ELICOP’, Seminar Notes, delivered in London, 15 July 2008, p.2.

299 Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p.258.
Initially Onyinah studied at Regents Theological College in Nantwich, however, it was during his stay in Birmingham to undertake his doctoral studies that he felt the need and desire to start a branch of the church in Birmingham. Initially Onyinah started a house/prayer group which consisted of two families and two ladies. The need for this church planting was motivated by the number of Ghanaian migrants that were in Birmingham at the time. There were other associations such as the University of Birmingham Association for Ghanaian Students and the Association of Ghanaians in Birmingham which were already operational.

These associations mentioned above were set up to deal with social and identity issues facing the Ghanaian/African migrant communities such as racism, work and employment, housing and care. They were means of coping with the pressures of living in a foreign land. These groups support each other in events such as child naming ceremonies, funeral rites and bereavements, weddings and in some cases financial and money saving schemes known as susu.

For Onyinah, the beginning of the house/prayer group was not a replacement for any of the associations but rather a beginning of a church to provide spiritual and where appropriate, practical help to the Ghanaian community. Unlike the association, which grew in London and became an independent church, the house/prayer group in Birmingham was started from the outset with the intention of becoming a branch of CoP.

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300 Regents Theological College is the training college of the Elim Churches. Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah, Chairman of the Church of Pentecost. Interview 7 July 2013.
301 These two families were Onyinah’s family of which this author is a member, another student family known as the Amponsah family. The two ladies were Mrs Juliana Frempong and a lady popularly known as Sister Yaa.
302 Cf. Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p.257. Kalu suggests that the growth of some of these migrant churches largely depend on the motivation of the immigrants in the Diaspora communities.
304 Susu is a term used in Ghana to denote a concept whereby individuals save money for each other.
305 Interview with Opoku Onyinah, 7 July 2013.
306 Van der Laan refers to such churches as practising ‘Reverse mission migrant Churches’, Cornelis van der Laan, ‘Pentecostal Migrant Churches in the Netherlands’, JEPTA XXV (2005), p.74
Commenting on migrant African Pentecostal and Charismatic churches Kalu notes the impact of polity and frictions surrounding home/abroad missionaries and postings of pastors.\textsuperscript{307} In this case, a key advantage of the inception of BCoP was having Opoku Onyinah who was already a serving senior apostle of the church and who had also founded its mother branch in London.

Mrs Juliana Frempong, one of the founding members of BCoP, commented on the strong foundations that were laid through intensive prayer and Bible study from the outset.\textsuperscript{308} The house group which included Mrs Frempong, rapidly outgrew Onyinah’s student flat where they met. Subsequently, Onyinah made the formal declaration of his intention to name the fellowship ‘Church of Pentecost’ Birmingham branch in July 2000.

With most of the members already attending other churches including Roman Catholic, Methodist and Elim, Onyinah opted to meet in Harborne Baptist Church on Sunday afternoons to allow other members who wanted to continue fellowshipping in their various churches to do so before coming to BCoP services. This is a popular trend among African-led churches in the Diaspora. Scholars such as Aldred,\textsuperscript{309} Chike,\textsuperscript{310} and Kalu\textsuperscript{311} give a concise historiography of the reasons for the rising surge in African, Caribbean and what Aldred calls the ‘Black Church’ in Britain.\textsuperscript{312} Many of these migrant Africans settle in other churches due to the lack of branches of their mother churches. They then join house groups and prayer groups belonging to either people of their culture or their mother church.

\textsuperscript{307} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p.258.
\textsuperscript{308} Interview with Mrs Juliana Frempong, 19 May, 2013.
\textsuperscript{310} Chigor Chike, \textit{African Christianity in Britain: Diasporas, Doctrines and Dialogue} (Milton Keynes: Author House, 2007), pp.1-27.
\textsuperscript{311} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}.
\textsuperscript{312} Joe Aldred in \textit{The Black church in the 21st Century}, Joe Aldred and Keno Ogbo (eds), (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2010), p.1
Kalu observes that a large number of African ministers travel to Europe and America as itinerant preachers. They share preaching engagements, conferences and prayer networks with their host churches as well as other smaller churches among the Diaspora communities. Adogame highlights the positive impact of the proliferation of these networks as vital and useful for global and local ecumenical affiliations. For instance, during its infancy months BCoP used to fellowship with other churches in the Aston area of Birmingham bi-monthly and continues to work closely with the Elim churches in Britain.

As more people joined the church, the various practices and polity in the CoP began to emerge. Apart from the main services on Sunday afternoons, there was Friday evening bible study and prayer meetings. One of the members who joined the church a few months after its inception in 2000 explained his reasons for joining, ‘I was particularly touched by the power of the Holy Spirit during the prayer meetings and deep Bible studies’. Furthermore, Mr. Barnes another member who joined the church in its infancy observed that even though he joined a small fellowship, he could sense the presence of the Holy Spirit in the meetings. He adds that answers to prayers and sound biblical teachings in addition with the power of the Holy Spirit led to his commitment to the church.

Mrs Frempong adds that there were strong emphasis on the word of God, holiness and the power of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives. With regards to holiness and the power of the Spirit in believers lives, Onyinah stressed on the Spirit's power to overcome sin and temptation in the midst of the Western moral decadence. There were prayers for healing,

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315 Telephone Interview with Mr F. Baah, 21 May 2013.
316 Interview with Mr P. Barnes, 21 June 2013.
317 Interview with Mrs J. Frempong, 19 May, 2013.
318 Interview Opoku Onyinah, 7 July 2013.
protection, salvation, academic success and prosperity in the work place for the members. This is in line with Anderson's assertion that

Pentecostals believe that the coming of the Spirit brings an ability to do “signs and wonders” particularly that of healing and miracles in the name of Jesus Christ to accompany and authenticate the gospel message.\(^{319}\)

Elders and deacons as well as deaconesses were appointed. The church began to raise its own finances for renting of premises and other resources such as musical equipment.

By 2002 when Apostle Opoku Onyinah completed his doctoral studies and was about to return to Ghana, BCoP had grown to about 45 adult members. The foundations had been set for a church in Birmingham with its roots not only in London but significantly in Ghana. Onyinah had laid down key doctrines of the church including Spirit baptism, speaking in tongues and holiness as essential elements to church praxis and church growth.\(^{320}\)

4.3 BCoP and Its Context: A Ghanaian Church in a Diverse City

In its infancy years, BCoP was made up of mainly students from the University of Birmingham. Based on 2011 mid-year census, over 1,074,300 people lived in Birmingham. 46% of this population were under 30, accounting for the large student population in the city.\(^{321}\) Birmingham is a culturally diverse city known for its five main universities.\(^{322}\) However, with the increase of Ghanaian migrants into Birmingham from London and other European countries, the church began to grow to include workers. The arrivals of Pastor Daniel Walker who also came to embark on his

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\(^{320}\) Interview with Opoku Onyinah, 7th July 2013.


\(^{322}\) These universities include University of Birmingham, Aston University, Birmingham City University, Newman University and University College of Birmingham.
postgraduate studies and Elder Eric Yamoah from Holland were key to sustaining the growth of the church.

Since Onyinah’s departure in 2002, BCoP has seen five pastors including the current one as at the time of writing this thesis in 2013.\(^{323}\) This frequent change of senior leadership according to Elder Yamoah and other leaders of the church have stifled the growth of BCoP.\(^{324}\) Thus each pastor served an average of two years and did not have ample time to form and build their vision before they were transferred to other branches of the church. Again, although there are increasing number of Ghanaian migrants in Birmingham most of these migrants are students who tend to come and go as per the academic calendar. Walker notes that Ghanaians tend to settle in cities and towns where they can easily get semi-skilled and unskilled jobs.\(^{325}\) Subsequently, a smaller town like Telford has an adult membership of 349 in comparison to Birmingham’s 319.\(^{326}\) Walker explains this in terms of the factories in Telford which means that Ghanaians who are not coming for educational purposes are likely to settle in some parts of London as well as Telford where they can readily find jobs in these factories.\(^{327}\)

Thus from the outset, it appears that the pattern of community formation has a direct correlation on the growth of BCoP.\(^{328}\) This is significant for two reasons. Firstly, although most of the branches of BCoP attribute its growth to the work of the Holy Spirit, it can be seen that without a large Ghanaian community presence church growth is muffled. Secondly, these findings also suggest that BCoP like other APC churches is not only Ghanaian based but also Ghanaian oriented. Kalu makes this observation when he described the liturgy in a branch of CoP in Nuremberg, Germany.

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\(^{324}\) Interview with Elder Eric Yamoah, 21 June 2013. Interview with Elder G. Boakye, 13 July 2013. 
\(^{326}\) Church of Pentecost UK, Annual Church Statistics, 2012. 
According to Kalu, he was intrigued when the Bible was read in English, Twi and German.\(^{329}\) Explaining such liturgical practices Pastor Edmund, the outgoing Pastor in BCoP opines that due to complex nature of the membership the church, conscious efforts are made to meet the needs of all its members. However in Birmingham the main languages used in church liturgy are Twi (the Akan dialect) and English.

Currently, BCoP has seven assemblies or local churches with about 458 members made up of 322 adults and 136 children. The seven local churches are made up of three fellowships within Birmingham and the remaining four spreading across its outskirts into West Midland districts of Walsall and Coventry, and the Worcestershire town of Redditch. Unlike other APC churches, BCoP does not focus on large local churches but rather smaller congregations across a geographical area. Subsequently whilst other African-led Churches such as Kingsway International Church (KICC) has one big branch in Birmingham, Light House has two, and Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) has three branches. BCoP has seven branches spread across the Birmingham city and its surroundings.

By comparison, the Light House Church in Sparkbrook Birmingham has over 100 adult members in attendance whilst the Nigerian based RCCG in Birmingham has over 250 members in attendance. KICC London has over 12,000 in a single service whilst its Birmingham branch has over 100 in attendance.\(^{330}\) Thus BCoP in line with the CoP UK trend does not hold large members in regular services. However there is the exception during Easter, Christmas and other mid-year conferences and conventions when all the local churches within Birmingham and its surrounding areas come together. Thus though the individual local churches have smaller numbers, the cumulative number of BCoP membership is similar to the numbers in other APC churches in Birmingham.


The make-up of the BCoP congregation has now extended to the wider community of Ghanaians in Birmingham and not just students. Members of the BCoP consist of four different categories. Firstly, there are those who were members of CoP from Ghana. Secondly, there are those who have joined BCoP because their mother church is not yet established in Birmingham and thirdly those who have become Christians for the first time whilst in the Diaspora. There is a fourth, according to Adogame, ‘Those who consciously maintain dual or multiple religious affiliations and identities’.

Adogame explains that such members remain legitimate members of their denominations from back home. For example, a Methodist member may switch allegiance temporarily to a Pentecostal church whilst they are away from their mother country. Some of these members in the fourth category continue to pay their tithes to their mother church back in Ghana.

4.4 The Nature of the Church

BCoP as a branch of CoP UK comes under the Manchester Area of the church. CoP UK is headed by a Resident Missionary (RM) usually sent from the international headquarters in Ghana. The RM has the general oversight of all the CoP branches in UK. The CoP UK is subsequently divided into 2 administrative areas; London Metropolitan and Manchester Areas. Birmingham represents one of the districts under the Manchester Area. The current pastor of the Birmingham district is Pastor Lord Elorm-Donkor.

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332 The Resident Missionary is usually an Apostle with a mandate to oversee the work of the CoP in UK for a period of time.


334 During my time of research, Pastor Edmund was transferred to oversee the CoP in Finland and Sweden and was subsequently replaced by Pastor Lord Elorm Donkor in September 2013.
In January 2013, BCoP had a membership of about 322 adults of which half of these were students living in the West Midlands Region. The church did not keep records of ethnic origins of its members however a survey conducted for the purpose of this research showed that only two members of the entire BCoP are non-Ghanaian. The non-Ghanaians are made up of one African and one other European married to a Ghanaian lady.\footnote{335 See Appendix 1}

Among the Ghanaians, 87% of the members are from Akan origin whilst the rest are from other tribes. Of the Ghanaian members, 89% were born in Ghana and more than half of those born in Ghana grew up in the CoP in Ghana. Others were members of CoP branches in London, Holland, Italy, Spain and Germany before migrating to Birmingham. The Birmingham Central branch is located at the heart of the city. The church currently rents a hall within St. George Community Centre for worship. The central branch hosts the two main branches of the church on Sundays. These are the English service otherwise known as the Pentecost International Worship Centre (PIWC) and the Twi Service for those members who wish to engage in the traditional vernacular. These two services have the most members in attendance.

BCoP in line with the CoP UK have Sunday services, Friday prayer meetings, regular revival meetings and 3 special conventions in the year.\footnote{336 These are Easter Convention, Holy Ghost Convention and Christmas convention.} In addition to these meetings, the pastor in charge is at liberty to arrange special programs when necessary. One significant meeting which the previous pastor introduced to Birmingham is ‘Monday Prayer Clinic’.

In an interview, Pastor Edmund spoke on the power of prayer to change things and the need for the members to be prayerful. Pastor Edmund adopted the ‘Prayer Clinic’ concept from the previous RM, Apostle Appiah. According to Pastor Edmund, even before his arrival in Birmingham, he had a vision from the Lord to unite the church through ‘Deep teaching,
deep worship and deep prayer’. In his view, ‘The power of the Holy Spirit to effect healing, deliverance, miracles and breakthroughs through prayer are essential for the edification of the members and also attract more souls into the kingdom of God’. The Prayer Clinics, which began in Easter 2013 have blossomed and attracted non-members of the church to attend. Most importantly for Pastor Edmund, the power of the Holy Spirit has been present and lives have been transformed.

Another significant part of the church activities is its events and programs aimed at ‘winning souls for Christ’. According to Pastor Edmund, mission is a DNA of the CoP and every member is expected to be involved in witnessing as soon as they become born again and baptised with the Holy Spirit. The church organises frequent in door evangelism programs as well as open air events which mainly comprise leafleting and one to one evangelism. Specific house visits and friendships are encouraged and organised with the view of leading others to Christ. Members are constantly encouraged to invite their unbelieving family and friends to church.

From personal observations, there was a good mix of people from different age groups in the services. Since many of the members are students, they invite other family members, usually their parents to help with childcare and daily house chores. Thus though a majority of the members are in their 30’s and 40’s there were others in their 50’s and 60’s. There were always more women in attendance than men in any meeting and there is a Youth service, which many of the teenagers and those in their early 20’s attend. For most of the services the youth were in attendance together with their parents and were fully involved in the church service. This included playing of musical instruments, singing and praying. The Pastor chairs all meetings and services when he is present.

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338 Interview with Pastor Appiah, 23 July 2013.
339 Interview with Pastor Appiah, 23 July 2013.
The church services were conducted with a mixture of English and Twi languages. People conversed in Twi before and after the service. Though in the PIWC’s services were conducted in English, the preachers and moderators often shared jokes in their vernacular language. Significantly, in my observations the youth choir which was made up of teenagers and young people under the age of 30 always sang Twi songs when they were called to sing. This is significant because though some of the members were born in the UK and other European countries, they are still connected to the songs from Ghana. The cultural upbringing has ensured that they remain grounded in their traditional songs. The RCCG branch in Birmingham has a similar challenge. On several visits to the church it was observed that though the services are conducted in English, several songs were sung in a Nigerian language and there were anecdotes and illustrations spoken in Nigerian language and dialects. Fletcher observes a similar concept in some of the Caribbean led churches\textsuperscript{340} where even though they speak English, members appear to speak in the Jamaican patois and sing songs using that same language.\textsuperscript{341}

Edmund notes that ‘Those who are not born in Ghana are trained to be Ghanaian because their parents don’t want them to lose their heritage and identity’.\textsuperscript{342} In this regard, it is remarkable to note that those young people were entirely responsible for their song choice. Chike observes a disparity within the Africans in the diaspora.\textsuperscript{343} For example, first generation Africans who were born in Ghana hold onto their Ghanaian cosmological beliefs where nearly everything is attributed to the spirit world. The second and third generation Ghanaians, that is, Ghanaians who have lived in Britain for over twenty years and those who were born here, do not necessarily jettison the Ghanaian cosmology. They contextualise it. This

\textsuperscript{340}RCCG, Bristol Street Birmingham, Some of these churches include Church of God, New Testament. In my personal observations I saw this demonstrated in the International First Born Church Birmingham, and Apostolic Church, Handsworth, Birmingham.


\textsuperscript{342}Interview with Pastor Appiah, 23 July 2013.

means that they find their identity in singing Ghanaian songs in a foreign land where they are a minority. The battle is no longer a spiritual one but a social one. Faced with issues such as racism, lack of employment and gender issues, singing indigenous songs and speaking in their vernacular language gives them a sense of belonging.

Similar to most African countries, the Ghanaian traditional culture is anthropocentric. That is religion and culture is centred on human life.\(^{344}\) Language as part of culture plays a key role in bringing identity to the Ghanaian. Thus although services are conducted in English with the hope of attracting English speaking members, songs and humour are still expressed in Twi. In an interview with Gifty, the youth choir leader, she expressed that they prefer to sing Twi songs because they ‘feel the power of the Spirit when they sing in Twi’.\(^{345}\) Pastor Edmund the former senior minister or district pastor as he is known did not always do the preaching, though he was involved in every service in which he was present, either partly moderating or leading prayer.

### 4.5 The Case Study: The Church Services

My observations here do not cover Easter conventions and Holy Ghost conferences alone but Sunday services, Friday half night and all night services as well as Monday morning Prayer Clinics. I have categorized my observations into two distinct areas. First are the Sunday services along with all other services such as the Prayer services and meetings. Second, the Holy Ghost conference and other services which were organised with specific Holy Spirit themes. Unless otherwise stated most of the observations were conducted at the Birmingham Central branch.\(^{346}\)

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\(^{345}\) Conversation with Gifty, youth choir leader. 28 July 2013.

\(^{346}\) Birmingham Central Branch is the main or largest congregation of the BCoP. This is the branch that meets at the St.George Community College in Birmingham.
4.5.1 Opening Prayer

I visited the same church for several months and in several services. Most of the services were well organised with a printed program sheet of the order of service. Though the program sheet had a start and finish time, the flexibility of allowing the Holy Spirit to do his work meant that most if not all the services finished later than planned. This practise of flexibility among Pentecostal churches is echoed by Gerloff and Clark, with the latter asserting that ‘Pentecostal ideal has a liturgy of the Spirit reacting against a cold formalism, structured inflexibility they saw in the historical denominations’. Warrington comments on the flexibility of the Spirit amongst Pentecostals in this way:

Even when Pentecostal services are scripted, songs to be sung have been chosen, the worship teams have practised and the sermon topic has been identified and prepared in readiness to be delivered, there is a readiness to discard these plans for that which the Spirit may wish to introduce that has not been anticipated.

This was precisely the case in the services I observed. The flexibility in allowing the Holy Spirit to ‘take over’ the service at any point is part of the DNA of the church as a whole and what Hollenwegger describes as the essence of oral liturgy. The services always start with opening prayer. Usually the opening prayer takes the form of singing and continuous prayers. During an all-night service on Friday 25th January 2013, the deaconess leading the opening prayer was asked to keep singing because attendance had not yet reached satisfactorily or reasonable numbers for the service to proceed. The length of the opening prayer

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350 Hollenweger, Pentecostalism, p.270.
351 This is usually led by a deacon or deaconess in the church. On special programmes this will be lead by an elder.
usually depended on the punctuality of the members though it seemed to be usually 3 to 4 prayer topics accompanied by twice as many songs. The prayer topics include thanking God for protection and provision and asking for forgiveness. A key element in the opening prayer is inviting the Holy Spirit to take absolute control of the service.

Two crucial points are observed at this stage. Firstly, in nearly all the opening prayer times, the phrase ‘let us invite the Holy Spirit to take control of the service’ and ‘let us activate the Holy Spirit’ were heard. Secondly, the opening prayer acts as establishment to the Spirit’s activities in the service. On the issue of ‘activating or inviting the Spirit’, this is important because it is believed that without the Holy Spirit the service will not be fruitful or powerful. What is crucial with the phrase ‘activating the Spirit’ is the fact that it brings into focus the Akan traditional worship especially on the day of consultation. On the day of consultation, the traditional priests endeavour to activate the spirit of the gods as though they were idle or asleep. Significantly, this phrase was not exceptional to BCoP as my visits to other CoP branches as well as other APCs and charismatic churches proved.352

Gerloff is right in asserting that there is an energetic concept of the Holy Spirit among black Pentecostals.353 Though in her observations Gerloff linked this energy to the resilience of the blacks during the era of the slave trade, African Pentecostal churches such as CoP links this energetic concept not from the era of slavery but from a cultural and socio religious background. As Aldred notes, ‘There is an interaction with the Holy Spirit that connects the worshipper with a transcendent and immanent God’.354 The belief is that though the Spirit is present everywhere, there is a sense in which his power must be purposely called upon in meetings. As described by one elder in BCoP,

352 Some of these churches include, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Resurrection Faith Ministries and Light House Church.


The Holy Spirit is powerful. The Spirit of God must be a living power in and through our lives. Therefore if we do not invite him and ask him to manifest himself we achieve nothing.\textsuperscript{355}

Furthermore by inviting the Holy Spirit to take control of the service, all other evil spirits that may have wanted to hijack the service would be dispersed. This is reflected in a testimony by a member, who blamed his sleeping habit in church on evil spirits and thanked God for healing him.\textsuperscript{356}

It is worthy of notice that the Holy Spirit is not called upon only to break Satan’s powers but imperatively he is called upon to touch the hearts of the members and make them submissive and receptive to his will. During one Prayer Clinic service, Pastor Edmund led the church into lengthy opening prayer of consecration and submission after he felt compelled by the Holy Spirit to do so. This was subsequent to the opening prayer which was led by a deacon.\textsuperscript{357} A scripture that is quoted often is ‘...where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom’.\textsuperscript{358} Furthermore, in most of the opening prayers times, there were songs to welcome the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{359} Thus right from the outset the presence and power of the Holy Spirit is sort after in the services.

4.5.2 Praise Time
A time of praise always followed the Opening prayer. This usually takes a considerable time in the service since people come to church to express their gratitude to God. Bright, a youth, comments on the ‘Praises session’ as the best part of the service. It is a time when both the young and adults dance to appreciate God’s goodness.\textsuperscript{360} Though the praise songs do not necessarily speak specifically of the Holy Spirit, there are frequent remarks

\textsuperscript{355} Conversation with Elder Baffo, Birmingham Central, 17 March 2013.
\textsuperscript{356} Friday Night Prayer Service at BCoP, Telford, 19 April 2013.
\textsuperscript{357} Monday 6\textsuperscript{th} May, 2013
\textsuperscript{358} 2Corinthians 3:8.
\textsuperscript{359} Songs such as: we are waiting on you God the Holy Spirit (Ye r3 twen wo), Let your living waters flow over my soul.
\textsuperscript{360} Interview with Bright Baah, 12 July, 2013.
to do with dancing in the Spirit. One such comment frequently made is 'when the Spirit of the Lord comes upon me I will dance like David danced'. This time of praise is a mark of Pentecostal Oral Liturgy.\textsuperscript{361} This is a time of loud, joyful singing accompanied with clapping and dancing.

4.5.3 Testimonies
Testimony time is not only important in CoP but a prominent feature in many African and African-Led churches.\textsuperscript{362} It is a time when people express their gratitude to God by testimony, song or occasionally scripture reading. During testimony time members get the opportunity to not only share but to hear of the miracles and answered prayers in the lives and in some cases in the lives of other family members in Ghana and other places. Others use the opportunity to thank God for new born babies, marriages, successful funeral services, new jobs, acquired immigration status and many others.

This is also a time to hear the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in people’s lives. During the testimony time at the Easter convention 2012, in the Saturday service, a lady who claimed to be led by the Spirit came forward and sung a song that she said was laid on her heart by the Holy Spirit. This song subsequently became the theme song of the convention.\textsuperscript{363} The current chairman of the church, Opoku Onyinah stressed on the Holy Spirit’s inspiration in giving him and others songs during church services and prayer times. Such songs are usually written, published and become repertoire of songs of the church.\textsuperscript{364} Testimony time usually has testimonies of healing, protection and deliverance. In one service the pastor rebuked a lady sharing her testimony for not trusting in the Lord for healing before going to hospital.\textsuperscript{365}

\textsuperscript{361} Hollenweger, Pentecostalism, p.18; Warrington, Pentecostal Theology, pp.223-224.
\textsuperscript{363} Saturday 30\textsuperscript{th} April, Easter Convention, Birmingham.
\textsuperscript{364} Interview with Apostle Opoku Onyinah, 16 February 2013.
\textsuperscript{365} Personal Observation, Revival week Telford, 29 March 2013.
During a Prayer Clinic service at the Birmingham Central, a lady stood up and walked to the front of the church singing joyfully as she seized the microphone. She greeted the congregation with the customary CoP greeting, where the speaker shouts ‘Praise the Lord’ and the congregation responds ‘Hallelujah’. After this greeting she went on to share her testimony:

Brothers and sisters, we serve a living God. I had given a huge amount of money in last week’s offering as an act of faith. I believed God for big projects. On my way to work last Monday the Holy Spirit drew my attention to a £20 note on the floor and said that’s a beginning of great things. In the same week the Spirit again drew my attention to another £20 note on the floor and said this is a double blessing. By the weekend, I had 2 phone calls offering me huge projects worth lots money. Brothers and sisters let us be obedient to the Holy Spirit. Amen!”

Such testimonies of heeding to the voice of the Spirit were common and they always yielded fruits and blessings. Most often the elder convening the service will encourage the congregation to be obedient to the Spirit. Another aspect of the Spirit’s manifestations, which is prominent during the times of testimonies, is dreams and revelations. Though these are not highly encouraged some members with dreams and interpretations come to testify to obeying the Holy Spirit through these medium and seeing blessings. Referring to dreams and its implications among Pentecostals, Clark opines that ‘Dreams are not an end in themselves but a means to an end, the end being the message conveyed in the dream which will have real consequences’.

Subsequently, dreams are important aspects of the Spirit’s manifestations however they are treated with caution in the church.

My observation of testimonies leads me to three significant conclusions. Firstly testimonies are not included on the BCoP programs as trivial

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366 Congregational testimony on Monday 24 June 2013.
religious liturgy. They are designed to encourage faith and exhort the congregation. One elder Kudjoe commented further that testimonies have become as important as the sermon because through them members are strengthened and challenged.\textsuperscript{368} Secondly, the testimonies emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who came to testify. This is vital because even for those who had received healing through surgical operations and others who had travelled abroad and returned, although they thanked the medical doctors and pilots or drivers, they always gave the ultimate praise to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for his intervention.

The Holy Spirit was often mentioned and described as the unseen director, surgeon, pilot and operator of every machine that was needed to make things go smoothly. Through testimonies, people are attracted to the church and subsequently some give their lives to Jesus when they hear of the testimonies of what Jesus can do.\textsuperscript{369} Thirdly, there were frequent testimonies of divine healing and deliverance from misfortune. In nearly every service, there were testimonies of divine healing attributed to the power of God. Essentially, through these testimonies, the people try to let others see the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives in areas such as healing, protection, deliverance and answered prayers.\textsuperscript{370}

4.5.4 ‘Worship’ Time

Worship time is a dedicated part of the service reserved for the singing of slow tempo songs, songs talking of God’s faithfulness and goodness and essentially a time of hearing from God the Holy Spirit. This usually follows testimonies because it is believed that after several members have come to testify of God’s goodness, the right thing to do is call the church to exalt God. As Clark notes, ‘God must be experienced at work before praise and worship can be ‘in spirit and in truth”.\textsuperscript{371} By this time ‘a spiritual atmosphere

\textsuperscript{368} Interview with Elder Kudjoe, Tottenham District, London, 14th August 2012.
\textsuperscript{369} Pastor Abraham Arthur, Telford Central, Friday 22nd November, 2012.
\textsuperscript{371} Clarke, Pentecostal Theology, p.23.
of worship has been created’\textsuperscript{372} and the church is called to worship God. This is usually led by a leader (elder, deacon or deaconess), and supported by the church worship team. The leader usually reads a scripture at the beginning of the worship session and speaks briefly after which singing and prayers begin. In contrast to the praise sessions observed earlier, the worship time is characteristically known for its slow tempo songs, minimal or no clapping. However members would raise hands, speak in tongues, kneel, cry and express deep emotions during this time.

There is an emphasis on observing the holiness of God. One of the key scriptures often mentioned at this time is ‘God is in his Holy temple, let the earth be silent before him’.\textsuperscript{373} Noise is not encouraged as it is during the Praise time. Worship time is essentially a time when the church usually expects to hear from God. In an interview with a deaconess of the church, Sister Anna, elaborated that when worship is good, God speaks.\textsuperscript{374} This is arguably the expectation whereby after singing several songs and praying both in audible language and in tongues, the members are asked to be silent before God. In a majority of the meetings I observed, there were prophetic words spoken by different people during this time.

During the worship time on Monday Clinic 24\textsuperscript{th} June 2013, a deacon had led the church through a time of prayer after which Pastor Edmund rose to the pulpit and took over at the end of worship. He said in a gentle voice, ‘The Holy Spirit speaks. Let him speak to you today. God speaks through his Spirit; let him speak to you in a personal way’.\textsuperscript{375} This is not an isolated incident. It was a phrase or assertion generally heard often at the end of worship time at BCoP and CoP in general. Though on this particular occasion no one prophesied, Pastor Edmund’s aim was to encourage the congregation to hear the voice of the Spirit. Hatting picks up on this subject when he notes:

\textsuperscript{372} Clarke, Pentecostal Theology, p.69.  
\textsuperscript{373} Habakkuk 2:20.  
\textsuperscript{374} This deaconess did not want to be identified.  
\textsuperscript{375} Personal Observation, Prayer Clinic, Monday 24\textsuperscript{th} June 2013.
If a church believes that God reveals himself through the Holy Spirit, that people can be converted and transformed, that he heals men, that people can be baptised in the Holy Spirit, that love and forgiveness is possible, then the church must expect these things to occur in its worship service, and allow opportunity for it to happen.  

Prophecy during worship time is a key feature in the CoP and BCoP for that matter. Speaking at a service in 2008, a retired senior minister of the CoP spoke of the importance of prophecy in the church. Apostle Ansong said the CoP and God’s covenant with the church were founded on prophetic words. The importance of prophecy and the prophetic is seen at the top-level leadership of the CoP where among the nine-member executive, there is always a prophet. Prophecy is therefore considered as an authentic manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the CoP. During prophetic utterances members are cautioned to be silent and avoid affirmations with the words ‘Amen’, ‘Hallelujah’. The reason is that since it is God speaking, there is no need for human affirmation or confirmation. 

Noticeably, the prophecies I observed were spoken in the first person as though God was speaking directly to the people, unlike some Old Testament prophets and prophecies where Prophets in the Old Testament were recognized by the identification of their words ‘Thus says the Lord’. Prophecies in BCoP are different from many other Pentecostal churches. At a ministers’ seminar in May 2011, Pastor Gordon Neale exhorted

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377 Personal Observation, CoP Induction Service of New Chairman and Executive Members, Burma Camp, Accra, August 2008. 
378 The nine-member executive council is the administrative and spiritual governing body of the Church of Pentecost World Wide. 
379 Telephone Interview with Apostle M.S Appiah, 5 June 2013. 
380 (1Kings.20:13; Isaiah.45:45); Other OT prophecies such as Isaiah, Jeremiah spoke in such terms. Donald Guthrie, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries-Hebrews* (Leicester: IVP, 1983), p.62.
ministers not to prophesy in the first person.\textsuperscript{381} He encouraged the gathered Elim Ministers to use phrases like ‘I believe the Lord is saying?’ and ‘I feel God saying’.\textsuperscript{382} Similar statements were made by Rev. David Campbell, during his seminar on ‘Moving in the Prophetic’ at the Elim Conference in 2013.\textsuperscript{383}

During a church visit to Selly Oak Elim, a church with significant white British population in attendance, I observed that those who gave a word of prophecy or encouragement did so by using the phrase ‘The Lord says’ and ‘I believe God is saying’. By contrast, on several occasions, in BCoP and the other CoP branches I visited, the majority of prophecies were given as though God were speaking directly to the church. Storms note that prophecy is based on revelation in the sense that the Holy Spirit reveals His plans or purposes for the Church through his messengers.\textsuperscript{384} The idea of speaking from revelation is fundamental to prophecy because it relates to either future events or the mind of the Spirit.

On one occasion during Revival Week, a lady got up to prophesy and in the prophecy spoke as though it was God speaking with direct instructions and predictions of future events relating to the church.\textsuperscript{385} On another occasion the prophecy came to challenge moral behaviour in the church. As it is, Pentecostal prophecy comes to exhort, edify and comfort.\textsuperscript{386} A similar prophecy was echoed on Friday 14\textsuperscript{th} June 2013, again immediately after the worship. On this occasion the Area Head, Apostle Bonsu, rose to the pulpit and affirmed that it was a word from God since his sermon, which he had yet to preach, carried the same message. This affirmation by the apostle is vital not only in the context of the one who prophesied but

\textsuperscript{381} Gordon Neale is the Regional Superintendent of Elim Churches in Midlands and the North East Regions of England.  
\textsuperscript{382} Personal Observation, Elim Regional Ministers Day, West Midlands, Selly Oak, 21 May, 2013.  
\textsuperscript{383} Personal Observation, Seminar by Rev David Campbell, Elim Bible Week, Telford, 4 April, 2013.  
\textsuperscript{385} Personal observation, Revival Week, Telford, 18\textsuperscript{th} -23\textsuperscript{th} March 2013.  
also within the entire service. Though members are exhorted not to shout amen or such exclamations during prophecy, the pastor or person in charge of the service usually comments, leads a song in accordance with the prophecy to affirm it is from God. This is done on the basis of Paul’s instruction to test prophecy in 1 Corinthian 14. Thus during the worship time the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested significantly through prophecy and prophetic words.

4.5.5 The Word
An essential part of any service or gathering in the CoP is the ministration of the word. During services where time is of the essence due to the rent of the building or a follow up program, other activities such as testimonies are minimised in order for the preacher to bring the sermon, often dubbed, ‘The Word of God’. An elder introducing the preacher in one of the services remarked, ‘We have reached an important part of the service. Take your pens and notebooks and get ready to receive from God’. The Pastor does not always preach. The preaching duty is shared among the elders, deacons and deaconess and occasionally members with teaching ability. The preachers usually begin with a remark that the word they are about to bring has been borne out of prayer and fasting and through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. These remarks usually encourage faith and make the congregation receptive to the words of the preacher.

Apart from the major conventions and special conferences, there is not a systematic theological theme. The preachers are encouraged to seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance and direction in picking a theme or subject for the day. In a preacher’s plan note given to me for July to September 2013, the RM for the UK encouraged the preachers to seek guidance from the Spirit in preparing for the word. The Holy Spirit is not always directly preached about or mentioned in the sermons; however the theme of God’s power is

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387 Cf. Pastoral circular guidelines on prophecy, Church of Pentecost, July 2013.
388 Friday Night Prayer service, Birmingham, Friday 31st May, 2013.
389 Preaching Plan Notes, July to September 2013, London Monday Prayer Clinic.
heard in most of the preaching. As noted by Kalu, most African sermons are charismatic in nature and drawn from experiences of God’s grace and power in the lives of the preacher.\textsuperscript{390} Thus the messages were not always related to the Holy Spirit, there were frequent references to the Power of God to transform lives, situations and bring deliverance.

4.5.6 Intensive Prayer

A noticeably different term which is now being used in the church liturgy of BCoP is ‘Intensive Prayer’. This phrase was observed being used not only in Birmingham but also in other branches like London, Manchester, Leeds and Telford. Though conventionally, prayers have always followed the giving of the Word, in 2008 Apostle Appiah who was then the RM for UK introduced the concept of ‘Prayer Clinic’ in UK. In an interview with Apostle Appiah he said that he had the vision to begin Prayer Clinic in UK after receiving a vision from the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{391}

Prayer clinic or surgery he said was not the ordinary prayer but ‘Intensive warfare prayer’.\textsuperscript{392} Walker is right in his observation that although CoP members believe in silent prayer, there are times when prayers are loud and forceful.\textsuperscript{393} Walker’s description of forceful prayer based on Matthew 11:12 coupled with most of the BCoP members’ description suggest that Apostle Appiah’s vision of Prayer Clinics is well received by the members of the CoP UK. For Apostle Appiah, the prayer clinics are times of warfare when people come to receive from God.\textsuperscript{394}

This concept of forceful prayer has now transpired to ‘Intensive Prayer’ after the sermons in most CoP churches including Birmingham. Thus on every programme sheet, it is noted that intensive prayer will follow the word. This part of the service is known for its manifestations of the supernatural. This is the part of the service where there are loud voices

\textsuperscript{390} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p.254.
\textsuperscript{391} Telephone Interview with Apostle M.S Appiah, 5 June 2013.
\textsuperscript{392} Interview with Apostle M.S Appiah, 5 June 2013.
\textsuperscript{393} Walker, ‘The Pentecostal Fire is burning’, pp.222-223.
\textsuperscript{394} Interview with Apostle M.S Appiah, 5\textsuperscript{th} June 2013.
praying out in tongues and strange languages. It is believed that the Holy Spirit comes in power in a mighty way during this time. On one Friday night prayer, a young lady screamed and yelled and slammed on the floor during the prayer time. This was interpreted as having an encounter with the Spirit. On regaining consciousness and taking her seat, the elder praised God because the lady had been delivered.\(^{395}\)

During such prayer times, healings take place, deliverance takes place and people with real needs are prayed for. On some occasions people with evil spirits are exorcised. Thus regardless of the subject of the sermon, the intensive prayers mostly take the form of intercession, healing and deliverance. This session of the service usually ends with a call for silence to wait for God. Prophecies and visions are once again expected or anticipated. The intensive prayer ends with a final word of prayer.

Another key aspect to this part of the service is ‘the altar call’. During the prayers uttered after the sermon there is always a call for people to ‘give their lives to Jesus’. This invitation to Christ goes beyond salvation to include promises of healing, deliverance and prosperity given by Jesus. Scriptures such as John 10:10 and Isaiah 53:5\(^{396}\) are mentioned to encourage prospective Christians in giving their lives to Jesus. This is a key part of the service. During my time of observations, I only witnessed one person coming forward to give their life to the Lord at the end of the service in BCoP. Though most services had the same people in attendance, yet there was always a call for people to give their life to the Lord. Pastor Edmund explained that this is important because there may be the odd occasion when an unfamiliar face may be present and needing salvation. He continued that

\(^{395}\) Personal observation, Birmingham Central, 24\(^{th}\) May 2013.

\(^{396}\) These scriptures are usually mentioned both in and out of context to encourage people into accepting Jesus in their lives.
Since Spirit baptism is directly connected to witnessing and we are full of the Spirit it is important that we always give people the opportunity to know and give their life to Jesus.  

4.5.7 Closing the Service

A key feature in BCoP and CoP worldwide is its strength as a self-supporting/sustaining church. This is stated in the tenets of the church and subsequently every service ends with collection of tithes and offerings. Members are encouraged to give and special prayers are said for the offerings. According to Elder Yiadom, it is important to pray over the offerings to bless the giver and encourage those who were unable to give to be able give next time. After offerings, notices are served for future events and new or invited guests are welcome. The service usually closes with a prayer and a benediction from the officiating minister or elder in charge. Though minor details may change, this is usually the pattern of services at BCoP.

4.6 Holy Spirit Conference

The Church of Pentecost has three main conferences otherwise known within church praxis as conventions in the year. These are Christmas, Easter and Holy Spirit Conventions. There are other seminars and conferences however these three are the main ones detailed on the church’s calendar. Though Christmas and Easter conventions have always been a major highlight on the church calendar, the Holy Spirit Conference, however, is relatively new. In an interview with the former National Head, Apostle Appiah who initiated this Holy Spirit conference in the UK, he made it clear that he received this mandate from God.

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398 The ninth tenet of the church states that ‘we believe in tithing and in the giving of free-will offerings towards the cause of carrying forward the kingdom of God. We believe that God blesses a cheerful giver’. The church of Pentecost Tenets, (Pentmedia, 2010).
399 Interview with Elder Yiadom Boakye, Birmingham CoP, 24 July 2013.
400 Interview with Apostle Newton Nyarko, National Head CoP UK, 12 August 2013.
401 Interview with Apostle Michael Seth Appiah, 5 June 2013.
Apostle Appiah states that he observed the lack of the manifestation of the Spirit in prophecies, visions, healing and the miraculous during his first couple of years in London. This observation is also shared by Pastor Edmund who lamented the lack of numbers of people who were actively ministering in the gifts of the Spirit in the Birmingham branch. In 2008, Apostle Appiah therefore initiated a week long Holy Spirit Conference during the summer months with the aim of teaching on the person of the Holy Spirit, Baptism of the Spirit and how to identify and use the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He added that for those members, who had been baptised with the Holy Spirit, he exhorted the pastors to teach on the gifts and fruit of the Spirit as well as the continued infilling of the Spirit.

Though the vision was about the Spirit, spiritual gifts and fruit of the Spirit, the practical application has evidently altered. In his own admission, Apostle Appiah noted that when emphases on preaching during the Holy Spirit week have been on his power to transform lives and empower believers for witness attendances have dwindled. However, when the pastors and speakers lay emphasis on the power of the Spirit to heal, deliver, protect, bless and destroy the work of the enemy, attendances have not only increased but membership has also increased. Other pastors in other areas of the CoP in UK have attested to this conclusion.

4.6.1 Holy Spirit Service

I observed two Holy Spirit Conferences during the research period. The first was in the summer of 2012 and the second was in July 2013. The Holy Spirit Conferences are not extensively different in format and style to the services described above. What makes them distinctive is the extreme emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Thus although in the normal services, continued references are made to the Holy Spirit, in the Holy Spirit

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402 Interview with Pastor Edmund, District Pastor Birmingham, 23 July 2013.
403 Interview with Apostle Appiah, 5 June 2013.
404 Some of these pastors include, Pastor Edmund Appiah Birmingham, Pastor Emmanuel Agyeman Telford, Pastor Andrew Acquah Manchester and Pastor Abraham Arthur Leicester.
convention nearly every song, speech and certainly all sermons are
directly related to the power, presence and honouring of the Holy Spirit.

Before the main Conference in July, there was a prelude revival in April
under the theme, ‘Power from on High’. The Pastor or conductor shouts
‘Power’ and the congregation responds ‘from on High’. 405 On Saturday
27th April, 2013, the week-long revival was coming to an end. After several
opening songs full of references to the Holy Spirit, there was a time for
praises, which continued with a time of worship. Initially there was a
lethargic attitude since most of the people had been attending all week.
However they soon warmed up to the loud drumming, music, clapping and
dancing. 406

Pastor Arthur who chaired this particular service rose to his feet after the
opening prayers and encouraged the congregation to fully participate and
expect a last day touch of the Holy Spirit upon their lives. He appealed to
the sick and those needing miracles to trust in the power of the Holy Spirit
to bring them deliverance that night. He shouted ‘Power!’ and they
responded ‘from on High’. 407 After this, the room erupted into frenzied
prayer, praise and ecstatic noises after which the worship team led the
church through some local praises which stressed on the power of the
Holy Spirit. 408

On this occasion, there was no time for testimonies or special songs. The
pastor in charge indicated that his purpose that night was to see the
manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It was time for the sermon and one Elder
was called to bring the ‘Word of God’. Upon receiving the mike he burst
into a song, ‘Power belongs to God’. After singing this for a while he
shouted ‘Power!’ and again the congregation responded ‘Belongs to God’.
There were four things pertinent in his sermon that night. First, Elder

405 This theme was chosen from Luke 24:24.
406 Personal Observation, Power from on High Revival service, 27th April, 2013.
407 Personal Observation, Power from on High Revival service, 27th April, 2013.
408 Some of these songs included: ‘Send your power, the Holy Ghost Power’, ‘Let your
mighty Power come down now’, and ‘Ogya Ogya sumsumkronkron’ (Fire, Holy Spirit Fire).
William mentioned that ‘when it comes to CoP the Holy Spirit is the most important’. This is significant because it shows that not only within the clergy but other leaders of the church and the members as will be seen later have a clear understanding of the importance of the Holy Spirit in their lives and church praxis.

Secondly, he repeatedly made references to the Holy Spirit as a person. Again this is vital because as opposed to some western misconceptions of African understanding of the Holy Spirit, the CoP along with many other African churches firmly believe in the personal characteristics of the person of the trinity. Thirdly Elder William said ‘the power comes from on high to destroy works of the enemy, burn away the chaff in our lives and energizes us for gospel proclamation’. Such remarks always incited louder amens whenever he mentioned power to destroy the work of Satan.

Elder William emphasized that it was through baptism that people encountered this power to transform their lives. Fourthly he talked on ‘activating the Holy Spirit’. There is a belief in activation. This is not to say that the Holy Spirit is dormant or asleep. Rather as seen in the Akan religious practices, the spirits of the gods and ancestors must be activated, called upon, and in some cases called into activation to perform some miraculous works. This is partly due to respect and desire: respect for the cosmological world because it is outside the human sphere. Thus in order to get them to make any impact they must be called and requested to act, hence, activating the Holy Spirit.

After the sermon, there was a long period of prayer that consisted of loud music, clapping, shouting, screaming and singing. People were called forward to receive baptism of the Holy Spirit. Hands were laid on them and the pastor and elders of the church went round those who sought for Spirit baptism and prayed over them. Out of the thirteen people who came forward, ten received the baptism with the evidence of speaking in

409 Cf. Anderson, Moya, p.60.
410 Onyinah, ‘Pentecostal exorcism’, p.120.
tongues. Following that, there was a call for prayer to those who wanted power from God. Nearly all the members came forward. During this prayer session, there were many who were falling without being touched, some made ecstatic screaming noises and others hopped and jumped in the room. Pastor Arthur explained that people were encountering the power of the Spirit. He said that some were being healed; others were being delivered from the power of Satan. There was a particular young lady who needed more attention and prayer. The pastor explained that she needed deliverance and called for the church to intensify their prayers.

The prayer session lasted nearly twice as long as the sermon. Towards the end of the prayer, the pastor signalled for there to be silence. Murmurings and whispers of prayers could be heard in the background. Many of them appeared to be speaking in tongues. Pastor Arthur burst out speaking in tongues. This gave the congregation a burst of energy to speak in tongues too. Musicians started playing along but Pastor Arthur signalled for there to be silent. On this occasion a young lady burst out speaking in unintelligible words after which she began to prophesy. Pastor Arthur led the congregation into a song after the prophecy, spoke on some of the key elements within the prophecy and motioned for everyone to take their seats. The service finished with a collection, closing prayer by the observer and final benediction by Pastor Arthur.

4.7 Interviews and Questionnaires
Towards the end of my observation period with BCoP, I conducted interviews and questionnaires to help support and answer questions that had risen from my observation period. Siedman points out that, when selecting people for interviews, ‘The range of people and sites from which the sample is selected should be fair to the larger population for readers of the study to connect to what they are reading’. On this note, I was given a helper by the BCoP Pastor, who assisted me to identify leaders and members to interact with. In this case, a fair reflection of the larger group

411 I. Seidman, Interviewing as Qualitative Research (New York: Teacher College Press, 2006), p.52
helped to get a balanced view of the subject matter and to avoid the work being labelled as idiosyncratic in nature.\textsuperscript{412}

I used a semi-structured interview approach during interviews. This semi-structured interview is less formal than a structured interview and allows more flexibility than a structured interview.\textsuperscript{413} It became apparent in my observations that most members of the church preferred and enjoyed informal and semi-formal conversations. Consequently the questionnaires were not as fruitful and productive as the interviews.\textsuperscript{414} The participants seemed to prefer semi-structured interviews to answering questionnaires and formal interviews.\textsuperscript{415}

Denscombe notes that the semi-structured interviews give the interviewer more control and flexibility to develop the subject further.\textsuperscript{416} Moreover, it helps for a denominational understanding and emphasis on the subject matter. The interviews were relatively short and comprised three key questions. Further questions were asked based on answers that were given for clarification purposes. I interviewed thirty people in the congregation including clergy, lay leaders and members. Most of these interviews were semi-structured and informal. I also conducted a written questionnaire and got fifty responses back. The questions proved more difficult as majority of the members preferred to speak informally than to write.

The three main questions were 1. Who is the Holy Spirit and what is Baptism of the Spirit? 2. What does it mean when the Bible says you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you? 3. What is the evidence of Power in your life and in the lives of believers? These three

\textsuperscript{412} Seidman, \textit{Interviewing as Qualitative Research}, p.52.
\textsuperscript{413} Chike, ‘An African Pneumatology in British Context’, p.35.
\textsuperscript{414} See Chapter 1 for explanation of the questionnaires and Appendix 4 for a sample of questionnaires.
\textsuperscript{415} This observation is not unique. On conversations with other recent scholars I realised that most of them had similar challenges.
main questions shaped the overall interview sessions. The full extent of questions is shown in Appendix 2.

In the interviews, I tried to involve those who were CoP members in Ghana, as well as those who have joined the BCoP after migration. I also included young people born in England and in Europe, and new converts. 89% of those interviewed were born in Ghana as this represented a large proportion of the BCoP members. This is vital because their views give an indication as to whether their perception on Spirit and power has changed or had been compromised since migrating from Ghana. The BCoP did not have any records of people’s ages or nationalities since all members with the exception of two were Ghanaian. By interviewing both leaders and members, I tried to gain an understanding of the concept of Spirit Baptism and Power from both the pulpit and the pews as well as in the people’s everyday lives. Due to ethical procedure and data protection, pseudonyms are used for the interviewees as shown in Appendix 3.

4.7.1 Identified Patterns and Interview Analysis
My interviews identified five patterns relevant to the concept of Spirit baptism and Power based on both the Lukan concept and cultural background.

i. Baptism as Spirit Possession
ii. Spirit baptism as Power to witness with subsequent miracles
iii. The Link between Power, Blessings and countering Evil forces
iv. The Spirit as power to effect Holiness
v. Belief in the Person of the Holy Spirit

4.7.2 Baptism as Spirit Possession
An overwhelming majority of those interviewed and those who responded to the questionnaire affirmed that Spirit baptism is when the Holy Spirit possessed the Christian. With different words and in different ways, nearly all the participants spoke as though Spirit baptism implied an occasion
when the Spirit literally possesses the Christian and takes over their lives. Ama, a youth in the choir explained that ‘Spirit baptism is when the Holy Spirit comes to live within the believer and takes full control of their body, spirit and soul’. Evans an elder of the BCoP gave a similar explanation that ‘Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the outpouring of the Spirit on a believer.’ It could also be described as full immersion of the Spirit in the believer’s life’. Simon, a deacon explained that ‘Spirit baptism is when the Holy Spirit possess Christians and take over their lives in a positive and powerful way.

Two out of the thirty people interviewed and surveyed responded slightly differently. Cindy, a lady in the 40-50 year age group who had only been a Christian for 3 months described Spirit baptism as speaking in tongues. Rose, another recent convert, described Spirit baptism within the context of tongues. Cindy and Rose’s responses can be explained by virtue of their recent conversion and membership in the church. Though they both intimated that the Spirit baptism meant that they were now under the control of the Holy Spirit’s power, they added that Spirit baptism meant they could speak in tongues. Significantly they both had received Spirit baptism shortly after their salvation experience and they both spoke in tongues. It is pertinent to note that at the time of interview, they were awaiting special classes on what it means to become a Christian.

The majority’s description of Spirit baptism as possession of the Christian by the Holy Spirit can be seen in the various teachings of the church. On one occasion Apostle Bonsu illustrated how Christians are immersed in the Spirit just as clothes are immersed in dye for colour. By this Apostle Bonsu explained that after Spirit baptism, the Christian becomes full of the Spirit. Again, an elder spoke of Spirit baptism as ‘being so consumed

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417 Interview with Ama, BCoP 18 July 2013
418 Interview with Elder Evans, Coventry, 9 Aug 2013.
419 Interview with Simon, Walsall, 11 Aug 2013.
420 Apostle Bonsu speaking at service in BCoP Central, Friday 28th June, 2013. Apostle Bonsu is the CoP Area Head of Manchester Area.
with power from the Holy Spirit that the Spirit takes over your life’. In a seminar on ‘Being Led by the Spirit’, Apostle Onyinah asserted that when one is baptised in the Spirit, the Spirit comes and possesses the individual. The Christian is subsequently able to hear from the Spirit and do as the Spirit leads.

In this particular seminar, Jamys Carter, an Elim pastor asked Onyinah during the ‘Q and A session’ whether the Spirit possess Christians or comes alongside them. This question highlights the African/Ghanaian understanding of Spirit baptism whereby the Holy Spirit is not merely seen as an agent who comes alongside, but as one who comes and takes control. By taking control, the Christian is seen as submitting themselves to the will of God.

4.7.3 Spirit Baptism as Power to witness with subsequent Miracles
The phrase that dominated all the interviews and questionnaires was ‘the Spirit gives Power...’ In all the interviews, the participants acknowledged that the Spirit gave them power for something. This is significant because before I asked any specific question to do with power, the participants always came up with the word power in relation to the Spirit. The question that I asked is, ‘What does it mean when the Bible says you shall receive Power when the Holy Spirit comes on you’? Out of the fifty participants these are the results below:

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421 Personal observation, Comment made by an elder during Holy Spirit week. BCoP Central, 27 July 2013.
422 Opoku Onyinah, seminar on Being Led by the Spirit, Sparkbrook Christian Centre, 14 May 2011.
423 Q and A session refers to Question and Answers. Personal observation, at the Seminar, Being Led by the Spirit, Sparkbrook Christian Centre, 14 May 2011.
424 The fifty participants include both questionnaires and interviews.
What does the Bible mean when it says you shall receive Power when the Holy Spirit comes on you

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of People who responded</th>
<th>Percentage representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power to witness</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power to Overcome sin</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power to Heal</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power to use gifts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, it is clear that the majority of participants understand the power in terms of witnessing. It must be noted however that some of those who said the power was primary for witness also indicated that the power also means they can overcome sin and heal. Thus on the surface BCoP and its members have a clear Lukan pneumatological understanding on the Spirit as power to witness. The subsequent question that was asked after the one above was: how does this power translate in daily lives? This question was designed to provoke responses from the participants’ daily experiences of the implications of the power received after Spirit baptism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the evidence of the Power. What does the power enable you to do in everyday lives</th>
<th>Number of People who responded</th>
<th>Percentage representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power to Speak in tongues and Pray</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supernatural ability (Power to cast out demons, heal the sick and possess spiritual gifts)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power to overcome sin</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power to prophesy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This second table gives a clear indication of the participants understanding of how the power of the Spirit affects their daily lives. The question it was not about what they have been taught in church, but significantly how they live their lives in relation to their belief. The participants clearly relied on the Holy Spirit’s power daily not for witnessing but for guidance and protection. When asked what does the Holy Spirit power enable you to do? There were acknowledgments that the Holy Spirit gives power to speak in tongues and pray. Thus speaking in tongue was regarded as a tangible evidence of Spirit baptism. All the members who were baptised in the Spirit spoke in tongues and the church leaders frequently encouraged the members to speak in tongues. For them, speaking in tongues does not only praise God but importantly breaks and destroys the work of the enemy.

Joanna explained that:

When I wake up every morning I first speak in tongues. I have to not only thank God, but also destroy the work of Satan. He [Satan] does not understand tongues so when I do that I destroy his plans.\(^{425}\)

Owusu said:

The power of the Spirit is very important in believers’ lives. You will be able to speak in tongues, communicate to God effectively. You have better vision and you get protection from the enemy. Also you get protection from all the powers of Satan.\(^{426}\)

Bernard a deacon explains:

When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, the hand of God is upon you and God works through you. You have power to witness. And power to engage in serious warfare. Satan cannot harm you.\(^{427}\)

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\(^{425}\) Conversation with Joanna, BCoP, 02 July 2013.
\(^{426}\) Interview with Owusu, BCoP, 18 July 2013.
\(^{427}\) Interview with Benard, BCoP, 18 July 2013.
Similar views were expressed by other church members. Thus, though the belief in power to witness is essential, the power also translates to having the ability to speak to God in tongues as well as destroying the work of Satan. The belief is that Satan and demons do not comprehend the language of tongues. Therefore by speaking in tongues the Christian destroys Satan’s work. There seem to be a very frank and vivid acknowledgement of Satan’s work and power as well as the battle of good and evil in the minds of the members of the church. Hence the need for power in their daily lives is not only for witnessing but for protection and guidance. Donkor puts it this way, ‘The traditional understanding of good and evil as a description of God being the author of good (odomankoma) and Satan being evil continues to occupy the minds of Ghanaians’. 428 Therefore there is the constant need and search for power and prayer to overcome.

Again, the power in the daily lives of the people is seen in their quest not only for protection but power to acquire supernatural ability over evil and misfortune. Ama explained that

When the Spirit comes, we shall receive power such as to heal the sick, and raise the dead. The power is for us to overcome any negative things in our lives and to destroy every work of Satan. 429

Yaw described it like this:

When we receive the power we become witness for Christ. We cast out demons, evil spirits and break the yoke of burden in our lives. We become more than conquerors in Jesus name. 430

Many saw the power of the Spirit not in the ordinary but in the spectacular. 431 There is clear evidence that the Holy Spirit enables ‘even

429 Interview with Ama2, BCoP, 18 July 2013
430 Interview with Yaw, BCoP, 18 July 2013.
the shy person to evangelise’. This assertion was spoken of by many of the participants. The power of the Spirit therefore gives people ability to do what they could not do before and to do better what they could previously do. This makes the members perceive Spirit and power as very important and vital for their daily lives. Some of the testimonies which were given demonstrated the fact that the Holy Spirit gave people supernatural protection and power. Droogers concludes, ‘The feeling of an overpowering and or empowering presence of the Spirit is especially clear in the dramatic experiences of glossolalia, healing, prophecy, dreams and visions’.

Conversely, less emphasis was placed on the Spirit’s power and ability to make people prophesy. A mere 6% of the people mentioned the Spirit’s power to prophesy. This is surprisingly low as most people speak of wanting to hear from God. Again an interesting point to note here is the high number of people who spoke of the Spirit’s power to enable them live holy lives, a characteristic of McKeown’s teaching’s which has remained through the ages and is still preached and practised in the church today. Thus although the majority of the members believed that they had received power to witness, the power they receive, actually manifests itself in protecting them, equipping them against the enemy and enabling them to live holy lives. This is not to say that the members do not witness. However, it appears that they prefer to see the miraculous which include healing, deliverance and other supernatural manifestations, happen more in their own personal lives.

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431 This is in contrast to Chikor’s findings whereby the members of the St. Mary’s church in London saw the Holy Spirit in the ordinary daily lives. Chike, ‘An African Pneumatology in British Context’, p.193.
432 As described in an interview with Apostle Appiah, 5 June 2013.
4.7.4 The Link between Power, Blessings and countering Evil forces

As in the study of the Akans in the previous chapter, members of the BCoP also seem to have a cosmology that is spiritually focussed and based on their Ghanaian traditional heritage. This concept of cosmology arguably shaped their concept of power in relation to the Holy Spirit. Another question asked was ‘why do you need power?’ the participants’ responses highlighted their awareness of the ardent presence of evil in society and the need for the power of the Holy Spirit. The strong emphasis on evil spirits, misfortunes and divine protection meant that they needed a higher power to give them blessings, healing, wealth and divine protection.

Significantly, the younger participants as well as those who were born in the UK or Europe shared similar ideologies with the older ones and those born in Ghana. The significant difference was that whilst those born in Ghana or the older ones wanted power for protection from evil spirits, the second and third generation members who had either lived here for a considerable length of time or were born here, needed power not just from evil spirits but to fight inequality, social justice and social status. Bernice, an eighteen-year old lady born in Amsterdam but presently living in the UK gave this answer when asked why she needed power from the Spirit:

I need the Holy Spirit power to protect me from the works of the devil. I know that without power from God, I cannot do what God wants me to do. The power has also helped me to overcome the flesh. Again, I need the favour of God to help me achieve all my dreams and the Holy Spirit helps me to do that.434

Akwasi, a twenty-one year old male born in Ghana gave this answer to the same question (why do you need power from the Holy Spirit?):

The Holy Spirit power is the ultimate power in the universe. It is the power of God to give us special supernatural powers to fight for our

434 Interview with Bernice, BCoP, 18 July 2013
rights and also to make us bold. I used to be timid and scared of intimidation and bad luck but since I had the power of the Holy Spirit, I am now bold and don’t fear no evil.  

Joyce, a woman in her fifties gave the following response, 

I need power to become a good witness for Christ and power for protection. By the Spirit’s power, I am dead to sin and alive in Christ. With the power of the Holy Spirit, I am a winner.  

Peter, a family man in his forties who migrated from Ghana six years ago commented, 

I need Holy Spirit power to enable me to be more powerful. The power is to give us the ability to heal people, do God’s work and break down Satan’s stronghold in our lives. 

Steve, a youth born in Birmingham remarked, ‘the power has given me ability to succeed in my studies and power over Satan like the early church and also helps me to overcome flesh’. Dorcas a lady in her early forties added, ‘I need power for protection. The power brings blessings and makes me more like Christ’.  

Two key points emerge from the interviews at this stage. Firstly, though the emphasis remains on power for proclamation there was a disparity between male and female on the reasons why they need power. The women generally turned to seek power for protection whilst men sought power to be great and influential. The gender differences here see men needing power to be able to achieve and be more productive whilst females needed power to survive and to be protected. 

Secondly, the need for power was closely linked to material blessings. For example, during a sermon, an elder said that when you receive power from the Holy Spirit, you get the ability to succeed and achieve beyond your dreams. On another occasion, another deaconess used David as an example when she said that because of the Spirit of God that was on David he rose above his elder brothers and succeeded as the greatest king in Israel. This perception that the Holy Spirit empowered Christians to be more successful is prevalent in the church. Enoch commented that ‘when Christians receive power, they become not only bold but also they become great. The Holy Spirit enables success in business and life.’ Barbara added that ‘since receiving the baptism of the Spirit, I have gained wisdom and direction in my studies. I have become sharper and am achieving higher grades in my studies’. Juliette spoke of how her health has improved and her finances flourished since being empowered by the Spirit.

Another elder used Daniel as an example in his preaching on a Friday all night prayers at Birmingham Central. The elder explained that because Daniel had an excellent spirit he excelled from an ordinary slave to a prominent person in exile while at Babylon. He encouraged the congregation to seek more of the Spirit’s power because ‘If the Holy Spirit did it for Daniel, he can do it for you’. This understanding that the Spirit’s power enables success and material blessings was key to the members’ desire to seek more from the Holy Spirit. There were testimonies that attested to people who relied on the Holy Spirit’s power to become wealthier in business and more successful in academic work. For them, empowerment of the Spirit was God’s blessings on their finances, employment, good health and success in life.

441 Deaconess Vida speaking during a service at Telford, 18th October 2013.
442 Interview with Enoch, BCoP, 26 July 2013.
443 Interview with Barbara, BCoP, 17 August 2013.
444 Interview with Juliette, BCoP, 6 September 2013
445 Sermon observation, Birmingham Central, Friday 26th April 2013.
4.7.5 Power to Effect Holiness

Another vital point observed was the emphasis on the Spirit’s power to effect holiness in the lives of believers. For most of the participants, baptism of the Spirit and the subsequent power he brings gives them power to overcome sin or the flesh as most of them described it. Age differences played a key role. The participants under forty seemed to emphasise power to overcome the flesh, a weakness, which they explained originates from Satan. Those over forty emphasised power to become like Christ. Whilst these two concepts (overcoming sin) and (becoming like Christ) may be argued as mutually coherent, the terminology was vital among the participants. Bearing in mind that they were interviewed at different times, their responses were very similar. These interviews bring to light Hollenweger’s observations that for the Pentecostals:

The Holy Spirit is not just a third person of the trinity (where it can then conveniently be tamed and marginalized through categories of theology, ecclesiology, and above all categories of so-called decency) but as a cosmological reality for life and liturgy, for politics and prayer, for healing and wholeness, for unity in diversity.446

In essence, there is a strong belief that the Holy Spirit’s power is vital for overcoming the forces and powers of darkness. As Kalu notes, ‘The Africans with their precarious vision of human world besieged by evil forces, sought more potent protectors’.447 It is within this context that members of BCoP regardless of their place of birth still maintain their Ghanaian cosmological realities. The songs, prayers and some of the oral liturgy done during the services are done with the specific aim of praising God whilst at the same time destroying Satan’s work.

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The Holy Spirit is called upon in power to destroy the enemy and to manifest blessings and favour to God’s people. The repetition of ‘Holy Ghost power’ during sermons and prayers are not just a vain oratory emphasis but rather they are specific and intentional messages to ‘activate’ the power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, there is a strong belief that the Holy Spirit’s power is needed for overcoming sin, where sin is clearly seen as the work of Satan. There is therefore a dual need for power. First to counter Satan’s work in external circumstances and second to overcome Satan’s work in the soul of the believer.

4.7.6 Belief in the Person of the Holy Spirit

At BCoP, I identified a belief that the Holy Spirit is a real person with personal characteristics such as emotions and will. In most Pentecostal circles, the Spirit is seen as a missionary force, the driving force and director of missions. Thus, the belief in the person of the Spirit is vital because since Spirit Baptism is heavily linked to power, the Holy Spirit is and can be perceived as merely a supernatural force. Though there appeared to be a general understanding of the Holy Spirit as a real person, a few of the people I interviewed found it difficult to explain their relationship with him in real terms. For example when I asked Solomon who the Holy Spirit is and what he does for us, he responded:

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. It is the Spirit of God. It gives us power and comes to strengthen us. We don’t see him but we know it is all around us.

Another member, Cynthia, a deaconess in her forties gave the following answer to the same question:

The Holy Spirit is God. Because we worship God in Spirit and truth therefore we worship the Holy Spirit too. We cannot see it. But that

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449 Onyinah, ‘Pentecostal Exorcism’, p.278.
doesn’t mean it is not there. I can feel it. It comes and takes control of me and those who are born again. It empowers us and makes us better Christians to live for God.\footnote{Interview with Cynthia, BCoP, 20 July, 2013.}

Similar answers were received from five other participants. Most of the participants struggled to use the personal pronoun ‘He’ for the Holy Spirit, although they were very comfortable to refer to God and Jesus as ‘He’. In all cases when I pointed out that some people see the Holy Spirit as wind or as simply a ‘forceful agent of power’ from God, they all unanimously rejected that view and said the Holy Spirit is not wind but God. Furthermore some responded that ‘…though the Holy Spirit is not wind, he does sometimes come as wind like on the day of Pentecost’. Solomon, Cynthia, Mary, Mavis, David and Baah who represent a varied age of people in the church all spoke along the same lines.

The only two participants who gave a completely contrasting answer were recent members from another African charismatic church. Dorcas responded to the question on who is the Holy Spirit as:

\begin{quote}
He is working for God. He is the power of God in and through us but we don’t worship him. The Holy Spirit is a powerful force from God. Holy Spirit brings us closer to Jesus.\footnote{Interview with Dorcas, BCoP, 18 July, 2013}
\end{quote}

Dorothy added:

\begin{quote}
I pray to God to send his Holy Spirit to lead me and guide me. It is a powerful gift from God. But I appreciate the Holy Spirit because it gives me all that I need from God.\footnote{Interview with Dorothy, BCoP, 19 July, 2013}
\end{quote}

These two were an exception and it clearly showed their pneumatology was different to that which was taught in BCoP. This led me to follow up
the foundations of their belief. Dorcas and Dorothy were previously members of a Charismatic Church, which began in 2007 in Telford under Grace International Ministries.\footnote{Grace International Ministries is led by a self-professed Prophet with affiliations to Grace International London.} Visits to both the Telford and Birmingham branches of Grace International Ministries enabled me to speak informally to both their pastor and some of the church members. The pastor who did not wish to disclose attested to the person and divinity of the Holy Spirit, however, none of the ten members I spoke to admitted to being taught to worship the Holy Spirit or categorically affirmed the person of the Holy Spirit.

Akolade, a Nigerian man from the Telford branch, said that ‘the Holy Spirit is a powerful force from God’. He added, ‘we worship God and the Holy Spirit is here to give us power’.\footnote{Interview with Akolade, Grace International Telford, 18 Sept 2013.} Charles, a Zimbabwean man in his thirties said, ‘why do you ask if the Holy Spirit is a person? It clearly says it is a spirit’ but a very powerful spirit.\footnote{Interview with Charles, Grace International Telford, 18 Sept 2013.} Gracey, a Ghanaian woman added, ‘It is the Holy spirit who gives us power to worship God and fight evil. The Spirit is a powerful force that comes to help us’.\footnote{Interview with Gracey, Grace International Telford, 18 Sept 2013.} These responses correspond with Chike’s observation that unlike the main Pentecostal churches most of the AICs are unclear in their belief in the divinity and person of the Holy Spirit.\footnote{Chike, ‘An African Pneumatology in British Context’, p.170.} As seen in the previous chapter, the spirit in the traditional Akan religion is seen as an agent of the Supreme Being who comes to give power. He is not seen as God but an agent of God.

The participants in the BCoP did not see the Spirit as merely a force or agent for empowerment. Nevertheless the distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit as a person and the explanation of his divinity were not clear. This can be explained within the limitations of language rather than a doctrinal belief. Thus the personality of the Holy Spirit is not rejected but its translation into everyday living is somewhat debatable. The relationship with the Holy Spirit is less stressed upon. This is because although the Spirit is
recognised as a person, he is spoken of as a force with powerful qualities. Hence his personality and personal attributes are less desired in contrast to his power. Some of the well-known songs sang during times of deliverance, intensive prayers and Holy Spirit baptisms emphasize the power, fire and presence of the Holy Spirit, a clear illustration of how the Holy Spirit is seen. Droogers rightly notes that ‘in the case of Pentecostalism...the believer does not only experience this divine power but affirms that he shares in it and applies it in relationship with other people’. 459

4.8 Conclusion

It has been seen that BCoP was established with firm apostolic teachings from the founding members. Though in a vibrant multicultural city, the church has attracted only Ghanaians, with the exception of two members. The culture of the church does not seem different to the culture of its indigenous Ghanaian heritage. Most of the services are conducted with the understanding of allowing the Holy Spirit to take complete control of the service.

The observations, questionnaires and interviews have shown that Spirit baptism and power play an important role in the church. Spirit manifestations such as speaking in tongues, healing and other such supernatural manifestations continue to be at the height of liturgy within the church. The emphasis on power for healing, protection and miracles remains key to the doctrine of Spirit baptism in the church praxis. Significantly, within the church praxis, power is not solely for witness. Though in theory there is a belief in the Lukan doctrine of power as essential for witnessing, in praxis, power is not just about witnessing. More to the point power is sought for personal deliverance, miracles and protection.

459 Droogers, ‘the normalisation of religious experience’, p. 46.
Chapter 5:

Reflections and Perspectives on Spirit Baptism and Power within BCoP

5.1 Introduction

Having looked in detail at the praxis of the Birmingham branch of the Church of Pentecost in the previous chapter, this chapter attempts to deduce significant observations from the church's concept of Spirit and power against the Lukan and the Ghanaian traditional backgrounds. Conversations and interviews with both the clergy, as well as the church leaders including elders, deacons and deaconesses together with members have helped in coming to the observations made in this chapter. The aim of this chapter is to answer the question, ‘Has culture had an impact on the BCoP’s understanding of Spirit and power. And to what extent has this understanding had on the church praxis and members?’

In order to do this effectively, this chapter reflects not only on the previous chapter but on the foundations laid throughout this thesis up to this point. The nature of African-led churches in the Diaspora will be discussed. The CoP’s history and foundations will be revisited to ascertain whether the foundations laid by its founders in regards to Holy Spirit baptism and Power is still believed and practised in the church today. The cultural orientation of its members especially against the Akan religious and traditional practices will also be significant in determining whether the church’s practices have been influenced by the socio-cultural and religious practices of the Akan traditional system. Finally this chapter attempts to appraise the CoP’s beliefs and concepts of Spirit and power against Lukan Pneumatology.
5.2 Spirit and Power: Socio-Cultural and Religious Perspectives

Chike rightly suggests that for many Africans there is little or no distinction between religion and the traditional cosmology. For most Ghanaians, religion and culture are interwoven together. Events such as weddings, funerals and naming ceremonies of babies are celebrated in the community as though they were religious events. Essentially, Akan communalism is not just about people or human culture. There is a strong emphasis on the relationship of the community with deities, ancestors and the spirit world. It is here that the concept of Spirit and power takes shape and becomes a pivotal issue in the Ghanaian socio-cultural and religious concept and understanding.

The missionary endeavours were helpful in bringing Christianity to Ghana. Though the missionaries succeeded in propagating the gospel, yet they failed to contextualise the message to the needs of the people. Healings, prophecies, exorcisms and such tangible manifestations were missing. This is not to say that the western missionaries provided no healing or spiritual aid to the people. Rather it appears that though their message was understood, there were still gaps left to be filled in the hearts of the people. Anderson points out that, the western missionaries’ misunderstanding of African cosmology led to a vacuum in African Christian theology. Hence the emergence of the Spiritual churches, which were not ‘...concerned with clarifying doctrines, but with helping the African faithful to live Christianity, and making the gospel message and Christian doctrines meaningful to their life institutions’.

Some of the missionaries had completely overlooked the importance of the Ghanaian cosmology and Akan traditional religious practices to the people whilst others had wilfully rejected the Ghanaian cosmology and branded

the traditional religion as evil and demonic.\textsuperscript{462} It is against this background that the Spiritual churches surfaced, followed by the Pentecostal churches from which the AG, CoP and other Pentecostal churches emerged. Appiah Kubi argues that spiritual hunger was the main cause for the rise of the spiritual churches. The people were still hungry for the manifestation of the Spirit and spiritual things in Christianity.\textsuperscript{463}

It is here that the CoP along with other Pentecostal churches provided the solution. Gifford aptly asserts that ‘Pentecostal Christianity is answering needs left entirely unaddressed by mainline Christianity’.\textsuperscript{464} By encouraging and embracing what was conventionally known as communal and cultural activities such as funeral services, naming ceremonies and weddings whilst providing the space for Holy Spirit manifestations such as speaking in tongues, prophecies, healing, the CoP became a safe alternative to those hungry for the manifestation of Spirit activities.

It is imperative to note at this point that power to witness was not in the Akan traditional religion. Proclamation was essentially for prophetic and unintelligible words. Significantly, members of the CoP as well as other Ghanaian Pentecostals began to express themselves through ecstatic traditional music, dance and other oral traditions within the church services without compromising the gospel.\textsuperscript{465} People began to seek baptism for power. However power was not sought necessarily only for witnessing but also for protection. Furthermore when these Ghanaians migrated from their homeland, they expected and hungered for the same manifestations, of power that they had been used to back home.

\textsuperscript{462} Anderson, \textit{Moya}, p.25
\textsuperscript{464} Gifford, \textit{African Christianity}, p.329.
5.3 Understanding the African Churches in the Diaspora

The phrase ‘African Diaspora’ was introduced by African American scholars such as Gayraud S. Wilmore and Albert Raboteau to describe the global scattering of Africans outside Africa as result of the Atlantic slave trade.\(^{466}\) The term has since been challenged on linguistic and historical grounds. Gerloff's initial description of Diaspora as ‘Redefining black international identity’ is debatable; however her subsequent explanation of Diaspora in socio-political terms is more appealing. According to Gerloff, Diaspora is the coming together of a group of people in a foreign land. ‘It puts people on a common ground and supports them to reclaim their rightful place and spiritual-cultural identity’.\(^{467}\) Haller speaks in a similar context when he refers to Diaspora as nodes that tie people together, religiously, politically or culturally.\(^{468}\)

Hunt opines that the presence of African Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches (APC) in the Diaspora can be explained within the context of coping strategies.\(^{469}\) By coping strategies Hunt suggests that most APC churches are established primarily as a way of bringing foreigners together to help them cope with the issues affecting them in a foreign land. In other words religion or the church becomes a means of cultural identity in a foreign land. Within a similar context, Rijk van Dijk also argues that the establishment of the APCs can be seen as a response to the quest for social respectability.\(^{470}\) The need for this response arises from the social exclusion and segregation prompted by racism at the social and institutional levels.\(^{471}\)

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For Rijk van Dijk, whilst immigrants are regarded as highly successful in their native countries, they are still seen collectively as backward.\textsuperscript{472} This was demonstrated in Boris Nieswand’s studies in some APC churches in Germany where highly skilled migrants had to settle for menial jobs in the cleaning industries.\textsuperscript{473} Van der Laan describes these as the three D-Jobs in the Netherlands: Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous.\textsuperscript{474} Thus by coming together as a church, the migrant community stood as one and helped to better their social status and lives. Gerloff\textsuperscript{475} and recently Kalu object to this notion with the latter suggesting that with the new generation of educated African migrant church leaders especially since 1980, the migrant communities do not necessarily need to establish churches in order to gain respect in the Diaspora.\textsuperscript{476} Gerloff adds that in Britain, cultural factors rather than quest for respect is the primary reason for the emergence and growth of APC churches.\textsuperscript{477} This appears to be the case of the establishment of CoP UK and its branches including Birmingham.

5.3.1 The Cultural Factor

In an interview with both the current chairman of CoP, Apostle Opoku Onyinah who is also a founding member of CoP UK and BCoP and Pastor John Glass, General Superintendent of Elim Churches UK, they both confirmed that it was purely cultural reasons that led to the establishing of the CoP in the UK.\textsuperscript{478} Culture is used to describe the popular expressive behaviour of the Ghanaian Christians and Pentecostals in the churches.\textsuperscript{479} Onyinah recalls that in Birmingham an association known as Ghanaian Association of University of Birmingham Students was established in 1999 to deal with issues relating to student living, social pressures including

\textsuperscript{472} Dijk, ‘Negotiating Marriage’, p. 464.
\textsuperscript{473} Boris Nieswand, ‘Charismatic Christianity’, p.250-256.
\textsuperscript{474} Van der Laan, ‘Pentecostal Migrant Churches in the Netherlands’, p.75.
\textsuperscript{476} Ogbu Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p.283.
\textsuperscript{477} Gerloff, ‘An African Continuum in Variation,’p.93.
\textsuperscript{478} Interview with Onyinah, 7 July 2013; Interview with John Glass, 30 August, 2013.
\textsuperscript{479} Cf. Aldred, Respect, p.14.
segregation and racism among the student community of Ghanaians in Birmingham.\(^{480}\)

However, the church was established as a missionary movement, a continuation and a branch of the mother church in Ghana to serve Ghanaians in Birmingham. Opinyah adds that

An important aspect of the promotion of Ghanaian worship is that through it the CoP uses the members overseas as its facilitators for evangelisation of those parts of the world and the expansion of the CoP there.\(^{481}\)

Against this background, Adogame posits that

The establishment of APC churches in Europe which is often explained as the migrants’ means of coping in the host countries can also rightly be described as active strategies by African church leaders for their global expansion.\(^{482}\)

Most of these APC churches are branches of mega-churches in Africa. Their extension in Britain is a continuation of church practice in their native countries. This is seen in mega APC churches such as The Redeemed Christian Church of God from Nigeria, the Embassy of God in Ukraine, Action Chapel from Ghana, Christ Embassy from Nigeria, Light House from Ghana and The Church of Pentecost from Ghana, among others. Thus on the main, the CoP along with other APCs have established branches in the UK, Europe and other parts of the world not only for their global expansion but also to provide a type of worship which their members are used to and can identify with.


In theory, this type of worship has a missionary concept in that it appeals to Ghanaians and Africans in the Diaspora; however, in practise it is a type of worship that essentially connects migrants to their cultural beliefs and practices. Theologically, the significance of CoP and the other APC churches in UK and other parts of the world is of tremendous importance for their cultural identity and spiritual growth. Members are able to pray for the power of God to intervene in matters relating to issues such as immigration, racism and employment which their Western counterparts do not necessarily pray into.

5.3.2 The Spiritual Factor

Another key factor in the establishment of APC churches in the Diaspora is the spiritual element or what Pomerville calls the deprivation of the supernatural. For most Ghanaians culture and religion are mutually exclusive and have inherently good values. Asamoah-Gyadu describes this concept of culture and religion as ‘Ghana’s political-religious history’. In Ghana like in many other African countries, it is difficult to separate religion from culture.

Traditionally, the spirit world permeates every area of their lives and as Anderson notes, ‘There is no distinction between sacred and secular, physical and spiritual, everything is at the same time ‘sacred’ and ‘spiritual’’. Dickson explains that the Akan religion is concerned to meet the demands of life. This includes areas of health, economy, social, and political settings. This may explain why most communal activities such as birth, death, marriage, harvest and even national sports events have religious dimensions to them. Against this background, Ghanaians in the

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483 Pomerville, *The Third Force*, p.44
487 Pobee, *Toward an African Theology*, p.44.
Diaspora, maintain a firm religious and spiritual view on life. Consequently, any church that is to have an impact on them must appeal to their Ghanaian cosmology. The churches have not replaced the associations established by the communities but rather they have been established to serve the spiritual needs of the people.

Elorm-Donkor rightly posits that for many Africans, Pentecostal/Charismatic worship is not about identity or coping. Worship must be culturally relevant and meet the spiritual panacea of the people. During the interviews with members of BCoP a majority of the people interviewed commented that they joined BCoP for both cultural and spiritual reasons. On matters concerning spirituality members were keen to stress BCoP's emphasis on Holy Spirit baptism and power as essential for effective living as crucial to them joining the church.

Thus although other British Pentecostal churches such as Elim and Assemblies of God share similar if not the same doctrines as the CoP, most Ghanaians who have joined BCoP, have done so on cultural grounds. Furthermore on the grounds that BCoP provides a spiritual, experiential concept of power that meets their existential challenges in the Diaspora. This observation substantiates Gerloff’s conclusion that Black and white Pentecostals use the same biblical symbolism language and employ similar ecstatic or enthusiastic expressions, yet they represent quite different realities under such stories, paradigms and manifestations.

By paradigms and manifestations, most of the members of BCoP expect to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in and through their socio-religious and socio-economic lives just as it was from their mother home in Ghana. That is, they want to experience the Holy Spirit in their loud music, ecstatic praise and singing, in their long prayers and in their busy and often

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490 Gerloff, ‘Pentecostals in African Diaspora’, p.73.
challenging work and social lives in a foreign land. The understanding is that the Holy Spirit is God’s powerful Spirit who lives in them and comes to their aid in power in times of trouble.\textsuperscript{491} The concept of Spirit and power therefore is a crucial area of concern for the Ghanaian and Africans as a whole. MacRobert is therefore right when he argues that,

Early Pentecostalism in America owes their tradition to the West African concept of community, spiritual power, spirit possession and the integration of the natural and supernatural.\textsuperscript{492}

Many of the members in BCoP retain their African world view regardless of how long they have lived outside Ghana. Against this background, the church is expected to provide for the Ghanaians/Africans in the Diaspora, what the mother church provides for them back home. Their dependence on the Holy Spirit for everyday needs and significantly relying on the Holy Spirit for protection against the enemy and evil spirits is crucial. Subsequently power from the Spirit is not solely for witnessing. It is for living effective and successful lives.

5.3.3 Spirit and Power: Socio-Cultural Empowerment

Gerloff notes that one of the significant factors of the African Christian Diaspora in Europe is that it continues to provide the spiritual needs of migrant Africans which are central to their survival.\textsuperscript{493} Joe Aldred argues cogently that many ‘black churches’ are set up with the aim of providing for their own and not necessarily bridging cultural gaps.\textsuperscript{494} Aldred suggests that many African and African Caribbean churches are now set up to cater for their migrant congregations in ways that the host churches cannot

\textsuperscript{492} Ian MacRobert, \textit{The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA} (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1988), p.36.
\textsuperscript{494} Rev Joe Aldred of the Church of God of Prophecy is a former Director of the Centre for Black and White Christian Partnerships at Selly Oak Colleges.
Accordingly, Onyinah asserts that ‘meeting the spiritual needs of migrant Ghanaians was the main cause of starting CoP in Birmingham’. Furthermore, Appiah-Kubi has argued convincingly that ‘spiritual hunger is the main cause of the emergence of the Indigenous African Christian Churches’.

In the course of my observations and interviews, it became apparent that the participants’ cosmological understanding shaped their prayers and worship. BCOP uses its synthesis of the gospel and the understanding of the Holy Spirit to provide for its members vibrant worship. The specific Holy Spirit conferences and all night prayers are all designed to meet the spiritual needs of the people. The members’ incessant fear of the malevolent spirit world coupled with the unpredictability of the ancestors to influence their physical world albeit in a foreign land means that for the leaders and members, power must be sought and appropriated not only for witnessing but for protection and well being.

This idea that misfortune is to be attributed to the spirit world is not prevalent in contemporary western culture. Again, as Stabell rightly opines, westerners are unlikely to face the same social, political and economic pressures that the Ghanaian immigrants face. Therefore western Pentecostal churches rarely focus their prayer and attention on breaking the devil's stronghold in areas such as immigration, employment and safety of extended family members back home. Ghanaians have a concept whereby a spirit-filled person is not only expected to prophesy but essentially to heal the sick, cast out demons and provided recourse to prosperity and good life. Anderson aptly concludes:

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496 Interview with Opoku Onyinah, 7 July 2013.
This holistic function, which does not separate the physical from the spiritual or the natural from the supernatural, is restored in Pentecostalism and the indigenous people see it as a powerful religion to meet human needs.\textsuperscript{499}

Thus BCoP offer a style of worship that satisfies the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of its members.\textsuperscript{500} The church encourages and celebrates and prays arduously in areas concerning marriage, barrenness, unemployment, and immigration. Consequently, the worship and church praxis provide a socio-cultural empowerment to its members who although reside in UK, yet hold strictly to their Ghanaian cultural beliefs and practices. In the BCoP, the need for healing and deliverance, prophecy and power for life are fulfilled through the ministry and power of the Holy Spirit.

5.4 Spirit and Power: the Akan Religious Influence on CoP
There is a sense in which elements of the Akan traditional religion encompasses events on the day of Pentecost and beyond. In the Akan traditional religion there is a day of consultation (\textit{abisa}). It is a day when many people travel to the shrine of the \textit{obosom} to hear from them of impending danger and or request for blessings, protection and favour. There is a need to wait for the spirit. On the day of consultation, traditional priest (\textit{okomfo}) acts as the mouthpiece of the gods. The \textit{okomfo}, literally translated one who prophecies, invites the spirit to take possession of his mind, body and soul. Onyinah notes that this invitation takes the form of dancing to certain forms of music, drum rhythms and clapping.\textsuperscript{501}

It is during this time that the spirit of the \textit{obosom} possesses the \textit{okomfo’s} personality and mind. The \textit{okomfo} receives power and begins to perform supernatural activities. Such activities include prophecy or foretelling of impending disasters, healing and the giving of charms to people for their

\textsuperscript{501} Onyinah, ‘Pentecostal Exorcisms’, p.42.
protection. Subsequently, the *okomfo* receives messages from the deities to relay to the people or persons in question. Significantly, the *okomfo* utters unintelligible words which need translation by an interpreter. If Cox’s argument that Pentecostalism is the recovery of ‘primal spirituality’ is to find any support, then this explanation of the Akan *abisa* religion might provide a solution.⁵⁰²

Though church services in the BCoP are not set out exclusively as consultation with the Holy Spirit, the opening prayers of all CoP services have elements of inviting and calling the Holy Spirit to take control. The opening prayers are structured not only to thank God for bringing the people to church but to invite the Holy Spirit and most imperatively, to prepare the people’s minds and heart to receive from God.⁵⁰³ Though not used within the context of *abisa*, the phrase ‘activate the Holy Spirit’ was used frequently as though the Holy Spirit needed awakening to perform his duties in the service. The belief here is that though the Holy Spirit is already present, there needs to be an awakening within the people to receive him and allow him to do his work in them and in the service. In this context, the members do not necessarily come to church for a consultation with the Holy Spirit but to have an encounter with him.⁵⁰⁴

The praise time in the services which always preceded time of worship is said to be a thanksgiving and expression of gratitude towards God for his abundant grace. As in the case of some of the services observed in BCoP, there was music, drumming and dancing in the worship services before the manifestation of the Spirit. In some cases the pastor needed to step in to encourage the members to continue to pray louder and earnestly seek the Holy Spirit. De Alminana sees a link here when she asserts that

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⁵⁰² Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp.81, 83, 228; Onyinah, ‘Pentecostalism Exorcism’, pp 220-221
⁵⁰³ Interview with Pastor Edmund, 13 July 2013.
Since the days of Azusa street revival, classical Pentecostal prayer has been a loud and boisterous affair, noted by dramatic eruptions of *glossolalia*, shouting, running and other outward displays. These phenomena were significantly noted in the Akan traditional religion before the introduction of Pentecostalism in Ghana.

Then there is the speaking in tongues and interpretation similar to the *okomfo’s* incompressible words when possessed. The significance of this utterance is seen in the Pentecostals experience of *glossolalia* whereby both the speaker and hearers are oblivious to its meaning. Unless there is interpretation, the Pentecostals experience of *glossolalia* is akin to the *okomfo’s* unintelligible words. The similitude between the events of the *okomfo’s* spirit possession during *abisa* and the Pentecostals encounter with the Spirit during church services becomes apparent. However, this is not to say that there is transfer or continuation of traditional religious practices in the church. On the day of *abisa*, the jumping, shaking and loud noises points to the fact that the spirit of the *obosom* has come to possess the *okomfo*. However, in the process of Spirit baptism, Christians are not required to jump, shake and make loud noises in order to be possessed by the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, whereas the *obosom* possess the *okomfo* for brief intervals; the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in the Christian.

It must be acknowledged that for the traditional priests, the act of being possessed is paramount to their effectiveness to communicate the mind and will of the spirit world. Furthermore, the possession leads to acts of prophecy, proclamation, healing and favour. These manifestations are not only seen in CoP, they have long being linked to the origins of early American Pentecostalism as well as events that took place in Azusa Street. A crucial point needs mentioning at this point. Power to witness

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was not part of the remit or manifestations of the okomfo. However in the church, Spirit baptism is preached with the emphasis on power to witness.

### 5.5 Spirit and Power: Reflections in the BCoP Services

A significant question here is, to what extent are the churches’ practices cultural? In answering this question, one must look to the Ghanaian perceptions of evil and its influences on the Christian life. The study of BCoP has shown that the members continue to attribute misfortune and lack of prosperity to evil spirits. Donkor aptly notes that ‘among Ghanaians there is a popular perception that religion possesses the necessary succour for dealing with the evils in life’. For the Ghanaian these evils are not limited to a specific location but to anywhere they are. Such evils include terrorism, violence, murder, poverty, sickness and witchcraft.

The continuous presence of these evils means that there is a constant need to seek higher power to protect, fight against and overcome evil.

Social and economic problems such as racism, lack of employment and financial difficulties are all attributed to the work of evil spirits. Though the leaders of the church endeavour to train and teach the members to deal with some of these issues through the appropriate channels, many of the members still feel the need to fight these problems spiritually. Asamoah-Gyadu has demonstrated this case in his work on the decline of Ghana Airways and the management’s decision to call in a charismatic evangelist to pray over the situation. Asamoah-Gyadu showed that on this case bad management and not satanic force was to be blamed for the ailing Airways. Nevertheless the Ghanaian cosmology always has room for the spirit world and its effects on human lives. As Anderson notes, ‘In Africa, the spirit world always has a bearing on the physical’. This means that in the case of the Ghana Airways although bad management

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was the primary cause of its failure, they still see a spiritual demon behind the management’s poor performance.

Again the study of the BCoP has shown that most people, both clergy and laity have a way of linking sickness to the spirit world. Among the members in BCoP, illness is not seen as simply a biophysical issue but rather a concept which needs divine intervention. This was the case on one occasion when a lady was giving her testimony in the service. Although she sought medical help, she was sternly challenged to seek divine intervention on subsequent incidents.

During testimony time nearly all those who give testimony of healing say that Satan wanted to harm them but God delivered them. These testimonies do not only refer to illness as Satan’s ploy but bad misfortune is also mostly associated with evil influence. On another occasion a young couple blamed Satan and evil powers for their inability to have children. ‘Satan wanted to disgrace us but thank God he has made us laugh again’. These were the words of a joyful couple who came to give God thanks for their first child after five years of marriage.

It is also worth noting that there is a strong belief that when a person is baptised in the Spirit, sin cannot dwell or must not be encouraged to dwell in such a Christian. In Akan religion, evil is mbusu not attributed to one being, Satan. Rather evil occurs when there is an act of rebellion against the land, the gods, ancestors or God. In essence, evil occurs when there is sin. As described by Bediako, Mbusu prevents people from living fruitful and productive lives. Subsequently, for the members of the BCoP,

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513 Fink, *Religion and Diseases*, p.183.
515 Personal observation, CoP, Telford, 26th April, 2013.
516 Testimony given at London Prayer Clinic, Tottenham District, 17th October, 2012.
many were happy to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and subsequently filled
because it enabled them overcome sin which consequently caused
fruitless, unproductive and unsuccessful lives. Significantly, though the
traditional priests could intercede on behalf of sinners or warn of
impending danger, they were powerless to help people overcome sin. In
the interviews, many of the BCoP members spoke of the Power of the Holy
Spirit in their lives to overcome sin.

Closely connected to sin and evil in the perceptions of the members is the
influence of witchcraft in their affairs. The Akan believes that witchcraft
cannot destroy or kill a Christian who has a spirit stronger than the
witchcraft spirit.\(^519\) Therefore seeking power through the Holy Spirit
ensures that the Christian has a stronger power in their life hence
witchcraft and evil spirit cannot dwell in them. In the BCoP services there
were teachings on the Holy Spirit which emphasised his empowering work
in witnessing. Nevertheless, in practise many of the members rather spoke
of and admitted the Spirit’s power in the fight against evil and for blessings.
To this effect, the cultural background of the members has had a profound
effect on how they appropriate the concept of Holy Spirit and power in their
lives. This is mainly due to the fact that culturally, power is not associated
with witness but rather with supernatural manifestations.

5.5.1 Spirit and Power in BCoP: Contextualising the Holy Spirit
In direct response to the question, ‘to what extent are the churches’
practices cultural?’, Anderson provides a suitable answer. Anderson
explains that, contrary to the rejection of Christianity and the gospel by the
indigenous Africans, recent history suggests that much of the third world
has now embraced the gospel message and adopted it to their cultures.
Christianity is therefore not seen as a white person’s religion irrelevant to
the African culture but rather ‘The gospel has much to say about issues
that were not addressed in western missionary founded churches.’\(^520\) In
this context Ghanaian Pentecostals do not necessarily agree with the

\(^{519}\) Fink, *Religion and Diseases*, p.183; Onyinah, ‘Pentecostal Exorcism’, 279.
\(^{520}\) Anderson, ‘Global Pentecostalism in the New Millennium’, p.216.
western missionaries as Ferdinando has shown. Rather Ghanaian Pentecostals emphasise the power of the Holy Spirit through acceptance of Christ as a more potent power to deal with the malevolent spirits and evil forces. Significantly, the leaders of the CoP and BCoP have successfully integrated issues of cultural relevance into the church to meet the needs of the members.

From this perspective, the church sees worship as a Holy Spirit empowered activity which enriches their spiritual lives and empowers them for the practical realities of life. The CoP and BCoP do not see these practices as a negative influence of the Akan traditional religion. All these acts are seen as elements of worship which prepares the believers for missionary witness. For the members of the BCoP this form of worship is reminiscent to what they are used to back in the native Ghana.

The half night services, intensive prayers after sermons and special meetings are arranged with the specific aim of responding not only to the spiritual needs of the members but their socio-economic needs. Kalu rightly opines that ‘Pentecostals creatively wove the Christ figure into an African universe as the person who could rescue, the agyenkwa, as the Akans would say’. Agyenkwa comes from two words, ‘nkwa’ meaning life and ‘gye’, which means to give or deliver. Thus, in the Akan society, the Agyenkwa refers to the giver of life. However what African Pentecostals including CoP have done so well is to present Jesus as more than a life giving person and the Holy Spirit as more than a force. As Mercy Oduyoye expounds:

The Agyenkwa, the one who rescues, who holds your life in safety, takes you out of a life-denying situation and places you in a life-affirming one. The Rescuer plucks you from a dehumanizing ambiance and places you in

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523 Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, p.75.
a position where you can grow toward authentic humanity. The *Agyenkwa* gives you back your life in all its wholeness and fullness.\(^{525}\)

Jesus is presented as the one who does not only save the soul but ultimately is concerned about giving life in abundance through the power of the Holy Spirit. The leaders frequently use scripture references that talk of God’s power to deliver, protect and break Satan’s schemes and stronghold. It is here that the power of the Holy Spirit comes into direct focus. The Holy Spirit is seen as the one who controls events in the Christian life better than the *abosom* control events in the ‘unbelievers’ world. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is called upon in power to perform his unseen work which will subsequently be made manifest in the physical.

Again, healing prayers for women seeking children and singles seeking marriage are all practical issues that are prayed for and sought by the power of the Holy Spirit. Leaders as well as members believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to confront what is traditionally known as evil virtues and forces which prevent these things from happening.\(^{526}\) The preachers advocate a life that is full of God’s power and receptive to the Holy Spirit and the charismatic gifts that he brings. Onyinah aptly summarises it as

> Pentecostal spirituality on the one hand empowers those in the Western world to overcome the pressures of an extremely materialistic culture; whilst on the other hand provides the Africans and others with the necessary spiritual armoury to overcome the fear in their existential spirit world.\(^{527}\)

Thus to a large extent, the power of the Holy Spirit is sought not primarily for witnessing but for power over fear, evil, sin and any other malevolent power which influences negatively on the believers’ lives.


\(^{526}\) Anderson, *‘Global Pentecostalism in the New Millennium’*, p.216.

\(^{527}\) Opoku Onyinah, *Life Together in Jesus: Empowered by the Holy Spirit*, p.11
5.5.2 Spirit and Power: Experiencing the Pentecostal Power

For BCoP members, the power of the Spirit must be visible and perceptible.\(^{528}\) Warrington puts it as ‘for Pentecostals to know God is to experience him not just intellectualize him’.\(^{529}\) Essentially, there is a sense that the Holy Spirit’s power must be experienced in every gathering. Studies in BCoP have shown that members expect to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit beginning with Baptism of the Spirit with glossolalia as the initial visible evidence.\(^{530}\) This is seen in the meetings as the Holy Spirit triggers actions that brings out the members’ natural affection and zeal in praying, praising, dancing and worshipping. The pastors and leaders encourage the members to prepare to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit. Where the services appear to be dull the leader or pastor encourages the church to pray earnestly to see the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. There is a sense of the immediate working of the power of the Holy Spirit and the leaders look for ways to express this power.\(^{531}\)

Furthermore, the power of the Spirit is seen in the release and exercising of charismata or gifts of the Spirit in the church praxis. Notable among these are tongues and interpretation, prophecy, works of miracles and healing. Larbi states that the key to the tapping of these unlimited abilities is the glossolalic experience, hence the stress on the need for every member to experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.\(^{532}\) The members are constantly waiting and expecting something to happen. Even when there are no prophecies in the service or direct healing or the miraculous, members of the church still go home with a sense and feeling of

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\(^{530}\) In a classic Pentecostal subsequence or initial doctrine theory, The preachers and leaders refer to scriptures such as Acts 2:4; 8:4-19; 10:44; 19:1-7


satisfaction, that the power of the Spirit has changed their destiny albeit spiritually.\textsuperscript{533}

5.6 Spirit Baptism as Power to Witness: The BCoP Concept

For members of CoP, Spirit baptism and power is the \textit{sine-qua non} of Pentecostalism.\textsuperscript{534} Speaking at a seminar on the CoP, Apostle Gyesi Addo, the International Mission Director of CoP, stated that 'the DNA of CoP is the Holy Spirit baptism and power'.\textsuperscript{535} The importance of this baptism is echoed in the church from the pulpit to the pews. For CoP, Spirit baptism is a doctrine of subsequence. It occurs after salvation and empowers the believer ‘…to live a sanctified life and also be of service to Christ’.\textsuperscript{536} There is greater emphasis laid on the power element of this Spirit baptism. On the one hand the church has a strong emphasis on Spirit baptism as power to witness whilst on the other hand the power is reflected not only in witnessing but in all areas of life.

The historical, cultural and social orientation of the church suggests that Spirit baptism and mission lie at the heart of its teachings and activities. In the BCoP, Pastor Edmund spoke incisively of the urgency and need of members to grasp the message and importance of power to witness as crucial to receiving power that comes from Spirit baptism.\textsuperscript{537} This area of receiving the Holy Spirit baptism for missionary purpose was emphasized strongly by Pastor Edmund. Incidentally, the concept of power to witness is not exclusive to the preaching and teaching of Pastor Edmund. From the days of Peter Anim to present day BCoP, regardless of the location, it appears that members of CoP have a missionary concept of Spirit baptism within their DNA.\textsuperscript{538}

\textsuperscript{534} This phrase is borrowed from Atkinson, \textit{Baptism in the Spirit}, p.3.
\textsuperscript{535} Apostle Gyasi Addo, \textit{The Growth of Church of Pentecost}, Key note speech at Elim Bible Week, 4th April, 2013.
\textsuperscript{536} Tenents of the church; Onyinah, \textit{Life Together in Jesus}, p.12
\textsuperscript{537} Interview with Pastor Edmund Appiah, 23 July 2013
\textsuperscript{538} Interview with Rev. Emmanuel Gyasi Addo, International Missions Director, CoP, 4 April, 2013.
The emphasis placed on Spirit baptism as essential for missions is not a recent practice. It has been spiritedly preached by both Anim and McKeown, founding fathers of the CoP. These two founding fathers arguably championed the doctrine of Spirit baptism as power to witness in early Ghanaian Pentecostalism. They orchestrated the practice of mission as a consequence of Spirit baptism in the CoP and from its inception, the Apostolic Church which later became the Church of Pentecost was known for its missionary zeal through the power of the Holy Spirit. This doctrine and practise has travelled through time and age to the CoP in 21st century Birmingham.

In an interview with Elder Dan of the BCoP he asserted that evangelism was not effective unless it had the power of the Holy Spirit. Elder Dan referred to such evangelism as ‘power evangelism’. It became obvious that the phrase ‘power evangelism’ had been chosen due to the nature of the evangelistic activities undertaken by Elder Dan and his evangelistic team. According to the elder, ‘Holy Spirit baptism equals power and power equals proclamation, hence evangelism’. The power approach to evangelism takes into consideration word and deed. The word of God is preached in power and the Spirit of God is expected to manifest himself in works of miracles. Referring to 1Corinthians 2:4-5,

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.

Elder Dan commented that Jesus and the early church, embarked on a ministry of proclamation and demonstration. Hence power evangelism

539 Anderson, Pentecostalism, p.508.
540 Elder Daniel Addo is the leader of the Evangelism movement of the Birmingham District at the time of writing, 5 September, 2013
541 Wimber deals with the concept of Power Evangelism with signs and wonders in his work. John Wimber and Kevin Springer, Power Evangelism (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2001)
542 Interview with Elder Daniel, 5 September 2013.
is a combination of the Spirit’s power in word and deed. Menzies asserts that ‘whenever Luke employs the collocation of pneuma (Spirit) and dynamis (power), he has a combination of prophetic phenomena and miraculous activity in view.’\(^{543}\) Subsequently, in their missionary and witnessing work, Elder Dan and his team in BCoP embark on a mission of preaching Christ as the giver of abundant life. Furthermore, they present Christ as the one who sets people free not only from sin, but from sickness, fear and evil through the power of the spirit. In other words they preach ‘the Kingdom of God comes in power’.\(^{544}\)

This concept of power evangelism has been shaped by Luke-Acts and to a large degree by the influence of the African/Ghanaian cosmology that the presence of evil destroys abundant life. Bediako has shown that whilst churches in the Western world grappled with the concept of the spirit world and materialism, African Christianity as well as African Christians in the Diaspora continue to grapple with the concept of evil spirits and the Holy Spirit.\(^{545}\) Asamoah-Gyadu asserts that in their ‘power evangelism’, African Pentecostals/Charismatics present Jesus as not just saviour but healer and deliverer.\(^{546}\) The fact that Jesus gives abundant and everlasting life is good news to the hearers. However, more significantly for their immediate concern, the fact that the Holy Spirit gives them security and protection in this life from evil spirits and enables them to prosper is very attractive. This has made evangelism in CoP and BCoP appeal to Ghanaians and Africans whether in Ghana or in UK.

Sam, a member of the witnessing team, described their zeal in evangelism after they were baptised in the Holy Spirit.\(^{547}\) In his own words Sam notes, ‘The joy, fascination and the driving force of the Holy Ghost I felt in my

\(^{543}\) Menzies, *Spirit and Power*, p.147.
\(^{545}\) Bediako, ‘Worship as Vital Participation’, p. 3.
\(^{546}\) Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Signs, Wonders and Ministry’, p.36.
\(^{547}\) Sam is a Pseudonym used here to describe the testimony of a young male in his twenties in the Evangelism team.
heart prompted me and the others to become witnesses for God’. He continued, ‘The Holy Ghost is our Managing Director and we love to go and talk to people about Christ’. One of the songs the evangelism ministry in the church sing when called upon is:

Sons of God, March Forward!
In the power of the Latter Rain
Sons of God, March Forward!
For Jesus is ever the same
Sons of God, March Forward!
For we are more than conquerors in His Name
Sons of God, March Forward!
In the power of the Latter Rain

In this song, the latter rain representing the pouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh in the last days. Sam lamented the fact that due to weather constraints and strenuous regulations, they were unable to embark on rallies and open air crusades in Birmingham as much as they would like to. Yet, for Sam and the team, it is clear that the Holy Spirit had given them power to be witnesses. They see BHS as power for evangelism. As noted by Apostle Gyesi Addo, ‘Evangelism is a responsibility of every church member in CoP’.

Walker, a scholar and pastor in CoP, has succinctly described this mission model set and practiced in the CoP in six stages:

Stage 1

The Message of Jesus is preached and converts are saved and added to the church.

Stage 2

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548 Interview with Sam, 21 July, 2013.
550 Rev Emmanuel Gyesi Addo was speaking in a seminar at Elim Bible Week, 4 April 2013.
Members seek the power of the Holy Spirit and are baptized with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Stage 3

Empowered members spread the gospel message amongst family, friends and neighbours.

Stage 4

Those who accept the message start small fellowships in homes and any available space.

Stage 5

A church leader is contacted and informed about the new group.

Stage 6

Church leaders arrange to send a local leader to help establish the church.\textsuperscript{551}

Warrington is right in concluding that the diversity of Pentecostalism today means that the uniqueness of Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues is less of a defining characteristic of a Pentecostal.\textsuperscript{552} Nevertheless, in the CoP, Spirit baptism with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues continues to play a pivotal role in the church praxis and beliefs. Leaders of the church continue to preach Spirit baptism as the most important ordinance after salvation. Apostle Appiah opines ‘The strength of any Christian is in the power they receive from the Holy Spirit after Spirit baptism’.\textsuperscript{553} Apostle Bonsu puts it this way ‘The Holy Spirit baptism is the fire within our hearts as the engine is the fire within the car’.\textsuperscript{554} Several other speakers both clergy and laity affirmed Spirit baptism as the one ordinance or occasion that empowers the Christian to be effective in life and in ministry. And significantly, no member will be ordained as a leader.

\textsuperscript{551} Walker, ‘The Pentecost Fire is burning’, p.147.
\textsuperscript{552} Warrington, ‘Challenges facing Pentecostals today’, p.201.
\textsuperscript{553} Telephone Interview with Apostle Appiah, 5 June 2013.
\textsuperscript{554} Sermon Observation, BCoP, 15 Sept. 2013
that is deacon, elder or pastor unless they have been baptised in the Spirit.  

The importance of Spirit baptism and power is seen in the church's calendar where they specifically allocate a weeklong conference annually to pray for those seeking Spirit baptism as well as pray for the continued filling of those who already have the Pentecostal gift. The importance of the power that comes from Spirit baptism is stressed not only in the Holy Spirit conference meetings but in nearly all the services. In this context, the CoP assumes Jesus' and the disciples' roles of preaching and proclamation. As noted by Stronstad, 'The Pentecost narrative is transfer of the Spirit from Jesus to his disciples'. It marks a continuation of Jesus' ministry on earth by his Spirit through the disciples. It is this witnessing act that has seen the church spread through various countries and continents around the world.

Four key points are worth noting here. Firstly, the CoP and BCoP for that matter practise and preach a doctrine of subsequence in regards to Spirit baptism. This is similar to the views of Pentecostal scholars such as Stronstad who cogently argues that 'Spirit baptism in the Pentecostal or Lukan sense is logically distinct from conversion'. The case here is that for BCoP members, until one is baptised with the Spirit, one is not clothed with power for power evangelism. Secondly, every member who is baptised in the Spirit is seen as an evangelist. They have been clothed with power to evangelise. As argued credibly by Menzies, 'Luke declares that we should expect to be a community of witnesses empowered by the Spirit of Pentecost. This expectation is missiological rather than soteriological in nature for it is defined by the character of the Pentecostal gift'.

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555 Interview with Onyinah, 7 July 2013.
556 Stronstad, Charismatic Theology, p.49.
559 Menzies, Spirit and Power, p.100.
Thirdly, the study of BCoP has shown not only do the church members believe in the empowering work of the Holy Spirit for witness but they also believe in the Holy Spirit as the director of their missionary activities in word and deed. Here, the implications of Pentecost demonstrated through Peter, the early church and Paul are seen in CoP. The early church grasped the essence of their calling as people empowered by the Spirit to witness and rightly followed the leading of the Holy Spirit. This leads to the fourth and crucial point. For BCoP and CoP as a whole, Spirit baptism and power do not necessarily imply witness. The element of witnessing is vital. Nevertheless in praxis, the power of the Spirit even in witnessing is also expressed in signs and wonders. Power is sought for healing, deliverance, miraculous and charismatic manifestations such as speaking in tongues, however, the primary purpose for the gift of the Spirit and the power that comes with the Spirit is for mission.

Thus, to a large degree the CoP’s interpretation of Spirit baptism and power goes beyond witnessing. Walker has successfully demonstrated that the CoP model is designed to instigate growth through the witnessing power enabled them by the Holy Spirit. Further studies need to be conducted to ascertain to what extent the church’s belief in Spirit and mission has contributed to its growth. Asamoah-Gyadu argues cogently that the growth of churches such as CoP is the ‘...realization that the gospel must be preached in power of the Spirit with sign and wonders following’. It is within this context that the church attracts members by way of witnessing and also through the power manifestations that accompany their witnessing. People are attracted to the church when they see the power of God working in the lives of the members. Answered

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564 Interviews with all the pastors in the CoP were unanimous in their acceptance that the growth of CoP is down to the witnessing power of the Holy Spirit.
prayers, healings and miracles all become genuine manifestations that attract people to the church.

5.7 There is more to Power than just witnessing
The study of BCoP has shown that though there is a strong emphasis on Spirit baptism as power for witnessing, yet in practice, the Spirit’s power can and does more than just empower people to witness. As one deaconess opines, ‘if we are clothed with power then our lives not just our mouths should be full of power’.565 There is a sense in which the power of the Spirit is seen as the power of Jesus. Jesus promised to give his church the same Spirit and power through which he fulfilled his ministry. For the members of the BCoP this power from the Spirit cannot be limited to only witnessing. The belief is that the Holy Spirit’s power enables the miraculous and supernatural manifestations that glorify God.566 It was this power that raised Jesus from the dead. The Spirit’s power that enabled the disciples to embark not only on their missionary journey but also on their miraculous expedition.567

For these Pentecostals, the Bible makes it clear that the ministry of Jesus was characterized by ‘proclamation, binding, disarming and plundering Satan’.568 Since Satan and his demons are not completely destroyed, Jesus gave his disciples the authority to continue the work which he began. Satan’s power is seen in causing poverty, ailments, fear and destruction. Ultimately, Jesus’ promise to send his disciples power to achieve this mission was not only for them to speak boldly. The promised power at Pentecost is therefore seen as a holistic power.569 It is power not just for witnessing, but power for healing, destroying the work of Satan and for the miraculous. It is hear that perhaps the socio-cultural religious

565 Victor is a Pseudonym used here to describe the deacon. Interview on 23 August 2013.
566 Land, Pentecostal Spirituality, p. 75.
567 De-Alminana, ‘Reconnecting with the Mystics’, p.62.
569 Kalu, Power, Poverty and Prayer, p.193.
concepts of Spirit and power has to a degree influenced the practices in the Church.

5.7.1 Spirit and Power: Power to do the Miraculous

Equally important in the praxis of the CoP is the role of prayer and miracles. Most of the prayer meetings are held as ‘healing and miracle services’ as well as ‘warfare’ against evil spirits and forces. The belief in the spirit world and the presence of satanic forces in the traditional culture means that many of the members go to these prayer meetings with the aim of seeking protection from a higher power: God (the Supreme Being and the Holy Spirit). Macchia states that ‘By making healing an important aspect of the church’s mission, the Pentecostal movement became a haven for those who were dissatisfied with the decline of emphasis on healing in the mainstream evangelical churches’.570 The important thing to note here is that the concept of power is not limited to evangelism or witnessing, but by the manifestation of the Spirit’s power. The cultural understanding of evil as something real and tangible means that any power that is received from God must be demonstrated in conquering evil.

It is true that African cosmology is plagued with uncertainty and no matter how hard one tries to be protected through traditional medicine, or as in the case of Ghanaians the okomfo or traditional priests, one cannot be certain if their claims of power is stronger than their adversary. Subsequently, as Anderson notes, ‘the Africans, with their precarious visions of a human world besieged by evil forces sought more potent protectors’.571

Omenyo notes that contrary to reports that Christianity was not taking root in Africa, Africans embraced Christianity because it resonated with their

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world view. In Ghana, people were beginning to embrace the gospel as a means of salvation as well as means to overcoming Satan’s powers and receiving blessings from God. Ghanaian Christians thus tend to see God as the Supreme Being, who is all powerful and is interested in every area of their lives. Hence, Spirit baptism became the means by which people received this power from God. BHS was vital because it did not only guarantee power from God, but it also meant that people could receive deliverance from Satan, sickness, misfortune and in turn receive wealth, favour and blessings from God.

Much of this belief is retained by Ghanaians and the BCoP members in the Diaspora. In his work on EliCoP and missions, Pastor Lord Donkor a scholar and pastor who has just replaced Pastor Edmund in Birmingham Church of Pentecost proposes a discussion on the quest for authentic Spirituality in African Charismatic/Pentecostals in the Diaspora. Donkor raises the point that one of the key factors that led to the early rise of CoP was that it met the needs of the local people in the sense that ‘the church provided a platform ‘Prayer Meetings’ for the members to come and seek healing, protection, deliverance and miracles’.

Donkor takes his cue from Max Assimeng who rightly asserts that Pentecostalism provides important catalyst for Africans, in offering scriptural interpretations which were fully accommodating of the indigenous preoccupations than did any of the mainline churches. They were able to provide a Christian basis for the assimilation of Christian procedures into traditional concerns.

Meyer notes that the historic missionaries’ inability to incorporate the Holy Spirit’s work and power to cast out demons, ward off evil and protect

573 Chike, African Christianity, p.114.
575 Assimeng, Saints and Social Structures, pp.157-158.
people was a catalyst to entice the indigenous people into Pentecostalism since Pentecostals offered ministry opportunities that saw visible acts of power and manifestations of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{576} Asamoah-Gyadu has also added that the rise of the Spiritual churches in Ghana was largely due to their appeal in meeting the needs of the indigenous people who sought power and acts of power through the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{577}

Furthermore, these needs were met satisfactorily and hence for the first generation members who had migrated from Ghana for over twenty years or more, the power of the Spirit is vital for protection, health and spiritual needs. However, during the interviews, it was noticed that the younger members who were either born in Britain or migrated when they were young sought power for different reasons. They sought power not necessarily for overcoming evil spirits and sickness, but for social justice and equality. This is seen in other African and Caribbean Diaspora churches and reflected in works of Chike,\textsuperscript{578} Babatunde\textsuperscript{579} and Anderson.\textsuperscript{580}

The CoP in Birmingham has followed this tradition of meeting the needs of the people through visible and powerful manifestations of the Holy Spirit. The introduction of Prayer Clinics which serve as a vital part of the start of the week attract a considerable number of people both members and non members to seek God in prayer. The emphasis on these Prayer Clinics is what Asamoah –Gyadu calls ayaresa ne ogyee (healing and deliverance).\textsuperscript{581} Here, the emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit is not on witnessing but on his power to heal, deliver and perform miracles. People from across Birmingham and the surrounding towns go into the Prayer Clinic to seek God’s power in their lives. They pray for the

\textsuperscript{577} Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Signs, wonders and Ministry’, p.36.
\textsuperscript{578} Chike, \textit{African Christianity}, p.114.
\textsuperscript{579} Adedibu, \textit{Coat of Many Colours}, pp.106-111.
\textsuperscript{580} Anderson’s work highlights the challenges facing majority of young people from the African Caribbean background in Birmingham, England. Carver Anderson, ‘Youth and the Black Church’, \textit{The Black Church in the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century}, pp.128-147.
\textsuperscript{581} Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Signs, wonders and Ministry’, p.36.
manifestation of power in areas of heath, barrenness, unemployment, marriage, academic success and financial freedom. There is a longing in the people’s hearts for a tangible God who they can experience in their lives. Testimonies that come out of these Prayer Clinics suggest that the prayers are being answered.

On a busy Monday morning when people are usually at work, the church was full with people seeking God and praying. One of the key reasons an elder of the church gave for the high attendance was that people needed deliverance and miracles. This can only come with power. He continued that such power ‘can be obtained only through the power of the Holy Ghost and prayer’. This is characteristic of Dayton’s assessment of Pentecostal praxis:

Perhaps even more characteristic of Pentecostalism than the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit is its celebration of miracles of divine healing as part of God’s salvation and as evidence of the presence of divine power in the church.

5.7.2 Spirit and Power: Power to Effect Holiness

Though power as a concept is vital to the Ghanaian society, Pobee is right in asserting that seeking power for the sake of power is avoided and classed as egocentric in the church. Central to CoP members is the desire to experience the Holy Spirit in their lives outside of church. There is a strong sense of the Spirit’s power necessary for fighting temptation and the sins of the flesh. This belief corresponds with the work of non-Pentecostals including Stott and notably Dunn who have successfully

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582 Elder Bismark, Birmingham, CoP, 3 June 2013.
583 Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism, p. 115.
584 Pobee, Towards an African Theology, p.151.
586 Stott, Baptism and Fullness.
championed this view with Wenk arguing for a wider recognition of the socio-ethical element to the gift of the Spirit.\textsuperscript{588}

Significantly, this view of the Spirit’s power in effecting holiness has emerged from McKeown’s strict doctrine on holiness. Members of BCoP are constantly reminded that the Holy Spirit will not dwell in them if they smoke, drink and engage in other immoral activities such as premarital sex and adultery. Onyinah admits that the church’s concept on holiness may be considered by some as fundamentalism. Nevertheless Onyinah asserts that such a concept on the work of the Holy Spirit in the individuals’ lives has been key to the CoP’s doctrinal statements and beliefs.\textsuperscript{589}

CoP and all its branches continue to stress the importance of the Holy Spirit’s power and work in the individual to deal with sin and live holy lives. Onyinah attributes this to McKeown, who although he embraced the Ghanaian culture, yet did not compromise with negative cultural practices such as polygamous marriage and excessive drinking. Such practices are preached against and members who indulge in them are disciplined. The belief here is that when one receives power which comes from the Holy Spirit, one should be able to deal with such cravings and urges to indulge in sin.

5.7.3 Spirit and Power: A Positive Fusion of Gospel and Culture

African Pentecostalism from its beginnings has sought this encounter of power with a living God through the power of the Holy Spirit. Speaking about his own experience, Peter Anim (1890-1984), a ‘founding father of Pentecostalism in Ghana’\textsuperscript{590} and from whose group emerged CoP opines that:

I was faced with the necessity of contending for a deeper faith and greater spiritual power than what primary religious experience was able to afford.

\textsuperscript{588} Wenk, Community-forming Power, p.237.
\textsuperscript{589} Onyinah, ‘Pentecostals in the African Diaspora’, p.234.
\textsuperscript{590} Omenyo, ‘Agenda for a Discussion of African Initiatives in Christianity,’ p.382.
and I began to seek with such trepidation to know more about the Holy Ghost.  

Anim believed in the laying on of hands as important in the process of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit and other spiritual gifts. Later on McKeown, the founder of CoP also continued to preach the importance of Holy Spirit baptism and Power. Although Beckmann points out that Spirit baptism and power along with speaking in tongues was introduced to the indigenous church by western missionaries, the evidence suggests the contrary. 

Before McKeown arrived in Ghana, Anim and his group had already assumed strong emphasis on divine healing without recourse to any medicine. Their belief was that through prayer, the Holy Spirit’s power could deliver any and every sickness. Anim’s own testimony of being healed from a chronic stomach illness after his Spirit baptism experience prompted him to reach that conclusion. The power of the Holy Spirit was thus seen as the most potent of the powers in the cosmos.

Onyinah rightly notes that what made the concept of Spirit baptism and power more attractive to the Ghanaian was that power had become available not only to the traditional priests but rather power had become available to all believers. Significantly, with the Spirit’s power, all believers were potential prophets. This affirms Stronstad’s ‘prophet-hood of all believers’ in the Ghanaian context. This is vital, because ‘Without the power of the Holy Spirit, African Christians can easily revert to the religion of the ancestors’. For the Ghanaian Christian, the concept of power is absolutely essential.

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591 Peter Anim, *The History of How the Full Gospel Church was founded in Ghana*, p.3; quoted in Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghananian Christianity*, p.103.
In the Akan religious worship, power came upon only the priest or priestess. Furthermore, the Spiritual/Spirit-type churches that provided an alternative for disgruntled followers of the Western missionaries also provided an agent usually the prophet through whom God will speak and manifest his power. However, with the emergence of Pentecostalism and CoP to be precise, there was a significant difference to the concept of the Spirit's power. Power had become available to all people through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This power was received by praying and asking God to give the promised gift of the Holy Spirit.

The CoP encourages its members to assume their spiritual authority over evil spirits and Satan’s devices because all members (not just clergy) who receive the Spirit baptism are powerful. The good news was that God, the Supreme Being offered power not only to the priest but to all who believe. Furthermore and most importantly, the power of the Holy Spirit was not dependant on charms or any objects as was used by the traditional priests and some Spiritual church prophets. Members in the CoP are taught to speak the word of God boldly in faith and believe the Holy Spirit to act.

Referring to the practices of the CoP, Onyinah aptly concludes; ‘The Church’s emphasis on the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a means of protection and of power against evil forces, and its stress on Ghanaian indigenous way of worship made it stand out in Ghanaian society’ and in the Diaspora. In this context, it can be concluded that the cultural background of protection from evil and seeking good health and prosperity has to a large degree influenced the interpretation and implications of power from the Holy Spirit. Though power is attributed to the Holy Spirit through baptism, members of BCoP remain true to their Ghanaian heritage and thus see Spirit baptism and power as an essential tool not only for evangelisation but for successful living. More to the point, they believe that the Holy Spirit is the most effective, personal and yet potent Spirit. The Spirit of God comes to dwell in them and enable them to live a fruitful and

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fearless life in the midst of all their socio-cultural, political and religious challenges.

5.8 Spirit and Power: Luke’s verdict on CoP

The coming of the Spirit was at Pentecost and Luke describes this as the occasion when power was given to the disciples and early church to equip them for their missionary task. The book of Acts amply demonstrates the immediate, subjective and often visible manifestations of the Holy Spirit’s power. The Spirit inspired the disciples and gave them power to preach the gospel in a profound and intelligible manner. Peter, who was previously timid, preached to a crowd of which about three thousand were converted (Acts 2:14-31). Furthermore, those who were baptised in the Spirit spoke in different tongues and the other disciples were all empowered to speak the word of God boldly (Acts.2:4, 43).

Moreover, the apostles had tremendous faith beyond the ordinary to perform signs and wonders. Luke sums up the manifestations of the Spirit’s gifts and supernatural manifestations as ‘Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles’ (Acts.2:43). Paul also points to the signs and wonders that accompanied his ministry as evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit at work within the believing community (Acts 14:3; 1512; Gal.3:1-5). These events are indicative of the fact that the gifts of healing, working of miracles, faith and other supernatural phenomena were manifesting in the early church as evidence of the power of the Spirit given at Pentecost and beyond.

Luke describes Pentecost, and the supernatural manifestations that occurred thereafter as a mark of the New Testament Church, a church

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602 Bridge, *Signs and Wonders Today*, p.150.
inaugurated and led by the Holy Spirit. Again, the case of power and holiness is seen in Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11). In the end their lies caused their death. The point here is that since they had the Holy Spirit’s power in them, they should have endeavoured to live a life that demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, the power and manifestations of the Spirit have the distinct purpose of empowering Christians and pointing unbelievers to Jesus as their saviour. Though the apostles like Jesus went about preaching after they received the Spirit, the implications of the Spirit’s power in effecting miracles and other supernatural activity was crucial to witnessing. They demonstrated the power of God not only to break the power of sin, but also to bring about salvation, protection, healing and deliverance from evil. Geisler’s attempt to deny that miracles and supernatural manifestations are irrelevant today has been disputed by Grudem who argues that the Holy Spirit continues to distribute the gifts to individuals and the church to demonstrate God’s power in the present age. The gift of the Spirit and supernatural phenomena are essential for contemporary believers and churches in the same manner as they were in the early church. They are needed not only to demonstrate God’s power but to build up the body of Christ.

If Bridge’s assertion that the contemporary church is called to a similar experience of the early church in combination of word and works, of faith and power, of proclamation and demonstration is right, then Luke-Acts will look at BCoP as a fair reflection of Spirit and power in church praxis. Asamoah-Gyadu has demonstrated that Luke makes it clear that Christ

This is seen in the many healings performed by Jesus (Matth.11:20-33), and in Acts (4:16; 8)
Bridge, Signs and Wonders, 155.
and his followers were empowered by the Holy Spirit for proclamation and demonstration.\textsuperscript{610} Luke ‘singles out the Spirit as the power and life of the mission of Jesus’.\textsuperscript{611} Not only Jesus but significantly the same power is given to his disciples to continue the mission. Luke’s concept of Spirit and power as seen in the life of Jesus and his disciples therefore translates into the church today as seen in BCoP. The relationship between the Spirit and power is therefore seen not only in witnessing but in demonstration of prayers, praise, prophetic and the miraculous in the church praxis and personal lives of the CoP Birmingham.

5.9 Conclusion
This chapter has revisited issues discussed in previous chapters and attempted to summarise and deduce to what extent both Lukan pneumatology and the Ghanaian culture has had on the concept of Spirit and power in BCoP. It has been seen that to a large extent culture has played a very vital role in shaping the programs and worship style of the church services and the perceptions of the members. Though the gospel has been embraced in its entirety and sincerely, nevertheless, a contextualisation has occurred which makes it more appealing to Africans and African-led churches such as the Church of Pentecost. The Ghanaians in the Diaspora have migrated to Britain with the same emphasis. That is seeking power not specifically for witnessing but for life. Reflecting on the beliefs and praxis in BCoP has shown that Spirit gives power not just for witness. The power of the Spirit enables believers to pray, empowers them to overcome life difficulties and gives them supernatural ability and assurance over sin, evil spirits and misfortune in life.

\textsuperscript{610} Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Signs, Wonders and Ministry’, p.37
\textsuperscript{611} Barclay, \textit{The Promise of the Holy Spirit}, 56.
Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions

This study has explored the concept of Spirit and power in church praxis using Luke-Acts as a basis to determine the concept of power given to believers at or after Spirit baptism. In doing so, this thesis discussed that Luke’s work especially in Acts points towards proclamation as the main purpose for BHS. In his gospel, Luke presents and sets key events such as the infancy narratives, Jesus’ Jordan water baptism experience and his discourse at the Temple as moments when the Spirit’s power came upon the individual characters to empower them to speak and to perform miracles. In the same way, Luke presents Pentecost as the pivotal moment when the church was birthed through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the power he brings. However, it was seen that this power given at Pentecost did not only produce a community of witnesses but also a community of people empowered to do supernatural tasks. Some of these included speaking in tongues, healing, exorcisms and other miracles. Having established this foundation, the study then went on to discuss how Spirit and power is seen in the church today, using Birmingham branch of the CoP as a case study.

In the process of doing this, an investigation of the Ghanaian pre-Christian cosmology, social, cultural and religious practises was carried out. This demonstrated that there were similarities between pre-western missionaries’ Christianity and events on the day of Pentecost. The similarities mainly featured ecstatic manifestations such as tongues, prophecy and the miraculous. The traditional worship and religious practices were based on the belief in a Supreme Being, who delegated his powers through spirit beings and entities. Significantly, it was seen that, there was a strong emphasis on the relationship between the spirit world and the physical world. Nearly all physical occurrences were the result of supernatural spirit events.

To the Akans in Ghana, physical life is rooted and linked to the spirit world. Life is therefore power. To have power from the spirit world leads to a
successful life. Sicknesses, misfortunes, lack of money, barrenness are all attributed to the presence of evil and evil powers. What the Akan traditional worship has shown is that people felt the need to seek God or this Supreme Being through powerful mediums. It is here that the Ghanaian desire for a spirit-filled life full of power from the Supreme Being through his mediators comes from. Thus from the outset, power was not connected to any form of witnessing.

This led to an examination of the emergence of western missionaries and Pentecostalism in Ghana. It was seen that though the western missionaries brought the gospel to Ghana, they failed to fully and accurately meet the spiritual thirst and hunger of the people. Subsequently, the AICs emerged with a solution to amalgamate Pentecostal liturgy with traditional practices. It was during these times that Pentecostalism and the Church of Pentecost emerged. It has been seen that during the early days of the CoP, Spirit baptism was preached as an essential recourse to witnessing. More than that, in Anim and McKeown’s era, the demonstration of the Holy Spirit’s power in healing and in the miraculous was essential. It proved that the Holy Spirit’s power was more potent than the powers of the spirits that the traditional religious worship was presenting to the people.

The ministry of James McKeown, who became the eventual founder of the CoP, complimented the foundations Peter Anim had laid. McKeown’s greatest challenge was to present Christ as the high priest since in the Akan concept, God communicated to the people through the okomfo via the abosom. McKeown had the task of preaching Christ as the only way to the supreme God. The power of Jesus was thus more influential to transform lives. Significantly, McKeown presented the Holy Spirit as the person and power who brings about the healing and protection from evil forces that people sought fervently from the lesser gods and traditional priests.
Furthermore McKeown emphasised that the key to obtaining the Spirit’s power was through Baptism in the Spirit. This baptism ensured not only power to overcome evil spirits but also power to live holy lives, speak in tongues, prophesy, pray effectively and become witnesses. It is the power to witness that led to establishing churches wherever the members of CoP went. With this background, the church spread across the continents and into Britain and subsequently Birmingham. It has been seen that when the Ghanaians migrated to Birmingham, they did not leave their belief system back home in Ghana. A brief look at the African churches in the Diaspora suggested that CoP was not alone in this context. Ghanaians still sought power for protection, healing, employment and generally for life. A minor but yet significant observation made was that though the concept of power remained generally for life issues, the emphasis sometimes changed from protection from evil to power to fight for justice and equality amongst the third and fourth generation Ghanaians in the Diaspora.

Significantly, the study in BCoP has shown that the concept of Spirit and power remains strong in church liturgy and praxis. The Spirit gives power to live, to succeed in life and to generally do what needs to be done to have a successful life. Satan and his cohorts are constantly fighting Christians to destroy and disgrace them. The existing tension as far as Spirit baptism and Power is concerned is this: BCoP seeks to provide a worship service that understands this concept of Spirit and power as essential for successful living whilst maintaining that Spirit baptism according to Luke-Acts is also for witness. This tension has emerged largely due to the members’ cosmological, cultural and social beliefs and background.

Overall, this thesis has shown that essentially the CoP’s praxis is not entirely based on Luke’s concept of Spirit baptism as power for witness as in seen in the first chapter. Fundamentally, the church praxis is an expression of an understanding of a contextualised form of Spirit baptism and power in an indigenous form of worship. It shows that Spirit and power
as expressed especially in Acts has a place in contemporary church praxis. That is power for prophecy and the miraculous.

By contextualizing the gospel in cultural forms, it appears that the church has not compromised the truth of the gospel but rather reached out to many indigenous people and also their people in the Diaspora. Luke’s concept of Spirit and power has very strong similarities to the Ghanaian culture. The power has been embraced not as power for witness. The power is also for protection, exorcism, healing and the miraculous. In this sense, just as Jesus and the early church beginning from Pentecost had power to preach and demonstrate the miraculous, the BCoP see themselves seeking power for the same effect, even if the power is more for the latter.

It is hoped that these findings will shed more light on African understanding of the Holy Spirit especially in the churches in the United Kingdom and beyond. A better understanding of how Africans in the Diaspora approach the spirit world and the Holy Spirit will hopefully help the indigenous British churches to meet the needs of the Africans in their congregations. Moreover, this thesis challenges Africans both at home and in the Diaspora to continue to seek ways to emphasize the message of Spirit baptism and Power as primarily for witnessing.
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**Correspondence**

Unless otherwise stated, The New International Version of the Bible was used for all Bible references.

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APPENDIX 1: ETHNICITY SURVEY

1. Response to Question 1. Which of the following will you say describes your ethnic origin?

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<th>Count</th>
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<tr>
<td>EWE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA-DANGME</td>
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<td><strong>137</strong></td>
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2. Response to Question 2. Which of the following is your place of birth?

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<tr>
<td>UK/EUROPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER AFRICAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>137</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These are sample of the extent of questions asked during the interviews and conversations

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. What do you understand by Baptism in the Spirit
3. What does it mean the Bible says you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you? What do you understand by that?
4. How does this power operate/express itself in your daily life?
5. What does the power mean to you?
6. What is/are the evidence of power in your life and the lives of others?
7. What do you need the power for?
### APPENDIX 3: PSEUDONYMS

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<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Leader or Member</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<td>18-29</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ama2</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anita</td>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>Deaconess</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enoch</td>
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<td>Joanna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Owusu</td>
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<td>Akwasi</td>
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<td>Baah</td>
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<td>David</td>
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<td>Charles</td>
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<td>(Zimbabwean)</td>
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## APPENDIX 4: Questionnaires

### CHURCH OF PENTECOST: BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT

#### Holy Spirit and Power

**Interview/questionnaires**

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<tr>
<td>HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A CHRISTIAN?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ATTENDING COP?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY SPIRIT BAPTISM?</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN THE BIBLE SAYS WE WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES ON US? <strong>POWER FOR WHAT?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE OF POWER ON YOUR OWN/PEOPLE’S LIVES?</td>
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