

# The Pentecostalization of Christian Worship- Part 1

Saturday, April 29, 2023 08:00 AM CT• 54:00

**Host: David Wheaton 00:08**

The Pentecostalization of Christian Worship.

That is the topic we'll discuss today, right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians, and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. We are able to pursue that mission on the radio station, website or app on which you are listening today because of the support of listeners like you. So thank you for your prayer, encouragement and support. You can connect with us by visiting our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org), calling our toll free number at 1-888-646-2233 or by writing to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Now before we get to the preview for today's topic, I just want to announce a Christian Worldview speaker series event featuring Christian journalist, Alex Newman, that we have coming up on Saturday, May 20th here in the Twin Cities.

The Christian Worldview speaker series are short listener events featuring a compelling speaker on a consequential topic, and the topic that day is going to be being informed of and prepared for the global great reset. Again, Christian journalist, Alex Newman, who was a recent guest on the program and also the CEO of Liberty Sentinel Media will be the featured speaker.

This event takes place on Saturday, May 20, 2023, from 8am to 10:30am at Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota, which is just west of Minneapolis, starting at 8am. We're going to have a pre event breakfast in the foyer of the church with coffee, doughnuts, muffins and yogurt. The Christian Worldview Radio Program will be airing in the sanctuary from 8:00 am to 9:00 am. At 9:00 am the event starts where Alex Newman will speak on The Great Reset and what Christians need to know and how we should respond to that. After he speaks for about 35 to 40 minutes, I'm going to interview him along with taking questions from the audience.

There's no registration for the event, there's no admission fee, you can come for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. If you do want to come to the pre event breakfast, we do ask you to register for that so we know how much food to provide. You can go to our website to register at [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call us toll free at 1-888-646-2233. The sanctuary holds 800 people, so there should be plenty of room for everyone. The event will not be live streamed online. I'll tell you more about it at the end of the program today.

There are many paradigm changing issues and events taking place nationally and internationally right now. The move to a cashless society seems to be coming with a digital currency. There's the insertion of computer technology into the human body or transhumanism.

The rapid expansion of the Marxist based woke religion, promoted by all institutions now. There's war in Europe, Africa, and potentially the Far East. The promotion of cross dressing, physical mutilation of gender confused children, and even the push for the normalization of adult-child sexual relationships. So why discuss "The Pentecostalization of Christian Worship?" And by "worship," I mean not just music, because that's what's become synonymous for music today is, "worship." But really, the broader worship service itself is being Pentecostalized in its purpose, or objective, and also its doctrines.

Bible believing, gospel preaching churches, mostly Evangelical churches, used to be the greatest point of influence in our society. As these churches have weakened and preaching has softened in the attempt to attract so called "seekers" rather than strengthening believers, broader society and its institutions have corrupted without the sanctifying influences that these churches once had. Now, as if that weren't tragic enough, Evangelical churches today are becoming unrecognizable, as Pentecostal or charismatic beliefs and methodologies are subsuming them, particularly through worship music. Case in point: A recent study, which I'm going to read you in a minute, showed that almost all music in Evangelical churches comes from four mega churches. . . all of which are charismatic.

David de Bruyn is the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is our guest this weekend and next on The Christian Worldview. He recently wrote a seven part column series called, "The Pentecostalization of Christian Worship," which we have linked on [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). This shows how the burgeoning charismatic movement has been welcomed into Evangelical churches, schools, radio stations, and ministries, and it has changed everything. This from The Religion News Services, titled, There's a Reason Every Hit Worship Song Sounds the Same.

Quoting from the article, "A new study found that Bethel Church and a handful of other mega churches have cornered the market on worship music in recent years, churning out hit after hit and dominating the worship charts. A study looked at 38 songs that made the top 25 lists for CCLI and praise charts, which track what songs are played in churches, and found that almost all had originated from one of four mega churches. Bethel Church in Redding, California. Hillsong, a mega church headquartered in Australia, Passion City Church in Atlanta, and Elevation Church, a North Carolina congregation with ties to the Southern Baptist Convention."

"If you've ever felt like most worship music sounds the same, the study's authors wrote, it may be because the worship music you are most likely to hear in many churches is written by just a handful of songwriters from a handful of churches. Beginning in 2010, the most popular new songs begin to come from mega church worship bands, and the most popular worship artists began affiliating with those churches. Of the 38 songs in the study, 22 were initially released by the four mega churches, with another eight songs released by artists affiliated with those churches. Six more were either collaborations between artists from those churches, or cover songs performed by those churches." And here's a key paragraph.

Adam Perez, Assistant Professor of worship studies at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee said, "The four most influential mega churches all come from the charismatic tradition of Protestant churches. All of them have a spirituality that believes God becomes

present in a "meaningful and powerful way" when the congregation sings a particular style of worship song. Those songs become one of the primary ways of connecting with God, rather than prayer or sacraments or other rituals. Because of their market success, these mega churches have changed the spiritual practice and sometimes even the theology of congregations from many traditions.

The industry itself becomes this invisible hand. We don't name the theology of praise and worship, we just assume it, and we use this kind of song repertoire to reinforce it. "The study did not look specifically at the lyrics of the most popular songs." Baker did say she's looking at those lyrics for a different project and found a few trends. For example, she said, "few of the most popular songs talk about the cross or salvation. A lot of it is, What is God doing for me now, and what has God promised to do for me in the future?"

Last couple paragraphs: "Marc Jolicoeur, a worship pastor from New Brunswick, Canada, worked on a previous study about how quickly hit worship songs appear and then disappear. Jolicoeur said any concerns about the theology of the four mega churches, or the recent troubles at Hillsong, which had several pastors resign in scandal, don't seem to affect the demand for their music. Another person with the last name Pain, doubts that scandals at churches such as Hillsong will affect the popularity of their music, because people have a relationship with the songs, not with the church leaders." That is quite an article and we have it linked on [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org).

Another person with the last name Pain, doubts that scandals at churches such as Hillsong will affect the popularity of their music, because people have a relationship with the songs, not with the church leaders. That is quite an article and we have it linked on the [Christianworldview.org](http://Christianworldview.org).

The question is, Who are these four churches? The first is Bethel Church in Redding, California. According to [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org), The Bethel Church can be characterized as promoting word of faith teaching, the prosperity gospel, dominionism, "grave sucking," and other aberrant doctrines and practices. Consistent with others in the New Apostolic Reformation, the Pastor, Bill Johnson, teaches that people today are receiving direct words from God and that the offices of apostle and Prophet have been restored to the church. According to Johnson, what Christians need is not doctrine, but the manifest presence of God.

Their band, Jesus culture, out of Bethel Church in Redding California, is one of the most influential across Christianity. Next church, Elevation Church near Charlotte, North Carolina pastored by Steven Furtick. According to [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org), it was founded by Furtick in 2006 with just 14 members. The church has now grown to a weekly attendance of over 27,000 people as of 2019. Prosperity gospel, sharing stage with Joel Osteen, TD Jakes, Brian and Bobbie Houston of Hillsong and Joyce Meyer, whom Furtick called "the greatest Bible teacher alive today,"

Furtick has become a renowned pastor, speaker and author, but he remains the visionary behind Elevation worship, which is their music arm of the church, developing concepts f

The third church is Hillsong based in Australia. Gotquestions.org says, Hillsong was founded in 1983 in Sydney, Australia by former global senior pastors Brian and Bobbie Houston. Hillsong has locations around the world, including in Kyiv, London, New York, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Moscow, Sao Paulo and other cities. Hillsong was originally part of the Assemblies of God charismatic, but formed its own denomination in 2018. Brian Houston, stepped down from his leadership role in March 2022 amid allegations of sexual misconduct.

Hillsong ordains women as pastors. Bobby Houston said in an interview in 2014, when it comes to women in leadership, "The church needs to come of age. Sometimes just grow up." They embrace the word of faith movement. A fan from the Hillsong website said, "We believe that God wants to heal and transform us so that we can live healthy and blessed lives in order to help others more effectively." The health, wealth and prosperity gospel. There it is.

Finally, the fourth church is Passion City Church in Atlanta, Georgia with Pastor Louie Giglio. Church Watch Central says, "It should come as no surprise that the popular Passion Conference, which this church puts on, led by its apostolic leader, Louie Giglio, espouses the New Apostolic Reformation's dangerous, "little God theology." Not only does Giglio and Passion Conference espouse heresy, they openly advertise and promote it on social media. A tweet from passion. "There's divinity in your DNA, there's heaven inside of you."

So what's the common denominator here across all these four churches? Well, it's something we've already mentioned. They're all charismatic or Pentecostal to varying degrees of error. They claim direct revelation from God, to be modern apostles, to do signs and wonders, to offer health and prosperity, their experiential, as they intentionally work toward a climactic worship experience. They have a completely different view of the objective of a Christian worship service. Evangelical churches today are funding these errant charismatic churches through paying for their worship songs to sing and play in their own churches. So do you really think that charismatic music and methodology in the evangelical church is not going to make a huge impact?

Stay tuned. Because David de Bruyn, the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa, will join us after these brief ministry announcements and talk about the Pentecostal association of Christian worship. I'm David Wheaton. You're listening to The Christian Worldview.

**Featured Resource: So Many Lions, So Few Daniels 13:53**

Have faith in God. Don't be intimidated by lions. If the world says back down, don't do this. Fling open your windows, pray openly so to speak. That's what Daniel did. Don't be ashamed. Don't be intimidated. A blind anemic, weak kneed flea on crutches has more chance of defeating a herd of 1,000 wild stampeding elephants than this world has of stopping the will of God. There's nothing they can do to stop God's will and if you're a Christian, you have aligned yourself with God's will.

That was evangelist, Ray Comfort, exhorting believers to stand firm and speak boldly, just like Daniel. Ray's new book, So Many Lions, So Few Daniels is 192 pages, softcover and retails for \$16.99. You can order the book for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview.

Go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

**Become a Worldview Partner 14:52**

What is The Christian Worldview Radio Program really about? Fundamentally, it's about impacting people, families, churches, with the life and eternity changing truth of God's Word. We know the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only message that saves us from God's wrath by God's grace for God's glory. And we know the Bible is the inspired Word of God, providing the only way to think and live to the glory of God. We are a nonprofit listener supported ministry.

If you'd like to help us impact listeners with the biblical worldview and the Gospel, consider becoming a Christian Worldview Partner who regularly give a specified amount to the ministry. As a thank you, Christian Worldview Partners automatically receive many of the resources featured on the program throughout the year. To become a Christian Worldview Partner, call us toll free at 1-888-646-2233 or visit [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry.

Our topic today is, The Pentecostalization of Christian Worship Services. Our guest is David de Bruyn, the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa. David, we've been looking forward to having you come on The Christian Worldview. Thank you all the way from Johannesburg, South Africa. Before we get into our topic of the day which is, The Pentecostalization of Christian Worship, which is based on the series of columns that you have written on that topic, this is your first time on the program. Tell us about your background briefly, and how you came to saving faith in Jesus Christ and what you do now.

**Guest: David de Bruyn 16:54**

Well, thank you, David. It's great to be with you. Yes, I've been pastoring a Baptist church now for almost 20 years. The church was begun in 2003. I'm happily married to a Minnesotan, Erin, whom I met here in South Africa when she came out to do short term missions. We have three children, Jack, Karissa and Caitlin. I came to saving faith when I was invited to a small Baptist Church in the inner city of Johannesburg, where we lived at the time. I came from a secular family. There was no religious background. I came to this little church that had an Awana program. For the first time in my life, I heard Bible verses. I memorized John 3:16. In the course of a few months, I came to understand that salvation was by grace, through faith, and not through works. At that young age, I confessed Christ, believed in him turned to Him, and the Lord began a work in me which he's continued to this day of shaping me and changing me, for which I'm thankful. So over the years, I walked with Him in that church, received theological training, both in South Africa and in the United States, and very privileged to continue to serve him today.

**Host: David Wheaton 18:21**

Well, thank you for sharing that with us. David de Bruyn, is with us today here on The Christian Worldview. Just one more follow up question. Being from South Africa and growing up there, as you have, I visited the country over 30 years ago, what an incredibly beautiful dynamic

place it was, the country has changed a lot. Maybe just briefly tell us, this is off topic a little bit, but tell us just what changes have taken place in South Africa. It was considered an apartheid state back in the day where a small minority of whites were ruling a black majority country. Tell us what the country has become if you can do that in a fairly brief manner.

**Guest: David de Bruyn 19:04**

Well, the brief will be the problem. South Africa is as you say, a beautiful country filled with wonderful people, tremendous potential. In the 30 years since the fall of apartheid, there has, of course been all kinds of changes. South Africa is now far more of a democratic place in terms of freedom of speech, in terms of the right to vote and proportional representation in government. All those freedoms certainly changed South Africa for the better.

There's also been changes for the worse, which include a Marxist leaning economic system that has steadily eroded South Africa's wealth base. Particularly in the last 20 years, we have seen a lot of corruption at the highest levels, a lot of squandering of momentum that the government had, and a steady disintegration of infrastructure of law and order, of general stability of society so that we're currently facing ongoing power crises. The electricity supply is no longer stable, and many such things that many South Africans never thought that we'd see. A kind of a failure of the state that seems to be accelerating.

Nevertheless, in the midst of that there are faithful churches, faithful believers, churches that are proclaiming the gospel clearly, believers growing. We're thankful that wherever there is political turmoil and adversity, with that goes the Gospel shining somewhat brighter. So it's a mix and there's always something to be thankful for. If, as scripture says, it is by Thy mercies we are not consumed, then we can say things are always better than what we deserve.

**Host: David Wheaton 21:00**

Well, that's very well said, Thank you for giving us an update on South Africa. I'm sure we could do a whole program just on that topic, the changes and what's taking place in your beautiful country. David de Bruyn is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview.

Okay, let's get into our topic. The Pentecostalisazation as you call it, of Christian worship. You have a seven part series of articles which we have linked at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where listeners can read them. I highly recommend that they do. You start out your first column by saying, It is hardly disputable that global Christianity has been overwhelmed and colonized by the Pentecostal and charismatic movements. You go on to say how this is the dominant growth of "Christianity" in South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia, which is overwhelmingly of the Pentecostal kind.

You say non Pentecostals or secessionists, those who don't believe in the continuation of the miraculous sign gifts that the apostles had in the first century, have dwindled into the minority. Very few voices, you write, have been raised to counter the theological distinctives of Pentecostalism. You say what those distinctives are:

1. An emphasis on the supernatural sign gifts of the Holy Spirit.

2. A belief in the baptism of the Spirit subsequent to salvation. So after salvation, there's another baptism of the Spirit to receive the Spirit.
3. An assorted novel of views on healing, prosperity and spiritual warfare.
4. And I'll add one more, which is a lot of Pentecostals, charismatics claim direct revelation beyond scripture, God spoke to me and so forth and so on. They'll say those kinds of things.

You say a notable exception to pushing back against this was John MacArthur's 2013, Strange Fire Conference, and a subsequent book. So the first question here on this topic is just explain for someone who hasn't followed the differences between Pentecostalism and let's say historic, Biblical Christianity, let's say Evangelicalism or even fundamentalism. Talk about some of the key differences. Then tell us more about how large a movement Pentecostalism has become worldwide.

**Guest: David de Bruyn 23:14**

To begin with the second question, we can estimate from Pew Research and various other polls that Pentecostal charismatic believers number somewhere between 540 million and 660 million. So it's a very large proportion of those who would claim some kind of Evangelical faith. The Christianity that is now spreading as missiologists would say, south and east, that is South America, particularly Sub Saharan Africa and Asia, is predominantly of the Pentecostal kind, the charismatic kind. So even though there are plenty of other forms that are growing, the most explosive growth belongs to the charismatic form, and particularly in Africa, what we'd call the prosperity gospel kind.

So what is the difference between Pentecostalism and what we might call classic Protestantism or Cessationist Evangelicalism? The key difference is a different view in how the Holy Spirit operates today. Charismatic and Pentecostal theology, which essentially dates to the beginning of the 20th century, is the belief that all that you see in the transitional book of Acts continues today in the same or even in more intense forms.

That is, we should expect manifestations of miracles. We should expect direct revelation. We should have the gift of tongues and its interpretation in our midst. We should expect that we have apostles amongst us today. So in many ways, the key distinction or even the key difference is the question, were the apostles a unique group of men with unique revelation and a unique role?

What went with them was tongues, prophecy, revelation, specific miracles, the outpouring of new revelation that became the New Testament. Or is that office something that we should expect throughout church history into the present age? The charismatic answer to that question would be, yes, we should expect all that the Holy Spirit did in the book of Acts and in the first century and in the apostolic era continues with us today. There is no distinction. We should expect that there was no change at the end of the apostolic era. In fact, they would probably dispute the concept of an apostolic era. They would say, today is the apostolic era, we still have apostles, we still have prophets and all that happened, then should happen now.

A key verse is often Hebrews 13. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. So my charismatic friend will say to me, Jesus hasn't changed has He? So we should expect all that took place then, to be taking place now. So in a nutshell, a Cessationist would say that at the close of the apostolic era, there were things that seized, that were complete, that were mature. There's no indication in the New Testament that we should expect them to perpetuate throughout church history. The charismatic would say, No, we should expect them at all times, at all places, as long as the church is on earth.

**Host: David Wheaton 26:54**

That was an excellent description of the distinctives there. But the refutation to that is, where's the evidence that these things have continued? In other words, I've never seen anyone in any part of church history except back into the first century, the apostolic era, as you mentioned, where a man has the gift to heal someone, raise someone from the dead, heal someone completely of an illness, as the apostles actually did, or to speak in a foreign language extemporaneously that they didn't previously know, or with an interpreter present, or to do miracles as things were happening back then. So how is this put forward when there's just no evidence that actually men still even have these gifts?

**Guest: David de Bruyn 27:44**

The argument for Pentecostalism is primarily an experiential one, with recourse to various texts that, in my opinion, are taken out of context. So the defense goes along the lines of "we experienced this in our church, or this has taken place in our circles, or I know so and so who did such and such, and that seems to correspond with the Bible, and that shows that this Christianity is living and supernatural and miraculous, therefore, who are you to naysay it from your perspective." So it becomes a swapping around of the burden of proof, and the charismatic says, "I've experienced it, you haven't, therefore, you must be wrong because you haven't experienced it."

The way that we have always defended positions in historic Christianity is we have not used anecdotal evidence, we have not merely turned to experience as our defense even though it does have a place. We have always turned to Scripture and Scripture rightly interpreted within context. We've said, "what does the text teach, what should we expect from the New Testament, and does the Bible regard this as normative for all Christians in all places?" The majority answer throughout church history has been that the apostolic era was unique. This was the view of the Ante-Nicene Fathers before the year 325. It was the view of the church all the way into the middle ages. It was the view of the Reformers. It was the view of the Puritans. It was the view of the 19th century great mission leaders. You will search in vain through the Puritans, through Jonathan Edwards, through Spurgeon, through Calvin and Luther and Zwingli. Even through the Waldensians and the early Baptists you will search in vain for references to the Pentecostal gifts continuing. Therefore, our contemporary Pentecostal has only a few choices to explain that. He must either say, well, all of those believers were quenching the Spirit, they failed to take advantage of what was theirs, or he must say, in the 20th century, God began to do something absolutely new and unprecedented that He hadn't done up to that point.



Either of those choices seem to me to be dubious and rather evil choices, because they're essentially casting something of a shadow on great saints of the past and we are placing a great burden of proof if you take the second option to say that this new movement is genuinely a work of God, particularly when the scriptures don't seem to point in that direction.

**Host: David Wheaton 30:53**

David de Bruyn with us today on The Christian Worldview. He is the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa, and we're talking about the Pentecostal realization of Christian worship. He's written a seven part column series on this topic. Now one more question before we get to the issue of music, because that's one of the big ways in your articles you say that this Pentecostalization has come into more historically biblical or Evangelical churches.

Charismatics or Pentecostals as you've described, what is their perception of cessationists? Because they believe, as you mentioned in the article that there must be a subsequent baptism of the Spirit, if I don't believe in that, am I actually born again in their eyes?

**Guest: David de Bruyn 31:39**

Yes, that's a great question. It does depend on the articulation of Pentecostalism we're talking about. Amongst the more theologically astute and theologically literate charismatics and Pentecostals, they would regard a person who professes the fundamentals of the faith and the gospel as a brother. They would regard you as being within the church, but they would say you are missing out on an experience that is available to you through some form of unbelief, or a lack of openness at best to what the Holy Spirit is doing.

If we move along the spectrum towards more radical proponents of Pentecostalism, there you will end up with individuals who will say things along the lines of, those people don't believe in the Holy Spirit. I've heard that articulated a few times. They may say, because you have refused to speak in tongues or have refused the baptism of the Spirit, you're not yet saved. In that case, they are actually committing a genuine heresy, because that is adding to the Gospel. Indeed, it's even splitting up the Trinity. No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Spirit. So the very concept of being able to accept Christ and not have the Spirit is refuted by orthodox Trinitarianism and Romans 8:9 which says, no man who's truly in Christ does not have the Spirit. So as we get to the fringes, we're going to have charismatics who would aver that people who have not gone through their subsequent baptism are actually outside the faith. The better taught charismatic is not going to make that statement. He's really going to say that you're missing out and you're quenching the spirit because of your lack of openness.

**Host: David Wheaton 33:47**

David De Bruyn, is our guest today, here on the program, the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa. We're talking about the Pentecostalization of Christian worship. We're going to dive much deeper into this after these brief ministry announcements. You're listening to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Here's Christian journalist Alex Newman, and why some of our fellow citizens are destroying our historic values to enact a great reset to globalism.

**Featured Resource: The Great Reset DVD 34:18**

They have no loyalty to the United States. In fact, I think many of these people at the highest levels absolutely despise the United States. Partly because it has been a historically Christian nation. It has taken the gospel to every corner of this planet like no other nation in all of human history. As I mentioned earlier, it's founded on these biblical principles. Really, a lot of the principles that are at the core of our republic, these came directly out of Scripture and our Founding Fathers made that crystal clear in their writings.

You can order Alex Newman's 80 minute DVD presentation on how globalist are attempting a great reset for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. Go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

**Featured Resource: So Many Lions, So Few Daniels 35:10**

Have faith in God. Don't be intimidated by lions. If the world says back down, don't do this. Fling open your windows, pray openly so to speak. That's what Daniel did. Don't be ashamed. Don't be intimidated. A blind anemic, weak kneed flea on crutches has more chance of defeating a herd of 1,000 wild stampeding elephants than this world has of stopping the will of God. There's nothing they can do to stop God's will and if you're a Christian, you have aligned yourself with God's will.

That was evangelist, Ray Comfort, exhorting believers to stand firm and speak boldly, just like Daniel. Ray's new book, *So Many Lions, So Few Daniels* is 192 pages, softcover and retails for \$16.99. You can order the book for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. Go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

**Host: David Wheaton 36:15**

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Our topic today is the Pentecostalization of Christian Worship Services. Our guest is David de Bruyn, the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa.

David, I'm going to read another quote from one of your columns. Again, they're all linked at our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). You write this. "But perhaps far more insidious has been the quiet takeover of Christian worship by Pentecostalism. (You don't just mean music in that reference, although you do get into the music element of it, but you're saying the worship service). Even in those churches that reject the theology of continuationism. (Which you just described earlier). (You say), What arrives incognito, worship forms are far more portable than doctrinal statements and tend to insinuate themselves gradually and quietly. A popular song emerging from Pentecostal or charismatic roots finds a home in cessationist circles, because it's theology is either Orthodox and acceptable to secessionists, or sufficiently banal to fit in almost anywhere.

What arrives incognito is the Pentecostal understanding of the act of corporate worship, with its accompanying postures, approaches and expectations. (You list three. I'll read those three and then follow up with a question). Here's what's expected in Pentecostal worship.

1. A populist approach to tradition, art, and the ecclesial authority. In other words, populism rejects expert opinion in matters of theology, church order, or music and promote the intuitive feelings of the common man as the arbiter of decisions in the church. (So there's not a hierarchy of trained leaders who are saying this is the best direction based on the history of the church, what the Bible says, and so forth. It's kind of up to the popular sentiment about how the church should be organized and how it should be run in worship).
2. Praise and worship theology, by means of successive phases of music and songs, often repetitive and unbroken in sequence. Worshipers can be led deeper and deeper into the presence of God until worshipers experience the presence of God in felt experiential ways. (Then the third point you write about),
3. The Pentecostal understanding of the act of corporate worship is this. An emphasis on extemporaneity and intensity. Pentecostals emphasis on the Holy Spirit often includes the belief that spontaneity and extemporaneity represent yieldness to the spirit, whereas what is prepared, scripted or planned, represents the "dead letter " or "quenching the spirit."

That was a lot to think about there, but I think that's important to understand that Pentecostals charismatics have a much different approach and expectation for what a worship service should be. Maybe you could describe a little more about what you mean in this particular section of your columns.

**Guest: David de Bruyn 39:42**

The first thing about populism is probably the most invisible to us and that's because it's really become part of the air that we breathe. Populism really grew in the late 18th and through the 19th century, particularly in the United States in North America with Jeffersonian democracy and just a strong kind of rugged frontier mentality. It led to an outlook that viewed the competence of the ordinary man to judge all questions.

So in the old world, there'd been a stronger sense of the need for learning, the need for questions of politics, philosophy, religion and taste, to require some training. But in populism, there's a suspicion of particular training and of those who give themselves to critical thinking regarding art or regarding taste that begins to be suspected as some kind of snobbery or elitism.

While that kind of populism is not unique to Pentecostalism, it's rarely found in the DNA of Evangelicalism itself, just a general outlook that regards questions of art and beauty and critical questions of "is this appropriate, Is this music Okay?", to really be questions that are snobbish and elitist, and questions that humble Christians really shouldn't look at that.

All believers are equally competent to judge this so long as we have sincere hearts and open attitudes. So I think that's the first point. Populism is just the outlook. The second matter of

praise and worship theology is the more clear break, because in all Christian worship, from even the Roman era, all the way into the Reformation era, there is a level of continuity. I describe in the column, some of the work that Brian Chapel has done in his book *Christ Centered Worship*, where he shows that many, many worship services across traditions carry more or less a similar gospel shaped pattern.

Pentecostalism and Charismaticism have made a very clear break with that. It's not a development of the tradition. It's not an extension of it. It's something completely new. It is not the old pattern of call and response. That is, God calls us to worship, God reveals Himself to us in His Word, we respond in prayer, we respond in song, we respond in listening, obedience.

It now becomes a model of experiential intensification that we walk through various stages of growing intensity, usually achieved through music. We can develop that more David, but that's essentially an entirely new and innovative approach to Christian worship.

Then that third matter is the Pentecostal view that extemporary nearity and intensity, reflect almost your honesty before the Lord, that truthfulness and childlike sincerity is synonymous with your worship service being unplanned, with your worship service being extemporaneous, and with the goal being a deeply felt intensity. Such is the power of this thinking that many who grow up even just broadly in secular culture are almost immediately wedded to it. It seems compelling to them that religion should feel intense, and that the work of the Spirit should be unexpected, unplanned, unscripted, and that this represents authenticity, as our culture views it. So for many people then, Christian worship that has planned readings and a planned liturgy and a planned order of service and structured singing and structured preaching, almost reflects a form of inauthenticity, a kind of stage play, mask wearing as they would imagine it. In some characterizations, quenching the spirit. So here we have a very deep divide in our outlook, in our actual instantiation of worship, and in our expectation of what worship will be. This is a deep divide.

**Host: David Wheaton 44:28**

Yes, it really is. I think you're really hitting the nail on the head in your breaking down of what is taking place within Pentecostal worship. Just to follow up on your last answer there. You mentioned there's an entirely new model of worship and you write in your columns called, *The Tabernacle Model* or *The Five Phase Model*, how there's a progression going on in a Pentecostal or charismatic worship service and how that's come right into the evangelical church to their influence, especially of music. You say in Charismatic worship theology, one is not so much in pursuit of a response, a faith response to what God has revealed, as one is in pursuit of an experience.

An experience of the presence of God that is intense, as you mentioned, sensorily, tangible, and emotionally or physically ecstatic. Very importantly, this experience will be almost passively felt once the moment arrives, as opposed to a rational response to God's Word.

By contrast, you write, Hebrew and Christian worship has always required the frequent conscious response of the mind and will, the restraining of what could become sensual

modesty in bodily expression and a rational active response to God. Not a sensual or passive one, you write.

So just to explain a bit more about what the goal is within a Pentecostal worship experience I guess you could say, how that's influenced the Evangelical church and to counter that, is there basis scripturally or more room for a more emotional response in worship? You think of King David, when they're bringing the Ark back to Jerusalem, he was dancing before the Ark. His wife at the time looked down at him for doing that. Is there a basis for more emotional response in worship?

**Guest: David de Bruyn 46:28**

So when we consider what the charismatic or Pentecostal is seeking in worship, and of course, I'm generalizing and I'm sure there'll be perhaps a Pentecostal or charismatic brother or sister listening to this, who will perhaps take umbrage at it and say, No, you're painting with a very broad brush, but I'm trying to be accurate to what charismatics have written in their own works. In their own books, and in their own theology, they speak of the tabernacle model of worship, or what they sometimes call the five phase model. In this, they talk about the songs of his invitation, which is the first phase. Songs of personal testimony. Then engagement is second, through the gates with thanksgiving. The third is exaltation into his courts with praise. Fourth is adoration, solemn worship inside the holy place. And finally, intimacy in the Holy of Holies.

Now, as I say, this is a technique in search of a text, because this is not what Scripture enjoins. Rather, this is someone who is in search of an experience of profound, perhaps ecstatic intimacy which they associate with the felt presence of God. Therefore, now we have a theology that's built around that, along the lines of steps that you take, that progressively take you deeper and deeper towards what they would probably call the encounter with God. So you're essentially warming up and getting more and more and more drawn in until there must be a climactic moment of overwhelming encounter with God, where the sense of emotional bliss becomes transcendent, or I guess the better word would be ecstatic. Where one's no longer really even contemplating, we've left reason behind, we are almost gripped by a passive experience of supreme ecstasy in His presence.

Now, to answer the second question, and isn't there a place for more emotional worship? The answer to that would be, of course, so long as our emotions correspond with whom or what it is we're worshipping. In other words, an emotion and affection is always an ordinate or deserving or correspondent response to the objective beauty. There are different kinds of loves and different kinds of joy and different kinds of fear that correspond to the thing it is that you're admiring. You know, a miser loves his money, but that's not the same kind of love as someone loving a sunset or loving the grandeur of Mount Everest. These are different loves that are brought about by the object of the love.

So when we're talking about more intense emotion, what we want to say is, our emotion should be as intense as it could be, provided, it is affected by nothing but truth about our God. We want to respond rightly to who He is. Therefore, if the kind of love that I'm offering Him or the kind of joy or the kind of fear is perhaps a kind that belongs, for example to a boyfriend or a girlfriend or to a cosmic grandfather or to a severe dictator or to a permissive parent, all of

those images don't correspond to the God of Scripture, and therefore my love, my emotion won't correspond either.

So what we're really talking about is just as you can have propositions that correspond to who God is, so you can have emotions that correspond to who God is. And you have to get both right, because the one is who God is, the other is what He deserves, which is very much like the first and second commandment of the Ten Commandments. You've got to get the right God, that's commandment number one, and then you need to respond to Him the right way, that's commandment number two.

**Host: David Wheaton 50:49**

Very well said. David de Bruyn with us today here on The Christian Worldview. He is the pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Johannesburg, South Africa from where he is joining us today. I hope you'll join us next week for part two of this topic with David.

As a related topic, you may remember back on December 3rd and 10th of 2022 we did two programs on, Principles for Selecting Christian Music. You may want to go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org and hear those programs if you haven't already. We are not free to worship as we please. The church must strive to worship God in a way that God is pleased.

Finally, in case you missed earlier in the program, we announced that we have an upcoming Christian Worldview speaker series event featuring Christian journalist, Alex Newman. That's going to take place on Saturday, May 20th from 8:00 am to 10:30am central time at Fourth Baptist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota. The topic is, Being Informed of and Prepared for the Global Great Reset. There is no registration or admission fee, just come for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. If you do want to come to the pre event breakfast from 8:00 am to 9:00 am, please do register for that so we can know how much food to provide. Go to our website, TheChristianWorldview.org or call us toll free atv 1-888-646-2233. The event will not be live streamed online. You can find out more details at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org.

Thank you for joining us today on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. In just a moment, there'll be information on how you can hear a replay of today's program, order transcripts and resources and support this nonprofit radio ministry. Let's remember, Jesus Christ and His Word are the same yesterday, and today and forever. So until next time, Think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm! The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript or find out, "What must I do to be saved?" Go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported nonprofit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview Partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter or contact us, visit TheChristianWorldview.org, call 1-888-646- 2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. That's Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Thanks for listening to The Christian Worldview.