

## CLAVARY BIBLE COLLEGE: SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS WEEK (6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2013)

### Paper Presentation on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2013

Topic: “Turning the World Upside Down through Oneness Pentecostal Preaching & Evangelism”

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#### 1. Introduction:

Preaching is indispensable to Christianity. Without preaching a necessary part of its authenticity has been lost. John Stott rightly asserts that for Christianity is, in its very essence, a religion of the Word of God.<sup>1</sup>In supplementing this, Oswald J. Smith argues that the supreme task of the Church is the evangelization of the world.<sup>2</sup>As such, it is indeed an urgent needs for the contemporary Oneness Pentecostal Churches especially the United Pentecostal Church of North East India with its ministers, old and young, to study and reflect on our topic “Turning the world upside down through Oneness Pentecostal preaching and evangelism.”

One must be conscious that, in this paper we will conceptualize Pentecostal preaching and evangelism as referring to one entity without giving a distinct entity to the meaning of preaching and evangelism. The focus of this paper will be on the exclusivity of the Oneness Pentecostal preaching in the light of the apostolic spirituality of preaching and evangelism so as to offer a challenge to modern Oneness Pentecostal ministers specifically the CBC students who are called to turn the contemporary world upside down. Since Pentecostal preaching and evangelism is related with the Pentecostal movement, this paper will be introduced with the rise of modern Pentecostal movement with special consideration on the origin of the Oneness Pentecostal movement.

#### 2. The Rise of Modern Pentecostal Movement

Modern Pentecostal movement without dispute has its roots in the apostolic spirituality as witness in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Apostolic Church. After long years of silence<sup>3</sup>, the apostolic spirituality again manifested in modern era in God’s own programme and will, and this movement without ceasing will last till the rapture of the Church. The following phases can now be clearly identified as variations of Pentecostal movement with one common factor of Spirit baptism accompanied by *glossolalia* and the other gifts of the Spirit:

**2.1. The “Holiness” Pentecostal Movement:** This initial movement began with Charles Parham in 1901 and included the Azusa Street revival with William Seymour from 1906 to 1909.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John RW Stott, *I Believe in Preaching*, 1980, rpt. (Udyog Bhavan, Worli Colony, Mumbai: GLS Publishing, 2011), 17.

<sup>2</sup> Oswald J. Smith, *The Challenge of Missions* (Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh: Authentic Books, 2010), 19.

<sup>3</sup> Here, the silence does not mean actual cessation since there are faithful remnants in the history of the church that speak in tongues and receive the Biblical spiritual gifts.

<sup>4</sup> David Reed, “Aspects of the Origins of Oneness Pentecostalism” in *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins*, edited by Vinson Synan (Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos International, 1975), 2.

**2.2. The “Finished Work” Pentecostal Movement:** This began with Chicagoan William Durham in 1910 and includes the Assemblies of God and most of the Pentecostal groups organized after 1914.<sup>5</sup>

**2.3. The “Oneness” Pentecostal Movements:** This movement began in 1913<sup>6</sup> and results in the emergence of the United Pentecostal Church in 1945. The Jesus Name message was renewed in this Oneness Pentecostal movement. Based on the examples in Acts, some early Pentecostals began to baptize in Jesus’ name, including Parham (1901), some in Los Angeles during the Azusa Street Revival (1907), and Andrew Urshan, a Persian immigrant in Chicago (1910).<sup>7</sup>

**2.4. The Protestant “Neo-Pentecostal” Movement:** This dates from about 1960. After 60 years, the Protestant churches learned to tolerate Pentecostals among their members rather than excommunicating them.<sup>8</sup>

**2.5. The “Catholic charismatic” Pentecostal Movement:** This movement traces its beginning to 1966. Reed insists that this latest phase of the Spirit’s outpouring caught the church world by surprise. “Catholic Pentecostalism” seemed a contradiction in terms to many, yet by 1974 over 30,000 Catholic Pentecostals gathered at Notre Dame to celebrate the eight year of the movement’s progress.<sup>9</sup>

### **3. The Oneness Pentecostal Movement: Its Origin**

David Reed asserts that in the history of our world, many new movements have been born in the womb of expectancy. The worldwide Pentecostal camp meeting set in Los Angeles in April, 1913, was no exception. It had been advertised for months, and the crowds were overwhelming. A well-known and powerful evangelist, Mrs. Woodworth Etter, was the leading preacher for the month-long revival. Hundreds were receiving the baptism in the Spirit and being healed.<sup>10</sup>

What finally occurred during the revival that had historical import was recorded by one who was present, Frank Ewart. With hearts now prepared, the mood of expectancy was heightened by a sermon from Jeremiah 31:22 assuring the listeners that God was going to perform a “new thing” in their midst. The moment came at a baptismal service during which a Canadian evangelist, R.E. McAlister, in an exhortation, pointed out that the apostles baptized not in the triune formula but in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The congregation was visibly startled, and McAlister was straightway informed that a Dr. Sykes of heretical reputation so baptized. Many were provoked to thought, and one, John G. Scheppe, was inspired to study and prayer throughout the night. In the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>The present General Superintendent of the UPCI, David K. Bernard here insists that the Jesus Name message was renewed in the modern Pentecostal movement, which originated with a Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, in January 1901 led by Charles Parham and with the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California, from 1906 to 1908 led by William Seymour. So, almost all the Oneness Pentecostal traced the movement back to 1901 led by Parham.

<sup>7</sup> “The Jesus Name Centennial” by David K. Bernard, <http://www.upci.org/jnc> (1/8/2013)

<sup>8</sup> Reed, *Aspects of Pentecostal...*, 2-3.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>10</sup> David Reed was an ordained Episcopal clergyman, now a trinitarian, his birth and background were in the Oneness Pentecostal tradition. His family was prominent in the United Pentecostal Church in eastern Canada. See, Reed, *Aspects of Pentecostal...*, 145.

early hours of the morning, he ran through the camp, shouting that the Lord had shown him the truth on baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Many listened, and not long hence, many believed.<sup>11</sup>

The one to reap the future benefit of McAlister's catalytic observation was Ewart. He reports that he spent many hours with McAlister after the revival; and following a year of study on the subject of baptism, he preached his "first public sermon on Acts 2:38, on April 15, 1914."<sup>12</sup> It was only after Ewart had preached his first sermon on the new message that the baptismal formula received its full theological justification from this revival till today especially among the Oneness Pentecostals. Thus, the modern oneness revelation (as the Biblical doctrine) was initially and primarily a discovery of the name of God as used in water baptism. The Christocentrism of the millenarian movement of the last century helped pave the way for Oneness Pentecostalism. The adherents to this modern biblical revelation were first known as "Jesus only," which finally gave way about 1930 to "Jesus' name" and "oneness," and more to "Christian monotheists."

#### 4. Understanding Preaching and Evangelism

*What is Evangelism?*

The word "evangelical" is a general word meaning the "gospel" preaching or proclamation.<sup>13</sup> Evangelism in the Bible is a ministry of the spoken word. Evangelism biblically means "to make known the message of the gospel."<sup>14</sup> More than 140 times the New Testament uses such words as *diaggelo*, "to announce"; *kataggello*, "to tell thoroughly"; *euaggelizo*, "to spread good news"; *laleo*, "to talk or speak"; and *kerusso*, "to herald or proclaim".<sup>15</sup> Thus "evangelism" means a verbal proclamation of the exciting and welcome news, "the call for and an offering of repentance and remission of sins in Jesus name" (Luke 24:47). And *evangelization* is the intelligible, attractive, meaningful, purposive and persuasive presentation of the gospel.<sup>16</sup> From this we can see the importance of verbal communication of the message of Jesus Christ committed unto us.

*What is Preaching?*

Preaching is indispensable to Christianity. Let us first define two words which are related with preaching: (1) *Homily*: This word in English is derived from a Greek term *homilia* which means "to converse or talk." It conveys the idea of engaging in conversation.<sup>17</sup> (2) *Sermon*: This English word is derived from the Latin word *sermo*, which means "to speak." It is believed that Augustine was the

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 145 - 146.

<sup>12</sup> Frank J. Ewart, *The Phenomenon of Pentecost* (St. Louis: Pentecostal Publishing House, 1947), 51. As Quoted by Reed, Ibid., 146.

<sup>13</sup> O.L. Snaitang, *A History of Ecumenical Movement: An Introduction* (Bangalore: BTESSC/SATHRI, 2004), 143.

<sup>14</sup> The Bible does not give a quick answer in our search for a definition or meaning of evangelism. The word *evangelism* in fact is not in the Bible, but the words *evangelist* and *evangelize* are there, and from these we learn what evangelism is. The Greek word *euaggelizomeans* "to preach, to proclaim the good tidings, to tell the good news." The angels evangelized. They brought "good tidings of great joy" (Luke 2:10). Jesus evangelized. He preached the "glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1). Paul evangelized. He said, "I have preached to you the gospel" (2 Corinthians 11:7), Philip evangelized. He "preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). Evangelism in the Bible, then, was a ministry of the spoken word.

<sup>15</sup> George W. Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), 212.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 210.

<sup>17</sup> G. Isaiah, *Preach the Word: The basic of Homiletics* (Tiruvalla: ChristavaSahityaSamithi, 2004), 19.

first one to use the word “sermon” in reference to the address that was given to the Christian congregations by the preachers.<sup>18</sup>

In the New Testament, two Greek words are translated “preach.” One is *euangelizo* which means “to announce good news.” It is usually translated “preach the gospel” or “preach the good news” in the NIV and NASB. The other word is *kerysso* which means “to proclaim, to announce publicly.” The best examples of preaching by the early church are found in sermons recorded in Acts, especially two by Peter (Ac. 2:14-41; 3:11-26) and two by Paul (Ac. 13:16-43; 17:22-31). The common elements in these sermons reveal basic truths that were preached as believers in the early church set about evangelizing the world.<sup>19</sup> So, in the New Testament preaching connotes evangelizing the world by the good news of Jesus Christ.

Let us now see three samples of definitions of preaching being defined functionally and theologically: (1) Philips Brooks: “*Preaching is the communication of truth by man to men.*” (2) J.N. Pattison: “*Preaching is a spoken communication of divine truth with a view to persuasion.*” (3) W.E. Manning: “*Preaching is the manifestation of the incarnate word from the written word, by the spoken word.*”<sup>20</sup>

From the above definitions, it is obvious that preaching and evangelism are like two sides of a same coin. It cannot be separated as having a different entity; it always goes together connoting the gospel of the kingdom of God. Thus, we can say that apostolic preaching and evangelism means revealing the good news of salvation found in Jesus Christ by the spoken word to turn the evil-world upside down regardless of the addressee believe it or not.

## 5. Roots in the Apostolic Preaching & Evangelism: The Gospel Re-defined!

Oneness Pentecostal preaching and evangelism has its roots in the apostolic preaching and evangelism. This affirmation is true because the basic content preached in both apostolic and oneness Pentecostals is the gospel of salvation to turn the lost world upside down. Since the main concern in apostolic preaching is to evangelize the world through the good news of salvation, the question then is “What is the good news of salvation which turns the lost world upside down?”

In respond to the question, I shall try to be honest with the Scripture without being guided by any personal assumption or rationality since the Scripture is plain in answering this question. If we turn our Bible and paged to 1 Corinthians 15:1ff, the apostle Paul was straight in telling us the good news of salvation in Christ when he says, “*Brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures...*”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>19</sup> Lawrence O. Richards, “Preach” in *Encyclopedia of Bible Words* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1991), 501.

<sup>20</sup>Isaiah, *Preach the Word...*, 21.

<sup>21</sup> All Scriptural quotation will be taken from the King James Version, unless otherwise indicated.

Thus, without controversy, it is quite obvious that the gospel which Paul and the other apostles preached is a Christocentric-gospel. Let us remind ourselves that Paul and the other apostles were in agreement with the content of the gospel they preached. The focal point is Christ. The gospel is all about Christ. Now, let us systematize this into points and supplement with its meaning:

(i) *It starts with the Revelation of God.* It all starts with who Christ is? = It starts with the Oneness of God. The One true God manifested in flesh. God who reveals Himself bodily to human, first to the Jews, then to Paul himself (the risen Christ reveals Himself to Paul, which in turn Paul also received Him) and then to the Gentiles. This for us is "faith towards God." The most important thing here is the object of faith - God, who manifested Himself in Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 3:16; Gal. 3:26; Jn. 8:24). Thus, *faith* leads to salvation but alone does not.

(ii) *Then, it comes to Christ died for the sins of the world.* It's all about the love of God perfectly revealed on the Cross = Death to sin. It's our repentance from ignorance which leads to dead works (Jn. 8:). We also need to be crucified with Christ from the sins of the world (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; 6:14). Thus, *repentance* leads to salvation but alone does not.

(iii) *Next is Christ who was buried.* Not only the head, but the whole body of Christ was buried inside the empty tomb = We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, totally immerse our body in the water (Rom. 6:3-4.). This experience is for the remissions of our sins (cf. Acts 2:38). Thus, *water baptism* leads to salvation but alone does not.

(iv) *Then comes the last, Christ rose again.* After burial, Christ was resurrected from the dead as a new Adam.<sup>22</sup> It's not the Christ who died; it's not the Christ who was buried. But, it's the risen Christ who was a new Adam having a new appearance with a glorified body. The new Adam was the one who ascended into heaven = We shall be also in the likeness of this new Adam by receiving the Holy Ghost to walk in newness of life (cf. Rom. 6:5). Then, be like new Adam, being filled and walked in the Spirit, we will end up in ascending into heaven at the *Rapture* of the Church (Rom. 8:14). We need the new Adam indwells in us, and this is what the Bible speaks of the baptism (or filled) of the Holy Ghost. *Baptism of the Holy Ghost* leads us to salvation but does not alone.

From the above points, it is obvious that the key message of the gospel is salvation. And this salvation is attained through God's revelation, faith in Christ, repenting of our ignorance and wicked deeds, water baptism in God's reveals name, receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost and walking in the Spirit. Thus, the gospel is all about the good news of salvation which is in Christ, received through revelation, faith, water and spirit baptism which correspond to Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4, as Christ revelation, death, burial and, resurrection.

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<sup>22</sup>Here, I am obliged to use this term 'New Adam' to refer to the risen Christ who rose again from the dead. Since, Paul only speaks of first Adam and last Adam (cf. 1 Cor. 15:45), I made my sub-division with the latter as second Adam and new Adam. Being influenced by Paul in using Adam's typology, here, let us theologize first Adam as the first created man in the Garden of Eden, who led humanity into sin because of his disobedience to God's word. Then theologizing the second Adam as the suffering Christ, who lives among man and led humanity into life and finally died for the sins of the world because of his complete obedience to God's word. Then, I come out with the new Adam and prefer this term to refer to Christ after His resurrection who led humanity into Paradise by dwelling in the life of the believers.

### 5.1. A Glance at Apostolic preaching in Acts:

(i) *Peter as an apostolic preacher & evangelizer:* Peter as a preacher was always accompanied by the power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. His boldness and enthusiasm comes from the presence of Christ's Spirit in him. The central message of his preaching can be summed up as – resurrection of Christ, repentance, faith, water baptism in Jesus name, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and living holiness of life<sup>23</sup> (see, Acts. 2: 22-40; 10:34-48; cf. 8:14-17). Healing and deliverance was also witness in Peter's preaching (cf. Acts 3:1-10; 2:41-42).

(ii) *Philip as an apostolic preacher & evangelizer:* Philip's preaching was accompanied with signs and wonder bringing joy to the listeners (Acts 3:8-13). Obedience and total submission to the commandment "Get up and go" was also seen in the life of Philip as a preacher (Acts 8:26). The central message of Philip's preaching was the good news about Jesus Christ accompanied by water baptism (Acts 8:34-38).

(iii) *Paul as an apostolic preacher & evangelizer:* The focus of Paul's preaching was the unreached<sup>24</sup> i.e., specifically the Gentile nations. Authority, boldness, healings and miracles, were all manifested in the life of Paul as a preacher. The guidance or voice of the Holy Ghost was the motivating factor in Paul's preaching and evangelism.<sup>25</sup> Paul's preaching focus on Christ specifically to His death, burial and resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-2). Believe and repentance, water baptism in Jesus name, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost were the key messages in Paul's preaching and evangelism (see, Acts 16:14-15; 16:27-34; 19:4-6). Paul's preaching also focus on the immanent return of Christ, a future hope for believers, justice, self-control life and the coming judgment (cf. Acts 24:25; 1 Thess. 4 & 5; 1 Cor. 7:35; Romans 12:1-2, etc).

## 6. Apostolic Preaching & Evangelism as a Model in Oneness Pentecostal Preaching

Oneness Pentecostal preaching and evangelism is always related with the book of Acts. For us, Apostle Peter, Paul, Philip and other apostles are our model in our preaching and evangelism. This is what makes us turning back to the book of Acts. In Acts, the stage for preaching or evangelism is not a pulpit for the apostles, but the stage for their preaching is the place wherever they communicate the gospel to others. This can be a house, street, public places, roads, or temple, etc. Place is not the basic concern but the message is the main concern in apostolic preaching and evangelism. 1 Peter 3:15 plainly affirms this, when the apostle says, "Give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of hope that is in you..." Thus, the main concern is to preach the message of hope for

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<sup>23</sup> Peter's words in Acts 2:40 "save yourselves from this untoward generation" is in agreement with Paul's statement in Romans 12:1-2 which reads as "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And **be not conformed to this world:** but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." All these statements advocate holiness Christian living acceptable to God.

<sup>24</sup> Here unreached means people who have never heard about Christ. Romans 15:20-21 read as: "I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, to whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand."

<sup>25</sup> For instance see, Acts 16:7-10. Passage like "they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not" and "Come over into Macedonia, and help us" do affirm this.

every soul irrespective of time, place or peoples. Apostolic preaching and evangelism have a concern only for soul winning. "Try to get people save" is the main purpose.

*How the preaching was carried out?* It's the right question to come up with. Of course, apostolic preaching and evangelism was carried out with the power from above. The apostles were endowed with power from above, which means they were filled with the Holy Ghost in their preaching. In spite of the kind of person they were, the Spirit of the Lord is always with them. Acts 4:13 reads: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." The one who is inside them is much more powerful and stronger than the one who is in the world. The new Adam Christ says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:18).

Thus, apostolic preaching and evangelism is always related with the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ. "Preached by the power of the Holy Ghost" is what makes them turn the world upside down. Signs, wonders, miracles and deliverance always go together in their preaching and evangelism.<sup>26</sup> Apostolic preaching is preaching in the demonstration of the Spirit of Christ, and this truth is affirmed by Paul when he says: "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. 2:4-5)

## **7. Distinctive Characteristic of Pentecostal Preaching:**

This distinctive characteristic of preaching will be pointed out from the Pentecostal perspective in general<sup>27</sup> which give all the Pentecostals a unique identity from the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches.

(1) *Activity of the Holy Spirit-Unity and participation:* In Pentecostal preaching, a dance goes on among the preacher, the Holy Spirit, the hearer and the Word. The preacher seeks to communicate the letter and the spirit of the Word while simultaneously carrying on a dialogue with the congregation. The preacher speaks to them, and, as well, tries to understand the verbal feedback from the people ("Halleluah! Yes! Praise the Lord! Amen!") and the non-verbal body language, facial expression or applauding when a point is being made. At the same time the preacher is seeking to hear what the Spirit is saying at the moment. The Holy Spirit is actively present in anointed Pentecostal preaching.

(2) *Altar Calling:* The altar calling is a place and time where people spend time in prayer or receive prayer just after the preaching or in continuance with the preaching as a conclusion. This is one important characteristic of Pentecostal preaching. The altar is usually in front of the church facing

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<sup>26</sup> For instance, the healing of the lame man at gate Beautiful and the preaching that followed (Acts 3:1-24); Philip in Samaria preaching and healing (Acts 8:4-7).

<sup>27</sup> Here, our point of arguments will be based and extracted from the writings of Aldwin Ragoonath. See, Aldwin Ragoonath, *Preached the Word: A Pentecostal Approach* (Aldgate Road, Winnipeg, Canada: Agape Teaching Ministry of Canada, Inc.: 2004), 37 - 41, 91 - 105.

the minister; it can also be kneeling at one's pew. The altar calling can be used for several purposes like praying (for re-filling of the Holy Ghost, guidance, etc), tarrying,<sup>28</sup> praising and counseling, etc.

(3) *Hermeneutics of Pentecostal Preaching*: Pentecostals take Scripture seriously. They believe the Bible to be historically accurate. They view all of Scripture to be God's Word and trust both the Old and New Testament to teach doctrine, salvation through the atoning death of Christ and instructions on how to live the Christian life. Most Pentecostals build their doctrine on Luke and Acts of the Apostles. Furthermore, Pentecostals historically take the New Testament text seriously. They seek to share the same experiences as the early church. Pentecostals, hermeneutically, do not see a rational reflection of Scripture but rather a lived-out experience. Its theology is descriptive and oral as in the early church.

(4) *A Holistic approach to Preaching*: Luke 4:16-20 is foundational and primary to understanding Pentecostal preaching where Jesus gives a definition and example of holistic preaching says Aldwin Ragoonath.<sup>29</sup> Pentecostal Christians see in Jesus a model of how one should preach (minister) and understand preaching (cf. Mat. 9:35). Anointed preaching, signs, wonders, miracles and deliverance go together. The early church did continue in this pattern of healing and preaching.

(5) *The Gifts of the Spirit that helps Preaching*: We may be born with gifts and may develop our abilities and talents but the gifts of the Spirit are divine abilities given by the Holy Spirit to individuals for personal edification, building up of the body of Christ and winning non-Christian to Christ.<sup>30</sup> The following group of gifts either brings authority to preaching or helps preaching - *discerning of spirit, healings and miracles, word of knowledge and wisdom, pastor and teacher and evangelist*. It is obvious that all the gifts of the Spirit help preaching in one way or another.

## 8. Distinctiveness of Oneness Pentecostal Preaching & Evangelism in terms of Theology

Here, we shall only point out the distinctiveness of Oneness Pentecostal preaching and evangelism in terms of theology from any other preaching. This is what makes us turning the world upside down in every generation starting from the apostolic time and will continue on until the Rapture of the Church.

8.1. *Emphasis on the doctrine of the Oneness of God*: The main distinctiveness of Oneness Pentecostal preaching is our emphasis on the teaching of the oneness of God as opposed to three-unity persons of God. As such, the main content and focus of our preaching is Jesus Christ.

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<sup>28</sup> Tarrying is similar to prayer but goes further. It is waiting in God's presence for God to do something. Tarrying can be someone waiting for God to give the baptism of the Holy Ghost or waiting for God to give direction in something they may be thinking about and find a decision difficult. See, Ragoonath, *Preached the Word...*, 39.

<sup>29</sup> Luke 4:18-19 read as "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*"

<sup>30</sup> Some people teach that we are born with gifts and talents and they do not make a distinction between spiritual gifts and talents (natural gifts). To reduce Spiritual gifts to talents is to deny the supernatural acts of God. At the same time, God also uses the talents we had before becoming a Christian for God uses anything that we surrender to Him. For example, if Robin is a good public speaker before he was converted, God will continue to use him as an effective public speaker.

8.2. *Emphasis on the name of JESUS:* Since oneness theology is a Christo-centric theology, the main emphasis on our preaching is the perfect and revealed name of God, Jesus Christ. We emphasize this name Jesus - in water baptism, in spirit baptism, in foot washing, in healing, in exorcism and also in our praise and worship.

8.3. *Emphasis on the Holiness of Life:* Oneness Pentecostal preaching does not only give its concern to doctrine alone but also give its emphasis on a consistent and true Christian living. In oneness theology, *soteriology* is connected with holiness of life; as such we denied the doctrine of "Eternal Security." Oneness Pentecostal churches practice and preach on this topic of holiness of life ever since the initiation of the Pentecostal movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Apparently, the Pentecostal movement has its root in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Holiness movement.

## 9. The Challenge for Us: We the CBC'ians

9.1. *Identity Crisis:* One important challenge especially for the CBC students is about our identity as a preacher. We must know beyond all doubt that we are divinely called to be a preacher. There can be no room for uncertainty here. With apostle Paul, we must be able to say: "For I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (NIV).

9.2. *Preparation:* The challenge for us is not simple preparing a sermon, but preparing ourselves spiritually for the message. Lack of preparation can result in lack of confidence. If we are to win the confidence of others, we must first have a confidence in ourselves. So, a good spiritual preparation is the challenge for us. We must recognize our identity as a preacher. We are God's messenger elected and sent into the world to preach.

9.3. *Dedication & Delivery:* After a good and spiritual preparation, we must dedicate our preparation (script) to God for His anointing. Anointed delivery is what makes the listener's heart turn upside down. We must have a good personal time with God before delivery. We must accept that we are nothing without God. Talented or natural gifted speaking will not necessarily turn the world upside down. We need the power of the Holy Ghost actively working in our delivery. Dependence on the Holy Spirit instead of our script is what makes us different from other churches.

9.4. *Making the Message clear:* George Sweeting rightly challenge us by insisting that it's best to avoid long, run-on sentences and theological phrases for plain, understandable words. Jesus said, "Feed my sheep," not "my giraffes." If we must use a difficult word, follow it with several understandable synonyms.<sup>31</sup> In making the message clear, the challenge for us is also the use of illustration in our preaching for our Lord did all the time in His preaching. Sweeting rightly goes on saying that "As window admit light to a house, an illustration or quotation brings clarity to the sermon. Illustrations are nail sinkers that drive home truth. It is a compliment of the highest order when teenagers tell me they understood every word."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> George Sweeting, "Evangelism and Preaching" in *The Moody Handbook of Preaching*, edited by John Koessler (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 89.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 90.

9.4. *Understanding & Addressing our Postmodern and Globalized context:* The big challenge for us in our preaching today is to address our post-modern world. The Swiss Reformed theologian, Professor Karl Barth once said *"in order to bear witness of the risen Lord, we ought to hold the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other."* We need to inform and address our present context and social problems (especially misused of modern technologies), by the Biblical text, the "revealed Word of God" so as to bring an inner and structural transformation.<sup>33</sup> We must remember that Paul, a preacher is also a contextual preacher. Addressing context with the text is a challenge for us today. Within our Church (UPC of NEI), a challenge for us again is that we need to address the uprising gap between the haves and the have not by our message of oneness in Christ. We need to emphasize our oneness not only in terms of doctrine but also in our fellowship and as a community of God's covenant people.

9.5. *Addressing Individual:* Our understanding of preaching as simple delivering the message is also a challenge for us today. We are called not simple to deliver or preach but to turn individual's heart and world upside down. Another challenge for us is that, as a preacher we are not only to address and focus to our listeners. We must remember that we are also the focus of our preaching. Our preaching is for all including the one who deliver. *"There is the door over there, you can go and walk out"* is not the right message, but *"there is the door over there, follow me and I will lead you out"* is the right message.

9.6 *Re-experiencing the text and helping the congregation experience the text:* Hermeneutically, for Pentecostals, re-experiencing the text becomes the starting point for building a sermon. We are not saying that this is the only starting point from which to build a sermon but it is the best starting point. A Pentecostal hermeneutics is Pentecostal preaching which starts with re-experiencing of the text; the text must become real to the preacher before it can become real to the audience. This is a big challenge for us. Try to "preach your deeds." There is a song in Mizo which says, *"Your action speaks louder than your voice."* What is needed today is someone who is transparent, who has experienced the text from God and can communicate it with passion. Here, the preaching becomes relevant and alive when the preacher re-experiences the text and helps the congregation to re-experience the text.

9.7. *The Great Commission:* Lastly, the challenge for us again is to acknowledge our identity as a preacher and our obligation to preach. It's not a matter of our decision or will to preach, it is an imperative. We are called and commanded to preach (cf. Acts 10: 42). We are to "get up and go" (Acts 9:26) which is opposed to "sit back and relax".

The so called "Great Commission" of Matthew 28:19-20 is summed up in four duties to be fulfilled (with a promise in connection), namely: (i) **Go** ye therefore, (ii) **Teach** all nations, (iii) **Baptizing** them, (iv) Teaching them to **Observe** all things (whatsoever I have commanded you). The promise herewith is, *"And lo, I am with you always."* So great was the commission that Jesus promised to accompany those who dared to obey it. His promise was not for one short period but for *"always (every day), even unto the end of the world."* The Greek word literally means *"I am with you all the*

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<sup>33</sup> K. Lal\hazuala, "A Challenge in Contemporary Pentecostal Missiology: Understanding Mission as Evangelism, Contextualization, Inculturation, & Witnessing Christ in a Resistant Culture" A Paper presented on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2012 at Calvary Bible College, Shillong on the occasion "Spiritual Emphasis Week", 3.

*days.*" Our Lord promise was given on conditions, and those conditions were the fulfilling of the commandments contained in this so called "The Great Commission".<sup>34</sup>

## 10. Conclusion

Preachers are human, and human wrestle with ego. We must remind ourselves that the goal in preaching is not to be a great preacher but to be an effective preacher to turn our listener's heart upside down. Hitting this goal consistently is a complicated, multifaceted enterprise that plays with our head and our heart. Joseph M. Stowell rightly affirms: *"I am humble when I remember that God even spoke through a donkey in the Old Testament."*<sup>35</sup> As preacher and evangelizer, we must remind ourselves that we are just the microphone used by God to speak aloud to His creatures.

Let me closed the paper with the words of David Yonggi Cho, pastor of the world's largest church in Seoul, Korea and let us ponder upon it to shed a light in our mission to turn the world upside down.

*"As a Pentecostal preacher, the most important thing for me is to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit every moment as I preach. No matter how well we may have prepared a sermon, unless the Holy Spirit is with us when we are delivering it, that sermon will wear us out, and our congregations will not be moved by it. When we are preaching, we have to wholly depend upon the Holy Spirit and receive His help. The greatest weapon available to the Pentecostal preacher is the Word of God. If a preacher does not have the skill to prepare the Word of God for the congregation to be spiritually fed by the sermon, he or she is not a qualified preacher. One must have the ability to skillfully deliver an adequate message in home visits, in cell meetings, behind the pulpit, or wherever he or she may go. This is a requirement. Then pastors can feed good pasture to their flocks, so they can have healthy spiritual lives."*<sup>36</sup>

### Questions for Group Discussion:

1. A homiletician by name Haddon Robinson say that he had devoted his life to answer one question: Why is it that some can preach for an hour and it seems like five minutes while others preach for only five minutes and it seems like an hour? Is the problem with the preacher or the listeners/congregations? Can we give a reasonable and meaningful answer to it?

2. "Modern understanding of preaching as pulpit ministry" vrs "Understanding preaching as a public, street or home ministry" as Jesus and the apostles did. What makes us to understand preaching as the former than the latter? How can or shall we do (as an individual preacher or the Church - UPC of NEI as a whole) to go back to the book of Acts in our understanding of preaching as a public, street or home ministry.

3. What do we think will be the main problem in our preaching if we fail to turn one's heart or thought upside-down?

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<sup>34</sup> K. Lal\hazuala, "Interpreting the Great Commission from Oneness Pentecostal Perspective" A Bible Study Paper presented on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2012 at Calvary Bible College, Shillong on the occasion "Spiritual Emphasis Week", 1.

<sup>35</sup> Joseph M. Stowell, "Why I love to Preach" in *The Moody Handbook...*, 69.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted from foreword page of Ragoonath, *Preached the Word...*, 10.

4. In Jesus' and apostolic ministry, a preacher is also a healer. What is the reason for the absence or lack of signs and wonders that should go along with our preaching since we are the ones who preached the full gospel of salvation. How shall or can we become a healing preacher again as our Lord and His chosen vessel, Apostle Paul. What shall we do? What is the lacking? What happen to us?

5. Urbanization is a phenomenal issue in today's Indian society. Since this is the social reality of our country, do we feel the need to extent and carry out our Oneness Pentecostal preaching and evangelism especially to urban places (viz., cities & towns in a state or metropolitan cities in our nation) instead of focusing to the village or rural poor. If so, can we suggest a ways or strategies to carry out this evangelistic mission to the intellectuals or in urban places? Why do we approach and limit our preaching only to those of a lower status than us, the uneducated, the rural people or the poor people? Why not to the rich people, the intellectuals or the educated people, the officers or the bureaucrats, the ministers or governors, etc? We are commanded to preach to all the peoples!!Are we not daring to unlock the keys to the Kingdom of God? Paul was bold enough to unlock the keys and preached to high officials of his days like Agrippa (Acts 26:28), and Felix (Acts 24:22ff.).