

Korean Pentecostalism and the Preaching of Prosperity

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Zusammenfassung

In diesem Aufsatz liegt der Fokus auf der pentekostalen Kirche in Korea. Die pentekostale Lehre wird oft für ein Synonym für die Prosperitätstheologie in Korea gehalten. Im Allgemeinen wird Prosperität als eine Bedingung für Erfolg definiert und als materielles Wohlergehen und wirtschaftlichen Erfolg charakterisiert. Doch die pentekostale Kirche hat kein Monopol auf die Prosperitätstheologie. Diese findet sich auch in der reformierten Tradition, sofern sie als Prosperität für die Gemeinschaft verstanden wird. Eine Prosperitätstheologie, die eine arginalisierte Gruppe von Menschen ausschließt, beispielsweise einen Großteil der Bevölkerung auf der südlichen Erdhalbkugel, dürfte kein geeignetes Mittel sein. Prosperitätstheologie darf nicht dazu missbraucht werden, falsche ökonomische Hoffnungen zu wecken oder physische Heilung oder individuelles materielles Wohlergehen zu verheißen, sie sollte das generelle Wohl für Gemeinden in aller Welt einschließen. Durch eine tiefere Anerkennung des Heiligen Geistes und durch die Weisheit, die der Geist mitteilt, müssen wir unser Verständnis des Dreieinen Gottes gründlich wiederherstellen. Anerkennung des Heiligen Geistes heißt auch Fluidität, Vielfalt, Wohlstand zu akzeptieren und jede androzentrische Ideologie zu korrigieren.

Schlüsselbegriffe

- Pentekostalismus in Südkorea
- Wohlstandstheologie
- Gemeinwohl und Wohlstand
- Presbyterianismus

Abstract

In this article, the author describes the development of the Korean Protestant Church, focusing on the Pentecostal Church. Pentecostal doctrine is often considered to be a synonym for prosperity theology in Korea. Generally, prosperity is defined as a requirement for success and is characterized as material well-being and economic success. The Pentecostal Church, however, does not have a monopoly on prosperity theology. Prosperity theology can also be found in the Reformed tradition, provided it is defined as prosperity for the community. Prosperity theology that excludes marginalized groups of people, for instance much of the population in the southern hemisphere, would not be a proper application. Prosperity theology must not be misused in such a way as to raise false economic hopes or to promise physical healing and individual material wealth. It should include general well-being for communities in all parts of the world. Through a deeper acknowledgment of the Holy Spirit and through the wisdom which the Spirit imparts, we must fully restore our understanding of the Triune God. Acknowledgment of the Holy Spirit also means accepting fluidity, diversity, and prosperity and correcting androcentric ideology in general.

Key words

- Pentecostalism in South Korea
- prosperity theology
- common good and prosperity
- Presbyterianism

Sumario

La autora presenta en este artículo el desarrollo del protestantismo en Corea. El foco está en la Iglesia pentecostal. La doctrina pentecostal es considerada en Corea como un sinónimo de la teología de la prosperidad. Generalmente, la prosperidad es definida como una condición para el éxito y caracterizada por el bienestar material y el éxito económico. Pero la Iglesia pentecostal no tiene el monopolio de la teología de la prosperidad, que también se encuentra en la tradición reformada, si se entiende por prosperidad la de la comunidad. Una teología de la prosperidad que excluye a un grupo de personas, por ejemplo a una gran parte de la población de los países del sur, no es el medio adecuado. La teología de la prosperidad no puede ser utilizada para despertar falsas expectativas económicas o prometer salud física o un bienestar material individual, sino que debería incluir el bienestar general de las comunidades en todo el mundo. A través de un reconocimiento más profundo del Espíritu Santo y de su sabiduría tenemos que recuperar fundamentalmente nuestro concepto del Dios trinitario. Reconocimiento del Espíritu Santo significa también aceptar la fluidez, la diversidad y el bienestar así como corregir toda ideología androcéntrica.

Conceptos claves

- Pentecostalismo en Corea del Sur
- teología de la prosperidad
- bien común y prosperidad
- presbiterianismo

1 Introduction

The extent to which preaching of prosperity is related to Korean Pentecostalism is the subject of this article. Additionally, I would like to clarify whether the preaching of prosperity is exclusive to Pentecostalism and consider what kind of connection Reformed tradition (Presbyterianism)¹ might have to this matter. From there, I explore the possibility that these traditions might learn from each other, reinforce each other, and challenge each other for self-correction and transformation. To this end, the article is composed of four parts: a general overview of the development of Korean Protestantism, the development of Korean Pentecostalism, specific characteristics of Pentecostalism, and a constructive challenge for preaching prosperity.

2 An Introduction to Protestantism in Korea

Korea's very first Protestant church was founded by a Korean who had »received the Gospel« in China, a fact of which Korean Christians are proud. However, the Reformed Presbyterian Church was first given its structure through American missionary ventures.² The country's first Presbyterian missionary was Horace Newton Allen (1858-1932) who was sent to Korea as a medical missionary in 1884. With the support of the King and Queen, he established Gwanghyewon (House of Extended Grace) in 1885. On April 5 of the same year, the British-born Horace Grant Underwood (1859-1916) came as a Presbyterian missionary together with his friend, Methodist missionary Henry Gerhard Appenzeller (1858-1902), an American of Swiss heritage.

During the socio-politically uncertain period of modernization, Christianity found easy access to Korea's population. Reading Christian scriptures contributed much to the population's literacy levels, especially among women and other marginalized groups. The proclamation of the gospel offered new hope and liberation from the subjugation of old social and cultural conventions. A clear transformation in the life and practice of Christians was very noticeable. The various church missions accelerated modernization in Korea. The establishment of churches, schools, and hospitals and the advancement of women's movements represent some positive results that emerged as a result of missionary activity. Although we ought not over-idealize the impact of such activities, we can certainly say that Christian missionary work has contributed positively to these developments.

There had been no conflict among religions throughout Korean history. The introduction of Christianity did not change that fact; religions continued to co-exist with tolerance for one another.³ While the drastic secularization that characterized the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century West rolled on, people in Korea were beginning to grapple with

1 I use »Reformed tradition« interchangeably with terms such as »Presbyterianism« in this article.

2 In 1893, missionaries from the United States created the first church council in Korea. They agreed on ten regulations for the Korean mission, the first of which was that the goal of evangelism in Korea would be to target the working classes rather than the high-upper classes.

3 For example, the Korean Catholic Church was indebted to Buddhist monks for hiding Christians during the Catholic martyrdom under the Chosen government. At the time, Buddhists showed tolerance toward Christianity rather than competition. COMMISSION OF CHONJINAM (ed.), *The Pilgrim of Chonjinam*, 3. Ebook: <http://www.chonjinam.org/intro.asp>. (Accessed August 16, 2015). Besides this episode, we can see occasional cooperation among different religious

groups with respect to national matters, such as the independent movement against Japanese colonialism on March 1, 1919, when an assembly of thirty-three religious and professional leaders put forth a Declaration of Independence. To this day, major religious representatives participate in joint public ceremonies, and major hospitals offer different religious counseling services. There is, however, much more work that could to improve religious cooperation.

the gospel for the first time. Christianity's arrival in Korea was marked by a loss of interest in established Korean religions.

In contrast, Koreans were very interested in Western culture in general and in the newly introduced Christianity in particular. Because of the political and social uncertainties of that period, Christianity was relatively easy for people to adopt. During a period characterized by a seemingly hopeless situation, people discovered in the gospel something new – the hope of the kingdom of God, the vision of which was not altogether foreign from traditional religious constructs. The Bible has great authority among Christians, and its story, especially the Exodus story, was read and heard against the backdrop of the story of liberation from the Japanese. So understood, Christianity was almost a sanctuary that offered security and comfort. In difficult times, people earnestly sought support from God and had a deep longing for God. The focus on Bible study groups, a zeal for Bible reading, and prayer both in the early morning hours and in small prayer communities were and continue to be important features of Korean churches. Since Korea was colonized by Japan, a non-Christian country, the attitude toward colonialism versus missions differs from that of many countries colonized by so-called Christian countries. »Mission« and »church« never did carry the same negative connotations as »colonialism.«

Young churches, including most Korean churches, have the tendency to stay alive, because – in contrast to the older churches in Europe or North America – they are less structured or established. The opportunity for one to freely choose a congregation to belong to, and for that congregation to then be able to freely choose their pastor unbridled by a parochial system has meant that people are more motivated to actively contribute to building community. An organic transformation that carries vitality in itself is still possible. However, the question is: how can the Church be sustained and developed in light of the twin realities of an aging society and the many attractions outside church that vie for the attention of the younger generations. Additionally, churches must ask themselves how Christianity impacts a society that is under manifold pressure of global grand-discourse like neo-liberalism, and pressures such as global warming and unemployment. It is important to study and apply the positive aspects of the prosperity theology in Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism in order to raise a prophetic voice and promote the welfare of whole communities. Thus, I would like to imagine an ecumenical dialogue between Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism.

Although the roots of the Presbyterian Reformed Church of South Korea date back to Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin, Martin Luther is better known than his counterparts from Zurich and Geneva. Despite this fact, Calvin has had a greater inner influence on the Church through his doctrine of predestination, and his Presbyterian structure about the Church's ministry and polity. Calvin's teachings were introduced to Korean Christianity in a revised form by American-style churches. Resulting from the competitive nature of

4 On the other hand there are many Pentecostal or Charismatic elements in the Presbyterian churches.

5 I use »Pentecostal« interchangeably with terms such as »Full Gospel« and »Assembly of God« in this article.

6 Hong KUN-SU, The Common Task of the Mission of the South-North Korean Churches, in: *The Encounter between the South and North Churches and Theology of Peace-Reunification*, ed. THE REUNIFICATION COMMITTEE OF KNCC, Seoul 1990, 157. Cited in Hong-Jung LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements in Korea, in: *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, ed. Allan H. ANDERSON and Walter J. HOLLENWEGER, London 1999, 150.

7 See Young-Hoon LEE, Korean Pentecost: The Great Revival of 1907, in: *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4/1 (2001) 73-83; William BLAIR/Bruce HUNT, *The Korean Pentecost and the Suffering which Followed*, Carlisle 1977, 23-79; Hong-Jung LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements in Korea, in: *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, ed. Allan H. ANDERSON/Walter J. HOLLENWEGER 1999, 141-143.

American missionary societies and the anti-Communist stance with regard to North Korea, deep rifts within Korea's Protestant Church have been a chronic problem.

Not only are almost all Protestant churches in Korea affected by some dogmatic Calvinist legacy, but the Presbyterian system with which his name is identified is very influential.⁴ Calvin's doctrine of double predestination has had grave repercussions in South Korea as it has been (mis)used to stamp those who hold different beliefs or ideological commitments as »enemies.« South Korean believers usually label their North Korean brothers and sisters as belonging to the »axis of evil« – further evidence that Korean mainline Protestant churches – Presbyterian, Methodist, and Pentecostal⁵ – are affected by a basic political tendency towards anti-communist ideology. These simple dualistic ideologies are characteristic of mainline Korean Protestantism in general and of Korean Pentecostalism in particular. Insecurity and instability following the division of the country is one of the biggest problems in the Korean peninsula, and churches are negligent in promoting reconciliation between the two countries. South Korean theologian Hong Kun-Su describes this kind of dualistic tendency in the following way:

- 1 Capitalism is democratic, whereas communism is dictatorial.
- 2 Capitalism is humanitarian and moral, whereas communism is inhumane and immoral.
- 3 Capitalism produces freedom, love, and peace, whereas communism produces destruction, violence, genocide, and revolution.
- 4 Capitalism is religious and Christian, whereas communism is anti-religious and anti-Christian.
- 5 The US is a good Christian nation that has enjoyed God's blessing as the chosen people of today and is a great benefactor and savior to Korea, whereas North Korea is an »evil empire« which should be destroyed.⁶

Because Presbyterian denominations represent the majority of Protestants in Korea, Presbyterianism commands influence well beyond the boundary of such denominations. For example, South Korean Protestantism places a strong emphasis on forms of piety expressed in such things as house fellowship groups, Bible study groups, and early morning-prayer. These traits are common across denominational splits. The origin of morning-prayer relates also to traditional Korean religious piety. Additionally, Korean churches are strongly characterized by positive Calvinistic traits such as hard work, a disciplined life, and accepting one's profession as one's calling. These qualities are combined with and reconfirmed by Confucian values. However, there is a negative common ground between Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism, and that is the predominance of patriarchy. Western patriarchy propagated by US missionaries and Calvinistic Puritanism has mingled with the traditional Korean patriarchy of Confucian origin. The result is reinforced gender injustice in the Church system in general.

3 The Development of Korean Pentecostalism and the Preaching of Prosperity

So what contributed to the dramatic growth of the Korean Pentecostal Church? We might consider two key events in the Church's history: The first is the famous Great Revival of 1907 that took place in Wonsan (today in North Korea) in the midst of political upheaval.⁷ There are a number of reasons to believe that this event was, from the Korean Pentecostal

perspective, orchestrated by the power of the Holy Spirit.⁸ Political imprisonment by Japan compelled a counter-movement. The old religious values had not been able to provide transformative energy, and so there was a pervading desire for a new religion.⁹ Certain points of contact between Christianity and traditional Korean religions – viewing God as creator and sustainer, for instance – were already in place, so people did not perceive Christianity as particularly strange, facilitating its acceptance. People found physical protection and spiritual consolation in churches. Christianity was relatively compatible with, and in many respects replaced, the old religions. Because it was a unifying rather than a separating force, the Korean Pentecostal perspective viewed the Holy Spirit as bringing about conversion and repentance and agreement among persons and church communities.¹⁰

The second event took place in 1958 when, under the rubble of a ruinous war, the Korean Pentecostal Church (Assembly of God) was founded. The ideology of the Cold War was incorporated into Pentecostalism's rapidly growing populace, and found fertile soil among a people whose primary concern was material and economic growth. While Western society was facing the problem of proliferate secularization during the 1950s, people in Korea were learning how to live in the aftermath of Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War. In these difficult times, Korean believers never lost their zeal and their desire for God. Following significant economic growth, the ecclesiastical landscape changed somewhat, but a living relationship with God, even if it is sometimes associated with fear of punishment, remains a point of emphasis in the Korean Church even today.¹¹

Between these two historical moments, there was a missionary who brought a more systematically Pentecostal movement to Korea. Mary Rumsey arrived in 1928 after the Azusa Street Revival in 1907.¹²

In addition to Rumsey's missionary work, a Korean named Lee Youngdo also contributed. Youngdo was very active in the Pentecostal movement in 1928. In the same year, he established a prayer place and was influential in the propagation of the Pentecostal movement and the founding of the Yoido Church.

The emergence and growth of Korean Pentecostalism ought to be considered against this background. Pentecostal pioneers Choi Jashil (1915-1989)¹³ and David Cho Yonggi (1936-),¹⁴ who met at the same Bible school, began a church ministry together, meeting first in Choi's apartment and then, the following year, in a tent. From the beginning, both leaders placed much emphasis on prayer and healing.¹⁵ After these humble beginnings, the community witnessed rapid growth, gaining more than 100,000 members within a few decades. This created a series of logistical challenges with respect to meeting space and the church saw the

8 The American Pentecostal movement originated 1906 with William Seymour, son of African slaves in a black church on Azusa Street, Los Angeles. Not long after, in 1907, Korea's revival took place with an early emphasis on Spirit baptism.

9 On Korean-Christian nationalism during the 1910 Edinburgh Conference, see Brian STANLEY, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, Grand Rapids 2009, 118ff.

10 See LEE, Korean Pentecost (see note 7), 79.

11 See LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements (see note 7), 141.

12 The official missionary from the US Assembly of God was Abner Ches-

nut, who arrived 1952. In 1953, the Korean Assembly of God was officially organized and in 1954 they opened their own theological seminary. See Vinson SYNAN, *In the Latter Days*, trans. by International Institute of Theology, Seoul 1995, 240ff.

13 Regarding Yonggi Cho's mother-in-law, see Jashil CHOI, *Wunder in Korea*. Durch Fasten und Gebet, Karlsruhe 1981.

14 See »Emeritus Pastor Cho.« Online: <http://davidcho.fgtv.com> (Accessed on August 15, 2010).

15 Healing ministry is one of the most important components of Yoido Full Gospel Church. Early in his ministry, David Cho healed a disabled

woman and her son, and this had a significant influence on the growth of the congregation. This story is comparable to C. Blumhardt's healing ministry that began with Gottlieb Dittus.

16 See Young-Hoon LEE, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Doctrinal Development*, Oxford 2009, 91-117.

17 Harvey COX, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, Cambridge 2001, 219ff.

18 Walter J. HOLLENWEGER, After Twenty Years' Research on Pentecostalism, in: *International Review of Mission* 75 (1986) 6.

need to relocate a number of times. In 1973, the community finally moved to its present site, and today, Korea's Yoido Full Gospel Church has 750,000 registered members.¹⁶ Referring to this mega church, Harvey Cox legitimately asks whether such a phenomenon ought to be criticized as an expression of mere syncretism or presented as evidence of the positive and transformative power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷

A specific feature of the Yoido Full Gospel Church is its »Prayer Mountain,« a retreat center for prayer and fasting where mystical revelations and other experiences with the Holy Spirit are not uncommon. Walter Hollenweger calls this phenomenon, along with dreams, »a kind of icon for the individual and the community.«¹⁸

The tenets of the Yoido Full Gospel Church might be summarized as »threefold blessings« and »fivefold good news,« the latter referring to salvation (rebirth), the fullness of the Holy Spirit, healing, blessing, and the second coming of Jesus.¹⁹ The former refers to prosperity of the soul, prosperity in all things, and a healthy life.²⁰ David Cho based his preaching of prosperity on the following verse: »Dear friend, and I pray that all goes well for you. I hope that you are as strong in body, as I know you are in spirit« (3 John 1, 2).²¹

David Cho underlined the following dimensions of his prosperity ministry: blessing and prosperity, divine healing, successful home cell groups, and prayer for revival.²² »Prosperity« is one Cho's favorite terms. He insists that the theology of prosperity is not problematic. In order to receive God's blessing, it is not wrong to pray for that blessing. To receive God's blessing is the natural desire of all human beings.

Some theologians claim that if a person asks God to bless him in a material sense, he is in a low spiritual state. They call it »prosperity religion.« Is this wrong? Where can we go to be blessed if not to God? When God created the heavens and the earth and all the things that are in it, He also blessed man ... The message of a pastor is to include God's blessings. Obviously, it is wrong to proclaim only material blessings. Above all, pastors must preach the redemption of Jesus Christ.²³

The background of the Full Gospel Church is rooted in optimism, which can be considered in relation to US religious figures such as Joel Osteen, Robert Schuler, and Vincent Peale.²⁴ Moreover, in terms of theological doctrine, fundamental theology is overall much more affected to the theology of David Cho. The influence of intensive prayer and revival each partially account for the rapid growth of Pentecostalism.²⁵ C. Peter Wagner and Donald A. Mc Gavran's theology of Church Growth also had an impact on the growth of Cho's congregation.²⁶

19 To illustrate the strength of this congregation, consider a few simple keywords: good networking system as an organic model, extensive human resources, accessibility to every local area, spontaneity, narrativity, and emotional approach, among others.

20 Foursquare gospel and the three-fold blessing are interrelated. However, a healthy, long life and material blessings are not exclusive to Pentecostal prosperity. These concepts already existed in ancient Korean religiosity prior to the arrival of Pentecostalism. For instance, the core values of Taoism, which is one of the essential parts of traditional Korean thought, include eating well, living a healthy, long life

with abundant material blessings, and attaining eternal life – all of these elements can be seen to have influenced Korean Christianity. However, such thinking reduces the biblical understanding of »blessing« to material blessings for individuals and families. The Taoist idea of eternal life and the idea of a Taoist hermit with supernatural powers are confused with the Christian understanding of resurrection and syncretism.

21 Yonggi CHO, The Secret Behind the World's Biggest Church, in: *Azusa Street and Beyond*, ed. L. Grant MCCLUNG, Jr., 2nd Edition, Alachua, FL 2012, 135.

22 Young-hoon LEE, Life and Ministry of David Yonggi Cho and the Yoido Full Gospel Church, in: *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 7/1 (2004) 3-20 (15).

23 Yonggi CHO, The Secret (see note 21), 135.

24 David MARTIN, *Tongues of Fire: The Exposition of Pentecostalism in Latin America*, Cambridge, MA 1990, 145, quoted by Dukman BAE, Inquiry of the Growth of the Yoido Full Gospel Church, in: *Pentecostal Theology in the 21st Century*, Daejeon 2009, 276.

25 BAE, Inquiry (see note 24), 271ff.

26 Ibid., 278.

Besides these components, the main aspects of Cho's success may have been his simple testimony to the truth of the Bible and his personal charisma. This witness is related to his own healing experiences that are very impressive to the general population. Hearing promises of healing, socially marginalized people were consoled and encouraged. The geographical situation of the congregation also played a significant role. Those who were situated near the church in the beginning were, on average, marginalized people groups. Cho's encouraging witness offered support to many of these people. Additionally, the political situation in the 1970s helped church development indirectly because under the dictatorship of the time people were not allowed to gather in large groups except for evangelistic purposes. The desire to be part of a close-knit yet larger community undoubtedly helped promote membership.²⁷

To sum up, Cho's early preaching was contextually appropriate, optimistic, and widely accepted by ordinary people. Currently, Full Gospel Church retains a franchisee-style structure. Though Protestant churches do not generally have any parochial system, within the capital city of Seoul, there are several branches, providing easy access to many parts of the city. Their cell-group structure is nationwide renowned, such that not only other churches, but even Buddhist temples have adopted their model of governing. Due to its large size, the church is able to manage its own university,²⁸ newspaper,²⁹ and broadcasting company.³⁰ Corresponding to the growth of the church, David Cho has become very rich and is called a »*chaebol* pastor.«³¹

4 Inquiry into the Characteristics of Pentecostalism

4.1 Narrativity

The global South and East have largely escaped the rationalization and have been disenchanted with the metaphysics that has dominated the global North and West since the Enlightenment. In the global South are more underlying layers related to real, personal narratives. These narratives are countered by the tendency within Pentecostalism to emphasize access to mystical experiences. Mystical experience is connected to encountering the Holy Spirit, and therefore with hope. It can inspire people to work towards alleviating material poverty in poor countries and spiritual poverty in rich ones. There can be a sort of transfer of enthusiasm, as illustrated in the history of women in the Bible (see John 4:39 and 20:16), unmarked by any institutional recognition. Some might assume that such enthusiasm was a phenomenon only

27 Ibid. 286.

28 <http://www.hansei.ac.kr> (Accessed on April 15, 2015).

29 <http://www.kmib.co.kr/news/index.asp> (Accessed on April 15, 2015).

30 <http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv> (Accessed on April 15, 2015).

31 *Chaebol* refers to the dominant company on which a conglomerate of small companies depends. Regarding Confucianism, Calvinism, and economic growth, see Youngchan RO, Korean Worldview and Values: Economic Implications, in: *The Review of Korean Studies* 2 (1999) 50ff. David Cho's Church became a big conglomerate, a sort of religious *Chaebol*.

Due to financial intransparencies and misuse of money, he and his family were connected to some issues of corruption.

32 See Lutz DRESCHER, Ethik und Ekstase. Beobachtungen über den Einfluss von Konfuzianismus und Schamanismus auf die koreanischen Kirchen, in: *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 78 (1994) 287.

33 HOLLENWEGER, After Twenty Years' Research (see note 18), 10.

34 See Leonard SHLAIN, *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The Conflict Between Word and Image*, New York 1998.

35 Regarding Confucianism and literacy, see Meehyun CHUNG, Das Geschrei der Stummen hören – Macht der Schrift, Sprache und Gender, in: DIES., *Reis und Wasser. Eine Feministische Theologie in Korea*, Berlin 2012, 197–199.

36 HOLLENWEGER, After Twenty Years' Research (see note 18), 6.

among the unenlightened. However, the simplicity and uninhibited expression of enthusiasm that generates positive energy and enlivens people's faith could be taken as a kind of antidote to depression and negativity, which tend to be the consequences of overemphasizing and overvaluing reason.³² Hollenweger offers the following comparison and tensions between Western-oriented mainline churches and Pentecostal churches in the global South:

- 1 Racism (or Euro-American superiority complex) versus an intercultural and interracial understanding of Christianity
- 2 Literacy versus orality
- 3 Abstract concepts versus narrativity
- 4 The anonymity of bureaucratic organizations versus family and personal relationships
- 5 Medical technology versus a holistic understanding of health and sickness
- 6 Western psycho-analytical techniques versus a group and family therapy that centers on the human touch, prayer, and daily informal education in dreams and visions.³³

These tensions have been founded not only between mainline churches and Pentecostal churches within the global South, but also interchangeably between the global North and global South in general. Hollenweger's description could comparatively be applied in a Korean context. Korean Presbyterianism is tendentially closer to Western-oriented mainline churches while Pentecostalism described above is similar and equivalent to Korean Pentecostalism.

The patriarchal religious component of Christianity – which is, incidentally, text-based – usually disregards religious components of Christianity that are based on oral tradition, many of which also have an interest in feminine images and components of the divine. Since the literalization of Christianity, female images and orality gradually disappeared, and literary forms became more important. In the New Testament era, Jesus' life and work were at first recounted by spoken word. Through canonization of the Bible, however, these words became a literary language. Orality gave way to the written word.³⁴ This kind of tendency also appears in the rift Presbyterianism and Pentecostalism. Presbyterianism is affected by text-based religion including Confucianism³⁵ while Pentecostalism is more connected to oral tradition and narrativity.

The constructive components of Pentecostalism, of which the Full Gospel Church is an expression, have been well summarized by Hollenweger:

- 1 Orality of liturgy
- 2 Narrativity of theology and witness
- 3 Maximum participation at the level of reflection, prayer, and decision-making, and therefore a form of community that is reconciliatory
- 4 Inclusion of dreams and visions in personal and public forms of worship, functioning as a kind of icon for the individual and the community
- 5 An understanding of the body-mind relationship that is informed by experiences of correspondence between body and mind, the most striking application being the ministry of healing by prayer.³⁶

Orality is also related to speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is one of key concepts and features of Pentecostal churches in Korea. This practices and foci are encouraged among the members of the internal community where they function as unifying realities. However, they can also simultaneously encourage a hard demarcation from those groups and individuals for whom these activities do not serve as fit markers. In other words, the absence of speaking in tongues, uncertainty about one's own salvation, illness, poverty, and so on. This could be interpreted as a lack of faith, and those concerned may be accused of

such a lack. It may be helpful at this point to recall Calvin's criticism of speaking in tongues and his preference for sober-minded prayer.³⁷ On the other side, speaking of tongue could be understood differently as a sign of a deficient and frailty of human being. So it has a paradoxical nature. It shows also comforting power of God through »cannot be put into words.« (Cf. Rom. 8:26)³⁸

4.2 Relationship to Shamanism

Whether Full Gospel Church has been influenced by Shamanism or not is still very controversial.³⁹ Those who take a socio-analytical approach to this congregation affirm that it has.⁴⁰ But members of the congregation are hesitant to accept this assessment fully, even though some of the correlations are scarcely deniable. It is likely that they don't want to be affiliated with Shamanism because Shamanism is generally not well respected in society and is disregarded as a primitive, pre-Christian female-oriented religion.⁴¹ Shamanism is an ancient religion that has deeply affected Korean culture and religiosity.⁴² Confucianism prevailed for more than 500 years as a political philosophy and ideology in Korea after its canonization in Chinese antiquity. Both religions have had an impact on Korean language, culture, tradition, society, and even the development of Christianity.⁴³ Shamanism and Confucianism in Korea is focused on the contrast between oral and written transmission, which is evident in the two religions.⁴⁴ More than Shamanism, Confucianism is characterized as related to literacy.⁴⁵ It belongs to strict forms of religion and philosophy.⁴⁶ Despite the existence of traditional writing systems, Shamanism is usually preserved by oral tradition and is designed to be flexible over time. The problem of gender stereotypes in patriarchal societies is more evident in Confucianism than in Shamanism.⁴⁷

Though Shamanism is not popular in Korean society on the surface, underneath it is still very active.⁴⁸ Among the positive influences of Shamanism are beliefs in the harmonization

37 See John CALVIN, *The Catechism of the Church of Geneva* (1545), in: *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, ed. J. K. S. REID, Philadelphia 1988, 121.

38 Frank D. MACCHIA, *Groans Too Deep For Words: Towards A Theology of Tongues As Initial Evidence*, in: *Asia Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1.2 (1998) 163.

39 For instance, Cox observed a certain mixture between pre-Christian religious practices like Shamanism and Korean Protestantism, especially in Pentecostalism: Harvey COX, *Fire from Heaven: The rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, Reading, Mass. 1995, 221ff.

40 Byong Suh KIM, *The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church Today: A Sociological Analysis*, in: *International Review of Mission* 75 (1985) 70, quoted by BAE, *Inquiry* (see note 24), 266.

41 In fact, women have generally had a stronger affinity for Shamanism in Korean history. This was especially true during the Chosen dynasty, when Confucianism banned women's participation and women found their place and healing in Shamanism.

42 The US missionary Horace Grant Underwood studied Asian religions and published a book based on his lecture at New York University in 1908.

He investigated how Taoism, Shintoism, Shamanism, Confucianism have been developed in Korea, Japan, and China. He compared these religions with Christianity in terms of theism. His book confirms that women, particularly in the lower classes, have been more involved in Shamanism. Additionally, Shamanism originally believed in an universal God and only later evolved into a form of pantheism. Underwood finally settled on the translational term for »God« when he understood that Koreans had had a very long tradition of belief in an universal God-being. »When the Korean with his worship of the Heavens and his strong filial devotion, combined nevertheless with his hourly dread of the powers of the air, learns that the »Great One,« whom he has never ceased to revere, is not only supreme, but alone, and that these lower lesser evil powers, the objects of his life-long dread, are the mere creatures of his imagination, that the only God who exists is one of love, wisdom, justice,

and truth, he is ready to give undivided allegiance to Him«, Horace Grant UNDERWOOD, *The Religions of Eastern Asia*, New York 1910, 261.

43 Confucianism is more closely related to Presbyterianism and Shamanism to Pentecostalism.

44 More about Confucianism and shamanism in Korea, cf. CHUNG, *Reis und Wasser* (see note 35). Buddhism also plays a strong role in Korean culture. To delve into this and/or a comparison with Buddhism exceeds the range of this article. It could be a subject for further research.

45 There is some commonality between Confucianism and shamanism, as both of them are cosmic religions. Conversion from these cosmic religions to a metacosmic religion is easier than it is the other way around, cf. Aloysius PIERIS, *Feuer und Wasser: Frau, Gesellschaft, Spiritualität in Buddhismus und Christentum*, Basel 1994, 17. Regarding Confucian ancestor worship and shamanism, cf. Lee NAM-BECK, *Protestantismus und Ahnenverehrung in Korea: Entwurf einer Theologie der Erinnerung*, Münster 2001, 23-34, 199.

of the universe, networked thinking, mutual help and sharing, and ritual forms of dialogue. Such rituals are human-inclusive but not human-centered; they involve all of nature. In this, they are not entirely unlike certain Old Testament festivities (see Lev. 25:4-7).

Understood thus, we might discern the work of the Holy Spirit in Shamanism as in Pentecostalism, two movements characterized by a message of health, wealth, material success, and fertility,⁴⁹ by a certain affinity of belief in supernatural powers, in healing, in the existence of the demonic, in the power of prayer to neutralize Satan's power, and in the ability of the shaman/pastor to convert evil things back into harmless objects.

The liturgical phenomena in Pentecostalism are comparable to Korean Shamanist liturgical processes whose strengths are flexibility, elasticity, mutuality in ritual, and orality of liturgy.⁵⁰ In fact, orality and narrativity are so prominent in both Pentecostalism and Shamanism⁵¹ that it is very difficult to map the extent to which these elements are a result of shamanistic influences on Korean Pentecostalism.⁵² Moreover, a certain affinity exists between prayer houses and shaman rituals, both in terms of phenomenal location and management style. Moreover, emotional piety and the sensuality of forms of worship are common elements in both shamanistic ritual and Pentecostal liturgy.⁵³ Such forms highlight good and bad tendencies in both religious expressions, the latter finding expression in dualistic ideas about works and righteousness. Fasting and prayer in both religious systems are the instruments by which believers connect to God.⁵⁴ A crucial component in assessing and comparing the ways that Shamanism and Pentecostalism bring about similar experiences is to ask whether something leads to the changing of destiny or fate, as well as to whether a particular set of religious commitments brings about liberation from the bondages of fear.⁵⁵ A religion that creates guilt and fear is not oriented towards health and life. Life giving energy for the sake of the individual as well as the community is, in this context, an important component.

46 There are three social duties in the Confucian-oriented social order: loyalty, children's filial duty, and rites through ancestor worship and respect in front of other people. Like other practical duties of society, it is important to have inter- and intra-human relationships. Five classical books and four classical books of great teachers were canonized as norms. Ironically, the standard of Confucius, »Lunyu« (論語), was not written by him but was collected through his disciples.

47 More about the dichotomy and confrontation between the literal and the oral in religion and culture in Korea, cf. Meehyun CHUNG, Integrating Different Values: Beyond Literal vs. Oral, Word vs. Image in the Reformed Spirit, will be published in the book, *Always Being Reformed*, edited by David H. JENSEN, Eugene, OR 2016.

48 For example, women play still an important role as fortunetellers of sorts. The rituals are more modern, though, including adaptations and variations of Shamanism that take place in Internet cafés and other popular places to attract young people and fit into people's ordinary lives. Analytically psychologist Booyoung Lee

mentions that, due to the prototype of unconsciousness, Shamanistic interest and beliefs in divination still remain in people's minds. Booyoung LEE, *Korean Shamanism and Analytic Psychology*, Seoul 2012, 659.

49 See LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements (see note 7), 146.

50 By contrast, there is the exclusivity and group egoism of Confucianism, whose own influence on Christianity has been noted in LEE, *The Holy Spirit Movement* (see note 16), 18.

51 Pentecostal churches are sensitive to the assertion that any connection may exist between Korean Shamanism and Pentecostalism. One consequence of this sensitivity is that Pentecostal churches deliberately refrain from using traditional Korean music and drawing on traditional Korean values for their liturgy, preferring instead to look to contemporary North American Christian culture for inspiration. Were Korean Pentecostals to take indigenous Korean processes and values as positive resources, this would help the transcultural gospel to be the transforming power about which they speak. Recognizing Korean traditional culture does not mean accepting it

without any theological reflection. It should be accompanied by critical theological examination. Allan ANDERSON, Introduction: World Pentecostalism at a Crossroads, in: *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, ed. DERS./Walter J. HOLLENWEGER, London 1999, 26.

52 See LEE, *The Holy Spirit Movement* (see note 16), 13f.

53 See LEE, *The Holy Spirit Movement* (see note 16), 111-115 and Cox, *Fire from Heaven* (see note 17), 228.

54 See CHOI, *Wunder in Korea* (see note 13), 24f.

55 Financial offerings or tithes are not necessarily acts of gratitude or love, but can be expressions of fear of God, or attempts to prevent or avert God's wrath or ensure God's blessing. Suffering persons often identify with such movements and draw consolation from them.

When customary Christian fasting and offerings are units of bargaining in a *Do ut Des* (give-to-get) dynamic, rather than being expressions of gratitude, there is the possibility of abuse. When expectations are not met, accusations around the lack of devotion and rigor are made. These accusations, and the fear, guilt, and humiliation associated with them, become part of a dynamic of bondage, rather than a way to health. It is preferable to emphasize compassion and the ethical dimension of integrity, rather than to proscribe a moral causality for health and illness. Life in abundance does not imply absence of disease. Sometimes we have to accept disease or misfortune and live with it. The crucial question is how to restore spiritual and physical balance. Healing should be considered a process of liberation connected with grace and a new covenant, rather than being rooted in fear and guilt towards either the spirits of the dead or the expectations of the living. Healing is a lessening of the disorder of life in various dimensions.

Threefold blessing, divine healing, and material prosperity are not the exclusive qualities of Shamanism. These elements also appear in David Cho's theology where shamanistic components can be observed.⁵⁶ Critical distance between the two, in order to make room for their own independent identity, rarely happens. Rather, aspects of both are absorbed and integrated. The Pentecostal Church incorporates many aspects of traditional Korean shamanistic culture into its own practices, including emphases on oral liturgies, reconciliatory and participatory worship styles, exorcisms, dance, and prayers for healing. This syncretistic flexibility and openness towards cross-fertilization and dynamic hybridization, where the Pentecostal Church has taken on various religious and cultural components in its own formation, has proven to be its one of its strengths.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Pentecostalism shares many of Shamanism's integrative ways of thinking, and a persistently constructive development orientation. Because it is believed that words bring about both negative and positive effects, words became »containers of power,«⁵⁸ not only in relation to faith but also in relation to health and wealth.

Similarities between Shamanism and Pentecostalism are also manifest in forms of leadership. One could compare the intermediary and authoritative role of the Pentecostal pastor with that of the shaman. In Shamanism, there is a rank or order among the divine beings: the supreme god is omnipotent, infallible, unapproachable, and sovereign, while the ancestors and other gods are inferior.⁵⁹ Depending on the ranking order of the divine essence, the benefits are different. Such personification of gods and the notion of hierarchy are not unrelated to a person's charisma and can also be seen in Christianity in the role of the pastor. As a German expert on Korea, Lutz Drescher notes, »It seems as if the priestly

56 BAE, Inquiry (see note 24), 288.

57 There is also a tendency within Pentecostalism towards group-centrism that excludes otherness (other groups). That is why there is a lack of ecumenical thought in Pentecostal theology.

58 See Victor CHILENJE, The Challenges of the Prosperity Gospel for Reformed / Presbyterian Churches in the Twenty-First Century, in: *In Search of Health and Wealth: The Prosperity Gospel in African, Reformed Perspective*, ed. Hermen KROESBERGEN, Eugene, OR-2014, 9.

59 In Korean Shamanism, as opposed to that in Africa, personified divine figures (so-called human gods) play a much more important role than do animal forces. See Lee NAM-BECK, *Protestantismus und Ahnenverehrung in Korea. Entwurf einer Theologie der Erinnerung*, Münster 2001, 15ff.

60 DRESCHER, Ethik und Ekstase (see note 32), 283.

61 See LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements (see note 7), 147.

62 Janghyun RYOO, A Theological Critique of the Prosperity Theology, in: *Theological Forum* 61 (2010) 13.

63 The opposite also happened in Korea. For this reason there are many Pentecostal (Charismatic) elements in the Presbyterian churches.

64 »Women's leadership« usually refers to cell-group leadership positions. Around 70% of regional leaders or sectorial leaders are women. BAE, Inquiry (see note 24), 277, 280-282.

65 Julie C. MA, Asian Women and Pentecostal Ministry, Asian and Pentecostal, in: *The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, Allan ANDERSON/Edmond TANG (eds.), Oxford 2011, 110.

function of a mudang (shaman) to establish a connection between heaven and earth is also passed to the pastor in normal communities.⁶⁰ In other words, the risk of dependence upon and manipulation by persons and personal cults are high. In addition, the internal cohesion of the community reinforces the feeling of togetherness, so much so that social and relational strains can further close rather than open up new horizons.

This could be considered the negative side to Shamanism:⁶¹ God being projected and manipulated against the catalogue of human needs and desires. Pentecostal versions of capitalism accord with the basic idea of *beati possidentes* – possess everything for its own sake, even the spirit, and be happy with this ownership. God's Spirit, it is sometimes believed, can be monopolized as a possession. God is understood as a »vending machine God.«⁶² The dominant image of the autonomous pastor as mediator between God and an ordinary believer prevails at the center of an arbitrary Christian life. To some extent, Shamanism and Christianity trend toward greed in a market economy. Current Shamanism has lost its focus on the value of communality and common goodness and reduced its priorities to personal matters and family wellbeing. A similar tendency can be observed in Pentecostalism.

4.3 Women's Leadership and Gender Discrimination

Patriarchal hierarchy, rooted in Confucianism and Christianity, is prominent within Presbyterianism as well as Pentecostalism. Although Pentecostalism possesses the feminine values of flexibility, receptivity, and narrativity to a certain extent, male dominance in congregational structure is just as prominent as it is in other denominations. Pentecostal churches have also adopted Presbyterian polity,⁶³ and a still-widespread Reformed attitude toward women in leadership. And though most churches' membership is dominated by a majority of women, women typically remain excluded from leadership positions and decision-making bodies. Established Pentecostal churches, like many other denominations, only accept men into senior clergy roles, while accepting the leadership ministry of women as heads of house-worship, evangelists, deaconesses, and in other supportive roles within the church.⁶⁴

In fact, there are very few women in higher leadership positions. Choi Jashil and her daughter Kim Sunghae have had significant influence in the Church, yet still can hardly be considered predominant leaders in the Church's history. Choi Jashil was influenced by a well-known revival preacher.⁶⁵ She dedicated much of her life for constructing the Full Gospel Church. Even Choi Jashil, laid much of the foundation for the Full Gospel Church, who has foundational work and has undertaken much detailed and, has received little recognition or formalization of her leadership role within the church structure. Her son-in-law David Yonggi Cho, on the other hand, was more readily accepted and much more institutionally anchored in the church.

Choi Jashil's daughter and successor Kim Sunghae is another female leader in this congregation. Since 2001, she has served as president of Hansei University, which developed out of the Pentecostal theological seminary founded in 1953. This position is inherited from a family member who previously served, and this is the position occupied by a woman in this church. In a way, whoever occupies this role is the token representative of female leadership, and in no way represents gender mainstreaming. Looking at an organogram of a church conference, it is plain that there are almost none female leaders at this level.

In spite of the fact that the majority of congregants are female, women are excluded from taking part in decision-making bodies in the church. Like the women in the Bible

who confessed and delivered the message of Easter before the male disciples did, these women remain largely unrecognized. This has meant an unequal distribution of power in the organization's decision making at leadership level. While women have not found recognition of their leadership abilities in established parishes in urban areas, such recognition has been somewhat more forthcoming in prayer houses in rural areas, and in places of special ministry, where there are far fewer conventional or structurally entrenched forms, and where flexibility is more common.⁶⁶

Even though the ordination of women is allowed in theory, there are still many kinds of barrier in practice. Compared to other Southeast Asian countries, female pastors are not common in Korea. Due to the Confucian-oriented patriarchal mindset, female pastors are not acceptable in the Church structure. Rather there is a separate domain where women's ministry is generally accepted, such as the Prayer Mountain retreats.⁶⁷ Therefore it is not really accurate to claim that Full Gospel Church promotes women's leadership. It depends on the definition of leadership. There may be many female leaders in the congregation, but very few women situated in decision-making bodies. Thus it is still not possible to say that female leadership is comprehensive or even effective on a larger scale. Women's leadership has been cultivated for the purpose of increasing church membership, but hasn't been promoted for governance.

Discrimination against women is legitimized, idealized, and instrumentalized for the sake of family and society. Should misfortune within family occur, women may be accused of a lack of devotion, sincerity, or faith. Women frequently fear these accusations following incidents of bad luck within the family. While the interest in supernaturalism is gender-neutral, the dangers of women being accused of causing misfortune are high. So on behalf of the family's wellbeing, a woman chooses to be submissive, and to devote herself to intensive prayer. But from a gender perspective, as women bear the total responsibility for wellbeing of the family including health, if for any reason that health is compromised, it is the woman who is often accused, or whose faith and behavior are found lacking. Blaming women for a situation not of their making and beyond their control is common. Women and people of inferior social status are readily accused of being the cause of illness within families and society. It is easier to use individuals as scapegoats than to take responsibility as an entire community. When illness is interpreted as a reflection of personal sin, it is easy for people to succumb to that moral fatalism which believes that it is moral conduct which determines health. This impedes discovery of the real causes of the problem, and people advocate using good deeds and charity as means of avoiding ill-fortune. Should misfortune happen nevertheless, it is then useful to accumulate more benefits to help a person recover from their loss. In fact *Do ut Des*

66 That said, in remote areas, it is not easy for women to be accepted as leaders in remote areas either, because here more conservative views typically prevail.

67 For example, Prayer Mountain in Osanli adopted the name Jashil Choi in her memory.

68 Meehyun CHUNG, *Illness and Healing from a Korean Woman's Intercultural Perspective*, in: *Feminist Theology. The Journal of the Britain and Ireland School of Feminist Theology*, 19/01 (2011) 121.

69 The lecture was occasioned by the 500th anniversary of Calvin's birth.

The PROK separated from the mainline Presbyterian Church of Korea in 1953 due to some irreconcilable theological differences, which mainly concerned the suitability of the historical critical method for biblical interpretation.

70 See CHILENJE, *The Challenges of the Prosperity Gospel* (see note 58), 3.

71 Hermen KROESBERGEN, *The Prosperity Gospel*, in: *In Search of Health and Wealth: The Prosperity Gospel in African, Reformed Perspective*, ed. DERS., Eugene, OR 2014, 80.

is a method of bargaining with God in order to achieve wellbeing and good health. If members of a community are enjoying good health, it is thought to be a reflection on the faith of the people. If less than ideal circumstances prevail, then it is thought to be someone's (mostly women) fault – a reflection of that individual's lack of commitment or weak faith. Religious sincerity is thus manipulated. Within this fatalistic and bargain-driven mindset, commitment, self-sacrifice, and the repression of anger are necessary virtues for women. In fact, they are considered prerequisites for the wellbeing of the family and the community.⁶⁸

To see this most clearly, discourse about gender should not be limited to sexual stereotypes and roles, but derived from social and ethnic realities. In this way, one can see more clearly the tension between the powerful and powerless, that which is mainstream and that which is not, the hegemonic and non-hegemonic, the center and the periphery, the essential and the marginal.

So despite the fact that women were and are the majority in Christian congregations, all over the world and throughout history, men rule the church. Women's ministry does not mean serving as senior pastor or elder; it means serving as a group leader or regional leader toward the bottom position of the denominational hierarchy. Women's responsibilities are to evangelize people and to promote membership. Thus women's positions are vulnerable in Christian congregations as well as in the secular world of finance and employment. This is the challenge of reconstructing gender roles in the Church. In order to increase the prospect for gender justice, religious values and perceptions should be reevaluated, with the ultimate intent of ameliorating injustice within the church structure.

5 A Constructive Challenge to Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism in Korea: Prosperity for all!

Does Pentecostalism have a monopoly on theology of prosperity? Does Reformed tradition have anything to say about this dimension of Christianity? Has Shamanism influence Pentecostalism only, or can its traces be found in Presbyterianism as well?

In 2009, I delivered a lecture on Calvin's theology and the Reformed tradition to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK), which is the most progressive of that country's Presbyterian denominations. I used the term »prosperity« with respect to Calvin.⁶⁹ Immediately after my lecture, I received some criticism because some audience members thought that the term »prosperity« belongs only to Pentecostal churches and that progressive Presbyterians ought not to have anything to do with this concept. Pentecostal doctrine is often employed as a synonym for a theology of prosperity. Generally, prosperity is defined as a condition of being successful, and is characterized by material wellbeing and economic success.⁷⁰ Prosperity per se is not the problem. The question is how the term is interpreted and applied. As Hermen Kroesbergen has noted:

The prosperity gospel need not be a foolish and unchristian way to attain health and wealth. The prosperity gospel might be a genuine protest against certain tendencies in the mainline churches, such as to discredit prospering, and to be formal, to exploit protocols to reduce spontaneity in church services. The prosperity gospel might be a celebration of the dignity in pure, spontaneous religious impulses and the dignity in enjoying or wishing to enjoy the good things in life.⁷¹

Prosperity should not be understood as a matter of individualism, but of the common good. I fully agree with what W. Ward Gasque writes:

In view of contemporary global economic realities, the teaching of Prosperity Theology seems to be simply nonsense. Not only are the majority of the people living on this planet poor, but the majority of Christians living in the world are also poor. If it is God's will that all his children should be financially prosperous, if it is not his will for any of his children to be poor, who are the poor? Thanks to the religious enthusiasm based on Prosperity Theology, many of the poor are being offered false economic hopes, just as many invalids and physically handicapped people are offered the false hope of perfect health by some of those very same preachers. Prosperity Theology is fundamentally anthropocentric and is a product of the highly individualistic and self-centred culture of late-twentieth-century western capitalism.⁷²

A true gospel of prosperity would argue for holistic ministries which serve the common good rather than contribute to individual greed and self-centered attitudes. Clearly, Calvin's intention for the prosperity of communities is largely ignored by many Presbyterians.⁷³ In particular, the extent to which Calvin underlined the work and fellowship of the Holy Spirit is underappreciated in theological history and contemporary dialogue.⁷⁴ As Calvin might have put it, each part of the body of Christ is precious, as the Holy Spirit grants life to each part of the organism without prejudice. Indeed, as Victor Chilenje has argued,

The prosperity gospel poses a big challenge to Reformed/Presbyterian churches in the twenty-first century, a challenge so enormous that it requires attention by the entire church. ... While many Reformed/Presbyterian churches are reported to be declining in membership, income, and staff in today's world, the prosperity gospel movement/church is the fastest growing body of Christian believers worldwide.⁷⁵

It is time to reflect on pneumatology in general and prosperity in particular. Like Western missionaries who failed to approach the African spiritual cosmology, Western missionaries in Asia struggled with the Asian spiritual cosmology. Therefore they did not reflect on it theologically.⁷⁶ Everything outside their belief system looked demonic, pagan, or superstitious. So they were not successful in dealing with pneumatology in general, which they would just as soon avoid discussing so as to evade getting into debates on the matter.⁷⁷

72 W. Ward GASQUE, Prosperity Theology and the New Testament, in: *Evangelical Review of Theology* 20/1 (1996) 44-45. Cited in LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements (see note 7), 159.

73 See Lameck BANDA, Dialoguing at Mphahlele: A Conversation on Faith between John Calvin and Proponents of the Prosperity Gospel, in: *In Search of Health and Wealth*, ed. KROESBERGEN (see note 71), 59-73.

74 John CALVIN, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. by John Allen, Grand Rapids 1949, 3:1.1; 3:2.34; 3:24.13; 4:1.4; 4:14.17.

75 CHILENJE, The Challenges of the Prosperity Gospel (see note 58), 4, 10.

76 For more about the comparison between Reformed tradition and Pentecostalism with respect to pneumatology, see Myungyong KIM, Reformed Pneumatology and Pentecostal Pneumatology, in: *Reformed Theology: Identity and Ecumenicity*, ed. Wallace M. ALSTON, Jr./Michael WELKER, Grand Rapids 2003, 170-189.

77 Cf. Allan ANDERSON, *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context*, Pretoria 1991.

78 The spirit of the Cold War lives on in the age of Islamophobia. Once a person makes his or her own self an absolute authority, others are labeled enemies of God or demons.

79 See Jan Milic LOCHMAN, *Die Bedeutung geschichtlicher Ereignisse für ethische Entscheidungen*, Zürich 1963, 17.

80 There are many kind of Presbyterianism within Korean Reformed churches due to historical division. Thus generalization is inappropriate. I am referring here one of the most progressive denominations to which I belong.

81 Young-Hoon Lee is not the real son of David Cho. He is a kind of spiritual son of him. Similar to many Presbyterian churches in Korea where the son inherits the congregation from his father all the way back to the founder of the church, Lee became his spiritual father's successor.

82 Cited in LEE, The Holy Spirit Movement (see note 7), 115.

Prosperity is generally related to health and wealth. But it is currently being interpreted in a personal sphere, not as a matter of public relationship. Some social challenges like global warming, sustainable development, and environmental health for all creatures are not an issue in contemporary prosperity theology.

Northeast Asia is not a part of the territory subject to Islamophobia,⁷⁸ but it is still subject to ideological conflict, in this case between communism and anticommunism.⁷⁹ It is not a religious conflict. In Northeast Asia, religions do not live together, but survive next to each other. So too, in Korea, where traditional religiosity is strongly rooted in the consciousness and subconscious of the people. It is at this level that the gospel works as a transforming power within the traditional religious understandings, transforming the culture with the living Word of God.

In the discourse of World Christianity, two Korean theologies are primarily discussed: one is Minjung Theology, the other is the theology of the Full Gospel Church which is imbued with prosperity theology. Prosperity theology is indigenized in Korean culture because it was already present in Shamanism, Taoism, and Confucianism. Thus, it became more popular in comparison to Minjung theology, which remains a token of the academic minority. Minjung theology of liberation by the progressive Presbyterian Church⁸⁰ emerged under the dictatorship in the 1970s. With Minjung theology, Korean theology was introduced on the world stage. Translated literally, Minjung means »the mass and the people,« and it derives from the biblical concepts of *ochlos* (crowd, mass) and *am Haaretz* (people of the land). But the Minjung theology was not very influential to the people of margin. The Minjung themselves have not chosen Minjung theology but the theology of prosperity. So while Minjung theology has indeed placed Korean theology on the global map, it has not quite been able to speak to most of the Christians in Korea itself. Pentecostalism, on the other hand, has been more effective in speaking the plain language of the ordinary people and in promising them a life of comfort and encouragement, promises which are finding concrete expression in the dialogues of daily life and in many practical activities where real needs are being met rather than theories developed. Accompanying this hive of activity is a firm belief in the Holy Spirit as an intercessor (Paraclete), and counselor or advocate (John 14:16). This gives people the feeling that they are not left orphaned in the world.

Minjung has not been very much interested in structural sin because the management of daily life is more urgent and is demanding enough in and of itself. For those who are suffering and living in poverty, merely preaching about the cross and redemption from sin would be unappealing. Prosperity in terms of material success is more necessary for living, even if it works as a kind of spiritual opiate. This is not only a Korean tendency; things are similar all over the world. The doctrine of prosperity gospel is more appealing compare to the doctrine of mainline churches. In the face of economic powerlessness, the poor want to hear pragmatic messages over theologically profound messages, and to experience the performance of miracles. Young-Hoon Lee,⁸¹ Yonggi Cho's successor at the Yoido Full Gospel Church observes the following:

The Minjung theology movement is so concerned about the poor and the oppressed. However, the social activities of the Minjung movement and the Yoido Full Gospel Church are quite different. The former focuses on social participation and the reform of society like the liberation movement, while the Yoido Full Gospel Church is more concerned about charity and the direct relief for the poor.⁸²

But Pentecostalism is in danger of trying to attract the materially-poor with hope-inspiring arguments while neglecting to attend to, or to take seriously, the socio-economic conditions and socio-political structures that give rise to such poverty. Indeed »The danger with some

forms of Christianity, Pentecostalism included, is that an emphasis on personal piety can become a sop for a lack of social conscience.⁸³ One's relationship with God becomes a purely private matter or, at most, a matter of interest only to one's own denomination.⁸⁴ Completely lacking is any ecumenical-mindset or community-oriented vision.

We are facing multiple responsibilities in both society and the Church. Finding commonality instead of reinforcing distinctions will be helpful for mutual correction and growth.⁸⁵ Since economic disparity is becoming bigger both domestically and on an international level, it is urgent that we handle with this issue with comprehensive perception. In this sense, Reformed tradition and Pentecostalism could have mutual challenges.

6 Fostering Dialogue between Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism: Some Observations from a Korean Ecumenical Feminist Perspective

In order to appreciate the feminist values found in Pentecostalism, I would like to utilize my own studies to construct a dialectical approach between Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism.

6.1 Integrity of Prosperity: Socio-political Awareness of Community

Prosperity should not be associated merely with individual material goods, for true prosperity is a communal matter. The opposite of prosperity is not poverty resulting from evil or some curse from God. There are many people in the world who are poor even though they are diligent because the social and global systems in place keep them living in poverty. Capital-driven materialism, a worldwide disease in this day and age, champions the notion that exterior values are more important than interior ones. Jesus, on the other hand, placed a premium on fellowship: »For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them« (Mt. 18:20). This is the true and basic meaning of a theology of prosperity for all. It is a quality of prosperity which is not the exclusive to Pentecostals but relevant

⁸³ See Allan ANDERSON, *Global Pentecostalism in the New Millennium*, in: *Pentecostals After a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, ed. Allan H. ANDERSON / Walter J. HOLLENWEGER, London 1999, 210.

⁸⁴ See Meehyun CHUNG, *Weaving the Web of Knowledge and Empowerment: With Special Reference to Jan Amos Comenius*, in: *Reconciliation and Transformation*, ed. Meehyun CHUNG / Reiner JANSEN, Basel 2009, 168f.

⁸⁵ Rather than place intense focus on the work of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals ought to engage more seriously and studiously with Trinitarian theology. Doing so would assist Pentecostals in better appreciating the nature of the freedom of the Holy Spirit – »the wind blows where it chooses« (John 3:8) – and unpossessable character. The Spirit is not the exclusive

property of anyone but »gives life« (1 Cor. 3:6) to all. Moreover, the Spirit is beyond all limits of human understanding and perception. This is the freedom of mystery: »Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom« (2 Cor. 3:17). For Pentecostals to do Trinitarian theology more seriously would be to correct the one-sided nature of its pneumatology. The same process could be applied to Presbyterianism, which generally neglects pneumatology and just focuses on Christology.

⁸⁶ Amos YONG, *The Demonic in Pentecostal / Charismatic Christianity and in the Religious Consciousness of Asia*, in: *Asian and Pentecostal. The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, Allan ANDERSON / Edmond TANG (eds.), Eugene, OR 2011, 78ff.

⁸⁷ See LEE, Minjung and Pentecostal Movements (see note 7), 158. Karl Barth insisted that we must speak of evil rather than avoid the topic. Karl BARTH, *Church Dogmatics IV / 3/1*, Edinburgh 1961, 260ff.

⁸⁸ Carter HEYWARD, *Saving Jesus From Those Who Are Right*, Minneapolis 1999, 77–116.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁹⁰ Mary DALY, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*, Boston 1985, 198.

⁹¹ Cf. Meehyun CHUNG, *Gender und Entwicklungspolitik*, in: *Theologie und Geschlecht. Dialoge Querbeet*, eds. Heike WALZ / David PLÜSS, Berlin 2008, 264.

⁹² See Jooseop KEUM (ed.), *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*, Geneva 2014, 17–21.

to all who gather in the name of Jesus and share in mystical communion with him, a communion that is far more important than visible buildings: »Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?« (1 Cor. 3:16).

In Korean culture, evil is often considered to be closely connected with illness as a private matter. Illness is frequently considered a punishment for sin. In spite of the prevalence of Western medicine and advanced technology, moral judgment is frequently confused for physical causality. Illness becomes the basis for accusation, fear, and guilt. An emphasis on blessing, healing and prosperity should not be limited to the private sphere but should be oriented toward social justice on a community and even global level. Individual piety should contribute to socio-political awareness. In our contemporary situation, where economic disparity between rich and poor is increasing the world over, it is necessary to restore a spirit of common welfare. The poor majority is dependent on the rich minority. Pentecostalism gives greater weight to evil than most other expressions of Christian faith. Consequently, exorcism is an important practice. The Korean Pentecostal Church places notable emphasis on demonology. The devil and his demons are constantly attacking humans in the various arenas of their daily lives.⁸⁶ However, placing all the blame on »evil« or on »Satan« is a convenient way to avoid confronting the real roots of social injustice or lack of community welfare. Likewise considering North Korea an »axis of evil« is not appropriate or helpful.

Trying to avoid or escape injustice rather than resisting it is not enough. Replacing evil with communal and even global prosperity – true prosperity – is obviously a daunting task. Additionally, it is important to intentionally resist structural evil, even if doing so is sometimes dangerous and unpleasant.⁸⁷ We could also say, with Carter Heyward, that evil is to be understood as a betrayal of mutuality.⁸⁸ Drawing on the Cappadocian Fathers, Heyward emphasizes God as a »relational power.« This dimension of the Godhead is denied and ignored in patriarchal theology. Patriarchy is a system of social control and thus a relationship system without mutuality, which is why love and patriarchy are incompatible. Love is about mutual relationship. Patriarchy is love's authoritarian antithesis which can tolerate no mutuality except in matters that are deemed trivial and inconsequential.⁸⁹ Mary Daly suggests the power of sisterhood as a viable alternative to patriarchal expressions of power: »The power of sisterhood is not war-power. There have been and will be conflicts, but the Final Cause causes not by conflict but by attraction. Not by the attraction of a Magnet that is All There, but by the creative drawing power of the Good who is self-communicating Being. Who is the Verb from whom, in whom, and with whom all true movements move.«⁹⁰

Our ability to both visualize evil and to experience our own connectedness to evil means that we must neither deny nor ignore it but rather, in the Spirit, look evil in the face and draw from the Spirit positive and healing energy. To this, the original Pentecostal movement also brought economic innovations, having »all things in common« (Acts 2:44). Consequently, »there was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need« (Acts 4:34-35). This example of socio-political justice challenges the view that the experience of the Spirit ought to be restricted to the private domain. »The Holy Spirit encourages and empowers us to live in mutual connectedness with other creatures.«⁹¹ Reviving the Pentecostal movement could help Christians confront the evil in our society and its unjust structures.⁹²

According to the feminist tradition, one could say that the power of the Holy Spirit works in us, with us, through us, and through our feet and hands. »The Spirit brooding over creation, the One who casts down the mighty from their thrones, this God is the

movement that connects us all, the whole creation, through all that has been and all that will be, now and forever! This energy for justice and compassion goes among us and between us, within us and beyond us, beneath us and above us, carrying us with her, transcending our boundaries-crossing over among us, connecting each to all ... wherever she goes, now and forever!⁹³ What we need is to promote an »axis of goodness« instead of defaming others.

Pentecostalism became mainstreams and was assimilated into Presbyterianism. As a result, they have faced similar problems. Therefore it is important to reflect on both traditions and to improve mutually. The crucial question is how to liberate society from »the bigness syndrome«⁹⁴ of the mega-church to rule economically and politically. Rather than quantitative growth, increased social involvement with burning issues such as neoliberalism, anti-communism, structural unemployment in Korea,⁹⁵ and other global challenges should be prioritized. These subjects are rarely mentioned in the Christian community. The social-analytic approach lacks Christian discourse. It is important to promote ideas for social improvement and to come together to work on common concerns.

6.2 The Value of Fluidity⁹⁶

In the words of Karl Rahner, »The devout Christian of the future will either be a ›mystic,‹ one who has experienced ›something,‹ or he will cease to be anything at all.«⁹⁷ This expression affirms the importance of the empirical dimension of religion. Pentecostalism could have good potential to promote this aspect of Christianity.

Presbyterianism, which is currently more culturally oriented toward the written word, could acquire a new impetus from Pentecostalism with its alternative and oral approaches to theology.⁹⁸ Presbyterianism concentrates on Christology while Pentecostalism focuses on pneumatology. While an ecclesiology marked by some continuity and stability remains important for Presbyterianism, mobility, flexibility, and pliability are more likely to be identified as characteristics of the movement of Pentecostals.⁹⁹ Conversely, strong roots and tradition are often associated with a loss of vitality, and fixed traditional structures and lack of agility and rhythm associated with one of the institutional Church's weaknesses, preventing new impetuses for contextual and situational changes and mission work.¹⁰⁰ Symbolically speaking, these are the weaknesses of literal approaches which appear to contain within themselves the antithesis of the orality that brings vibrancy. If institution-oriented denominations like Presbyterianism get stuck in rigid, defunct dogmas and authoritative stances, they may maintain their stability and tradition but they cannot meet the needs of

93 HEYWARD, *Saving Jesus* (see note 88), 61.

94 Byong Suh KIM, The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church Today: A Sociological Analysis, in: *International Review of Mission* 75/1 (1985) 70, quoted by BAE, Inquiry (see note 24), 280.

95 Currently the no-contract-based method of employment is a big problem. Young generations and women are more vulnerable and tend to be exploited in this kind of system.

96 In this article, fluidity, flexibility, mobility, and spontaneity are more or less interchangeable.

97 KARL RAHNER, Christian Living Formerly and Today, in: *Theological Investigations VII*, trans. David BOURKE, New York 1971, 15.

98 By the support of the Holy Spirit the dead character (literacy) of the Bible could be incorporated as an oral witness like the dry bones that live again in Ezekiel 37. Karl Barth's three-fold understanding of the word of God – incarnate, written, spoken – is adaptable to this case. KARL BARTH,

Church Dogmatics I/1. The Doctrine of the Word of God, translated by G.T. Thomson, Edinburgh 1969, 117ff.

99 It is important for ecclesiological development to seek some harmony between Pauline, Petrine, and Johannine ecclesiologies. While Pauline and Petrine ecclesiologies are relatively well represented in established churches, Johannine ones are often considered tendentious and Eastern and feminine (i.e., weak).

most contemporary people; flexibility, mobility, and vitality are required for that.¹⁰¹ Where there is openness to accepting otherness and maturing through self-reflection, the Christian faith will genuinely spread and begin to make its way in the culture.¹⁰² Dynamic spontaneity in church services and embodiment of feeling in liturgy, which are some of the strengths of Pentecostalism, are important components to consider.

An exchange between these two theologies could be very rewarding for both sides, and would contribute toward much-needed cross-fertilization. Being a church means maintaining deep rootedness in Jesus Christ on the one hand, and engaging in social action and mobility on the other. Institutionalization involves the risk of paralysis – the loss of rhythm and movement – where the Church is called to be itinerant and mobile. The Holy Spirit is the catalyst for this mobility. The Church can therefore both work toward the kingdom of God and await his blessing, a community marching onward as the *communio viatorum*, both »waiting and hurrying up.«¹⁰³ Like many other parts of the Church, the Pentecostal Church in Korea began as a dynamic movement, which then failed, to a degree, to resist the tendency toward fossilization through establishment and material security.¹⁰⁴ It is important that Pentecostalism abandon its idolatrous drive for security and acceptability and regain its vital character as a movement of progression, which promotes solidarity with people on the margins and bears impressive witness.

6.3 Recognition of diversity

The historical Pentecost did not ignore or cover over regional distinctive and diversity. Indeed, the inspiration that makes complex communication possible, and the recognition of diversity, are important features of this event. Diversity in unity was possible. This reconciled diversity differs from homogeneity. »In place of a totalitarian conception of universality, which is based on the absoluteness of its own particularity in favour of a unified whole, takes the search for an encounter as applied to interactive universality that allows the diversity and the opacity of the Other and the associated differences and dissonances to the starting point of the common reflection and practice makes.«¹⁰⁵ The strength of Pentecostalism is accepting this diversity while Presbyterianism focused on homogeneous uniformity.

Globalization creates fictitious unity, manipulated from the center by those who are in power, and covers up genuine diversity.¹⁰⁶ Those who live on the periphery, who in their own regions are already more likely to be weak and powerless, are further weakened and ignored. There is a need, therefore, to emphasize reciprocity rather than unilateral domination. The Chinese word for human being is Ingan (人間), a word which refers to mutual support and exchange of favors, underlining reciprocity and the inbetweenness

100 See Veli-Matti KÄRKKÄINEN, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective*, Grand Rapids 2002, 72.

101 See CHUNG, *Das Geschrei der Stimmen hören* (see note 35), 207.

102 See Andrew F. WALLS, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*, Maryknoll 2002, ix.

103 This phrase comes from one of Pastor Blumhardt's early sermons in Bad Boll with reference to the royal family to Wilhelm and Pauline. He suggested that human attitudes towards God's reign should be a combination of »waiting and hurrying up,« by which he meant that we need to do our best within the limited time, all the while aware that the ultimate things are reached by God alone. Besides this phrase his theological thought to combine between pneumatology and religious socialism could be a role-model for Pentecostal movement.

104 Currently there are many religious sects in Korea. This may imply that established churches are not appealing to people (especially marginalized people) and that many are seeking alternative forms of »church.«

105 Manuela KALSKY, *Christaphanien. Die Re-vision der Christologie aus der Sicht von Frauen in unterschiedlichen Kulturen*, Gütersloh 2000, 327.

106 See KEUM, *Together Towards Life* (see note 92), 14-17.

of human relationality. This stands in contrast to the West where although the individual and personal aspects of religion remain significant, interest in religious institutions has become noticeably smaller. Ecclesiology is based on our witness to the resurrected Jesus Christ. Witness is interaction among human beings in diversity, mobilizing across cultures in order to better help one another hear and learn and understand the Word of God. It is through such a weaving network of witness that our faith is revitalized and reinforced. An inclusive and comprehensive approach to healing and health, rooted in the inter-relation of different dimensions of human experience, is more useful than the current simplistic dualism which assumes a clear separation between causality and religion, reason and faith. This feminine value of diversity is an important component of intersectionality, which is crucial to correcting one-sided dominance in our value system.

7 Closing Remarks

In this article, I have introduced the development of the Korean Protestant Church in general and focused on the Pentecostal Church in particular. I have imagined a dialogue between Pentecostalism and Presbyterianism regarding prosperity for mutual correction and growth.

Pentecostal doctrine is often employed as a synonym for a theology of prosperity in Korea. Generally, prosperity is defined as a condition of being successful, and is characterized by material well-being and economic success. Prosperity theology however is not merely a monopoly of the Pentecostal Church. It is also related to the Reformed tradition in origin, if it is defined as prosperity for the community and common goodness. A renewed focus on positive values and common ground could provide impetus toward healing and prosperity these differences and divides.

Prosperity refers not only to material wealth, but also to spiritual richness. It requires comprehensive perception. Prosperity theology that does not include real problems of marginalized people groups both domestically and internationally might be not a proper application. Certainly prosperity theology shouldn't be misused to inspire false economic hope, physical healing, or individual material richness. It should cover the general wellbeing of the community and all creatures on Earth. Through the recognition of the Holy Spirit and the continued pursuit of wisdom we need to restore our understanding of the Trinitarian God. Acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit also means accepting feminine qualities like fluidity and diversity, and correcting andro-centric ideology in general. In terms of gender injustice, Presbyterianism and Pentecostalism are equally guilty. Both denominations should promote the vital equality of men and women in decision-making roles, not only in diaconal work or basis work. Every process of the church ought to be conducted in ways in which gender equity is modeled and celebrated. As with the deep unity emblemized at Pentecost, so too should churches today – Pentecostal and Presbyterian alike – be characterized by the sharing of means and empowerment. ♦