

Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity

Stanley Burgess, ed. *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*. New York: Routledge, 2006. 500 pp. \$175.00. Hardcover. ISBN: 0415969662.

The Introduction (which in the space of only two pages provides an excellent overview of the history of modern Pentecostalism) states that the purpose of this encyclopedia is “to introduce the reader to the vast worldwide Christian renewal movements” (xiii). It is helpful to be reminded early on that this Christian group is second in size only to the Roman Catholic Church worldwide.

The volume concentrates on the period since 1901. Its intended audiences are scholars and students of church history and theology as well as pastors and interested lay persons. Theological interpretation is combined with historical information; scripture commentary and references are also found in numerous articles. Because the volume is part of the Routledge Encyclopedias of Religion and Society series, the publisher likely hopes that it will appeal to university and public libraries as well as libraries in theological institutions.

Alphabetically arranged by 135 broad topics, this volume provides a useful “List of Entries” that serves as the table of contents. When the reader goes to an article on one of the broad topics, whose length can range from one to nine pages, she finds these topics include subtopics followed by “See also” references and a selected bibliography labeled “Further Reading.” Although one assumes these bibliographies are the sources of the article information, no explanation is offered in the Introduction that this is so. The user can scan the entries and get an overview of the primary focus of this volume, but must rely on the index for detailed information on lesser (as judged by the editors) topics. An index provides the key to optimum usage of any encyclopedia and the 26-page comprehensive index passes the test. Having spent 15 years in Africa observing the tremendous influence that Pentecostal and charismatic movements have exerted over African churches, this reviewer was pleased to find African index entries listed by countries and movements along with Asian and Latin American entries. This thoroughness backs up the global scope promised in the Introduction. Occasional black-and-white illustrations and inset quotes enliven the text. No cumulative bibliography is appended.

The 135 entries fall roughly under the following headings: geography and ethnicity (e.g., “Africa, East” and “Hispanic Pentecostalism”); history (e.g., “Azusa Street Revival” and “Doctrine, Development of”); theology and biblical teachings (e.g., “Gifts of the Spirit,” “Discernment, Spiritual,” and “Anthropology (Theology of Humans)”); influence on and relation to faith communities (e.g., “Islam, Relationship to” and “Catholic Charismatic Movement”); and experiences, practice, and worship (e.g., “Ecstasy,” “Oil, Anointing with,” and “Ordinances and Sacraments”). “Music” (nine pages) is the longest main entry, and “Neoevangelical Movements” occupies little more than half a page. “Holy Spirit” merits only four pages as a topic, yet receives over thirty references in the index. “Gifts of the Spirit” earns four pages of biblical commentary on texts from 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians. The reader hoping for a more historical approach must rely on the index.

Although the dust jacket indicates that “institutions” are one category of information, main entry status is not accorded the major Pentecostal denominations; these important groups can only be accessed via the index. Reasonable

coverage may be ferreted out for Assemblies of God (thirty-five references), the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) (twelve references), and Church of God in Christ (eleven references). Other groups such as Church of God of Prophecy and Church of the Foursquare Gospel are briefly noted. A number of the international church groups are not found in the index and can only be tracked down by reading the entries on a respective geographical region. No biographical entries are found; therefore, one must know the names of leaders or discover these persons through reading the articles. Unfortunately, not every person mentioned in the text earned an index listing. Spot-checking names from the “Africa, East” entry, one learns that Dale Brown, missionary founder of the Kenyan Assemblies of God in 1969, is omitted while James Brown, a Presbyterian preacher who, for the purposes of this volume is noteworthy only because he spoke in tongues in 1956, is indexed from the “Charismatic Movement” entry.

Any 500-page work is likely to have some errors. Tanzania was not an official name for the East African nation until the 1960s, but one article uses this name with reference to mission history in the 1930s. Other areas where there is room for improvement are geographic focus, gender balance of the contributors, and the art on the dust jacket. A reader who wants to learn about “indigenous churches” and looks up that phrase in the text alphabetically will find entries for Asia and Latin America, yet Africa appears only in the small print of “See also.” India, Korea, Brazil, and the Philippines have main entries but no African country is listed individually. This is surprising and misleading, considering that Nigeria’s population of over 135 million is estimated to be 40 percent Christian. North and South Korea together are only about 75 million. The four photos decorating the dust jacket offer an opportunity for interpretation given the global coverage promised: a young black child praying in front of the familiar Warner Sallman portrait of Jesus; a white dove in flight; white hands folded (in prayer?) and holding a cross pendant necklace; and a shoulders-up view of an apparently unclothed white woman being blessed.

The editor, Stanley Burgess, Distinguished Professor of Christian History at Regent University (founded as CBN University in 1978 by Pat Robertson, who is himself considered a charismatic renewal leader), has published extensively on Pentecostalism and charismatic movements. His associate editors are four men who come from Vanguard University (a Pentecostal/charismatic-related school in southern California), Ripon College, Austin Community College, and Southeast Missouri State University. The “List of Contributors” provides a useful look at the ninety scholars (including the editors) and the topics to which they contributed. Regent University provided twenty-two contributors and Southwest Missouri State seven. A dozen or so scholars teaching in institutions outside of North America (e.g., Nigeria, South Africa, Korea, Lebanon, India, the United Kingdom, Ecuador, Italy, and the Philippines) were represented. A variety of theological communities contributed: Roman Catholic, United Methodist, Pentecostal, independent evangelical, Lutheran, Baptist; some writers work in secular schools. At least seventy-two of the ninety contributors appeared by given name to be male. Given the important leadership roles held by women throughout the development of this movement (although more recent times have seen a decline in women’s roles, even in academic circles), a higher percentage of women contributors would have been appropriate.

The writing is clear and concise. Casual thumbing through and reading at random is enjoyable. On the whole, the book seems reasonably balanced, is certainly well-written, and would be a useful addition to any theological or religious studies collection.

Margaret Tarpley

