

## The Liminal Spirit: Ritual Experience, Ritual Initiation in Luke and Paul

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### Abstract

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This article is divided into two sections. The first employs literary, discourse analysis and narratological approaches to demonstrate that, contrary to widely received thought, Luke prescribes a coherent and internally consistent model of Christian initiation. The distinctive methodological combination addresses a problem long plaguing Lukan studies, namely, how to disambiguate between what is merely incidental to the story and what represents the implied author's ideology. The resultant data is discussed in terms of anthropological categories.

The second section addresses the problem of reconciling the two apparently conflicting data sets of Luke (who seems to show 'Christians' without the Spirit) and Paul (who claimed that there were no Christians without the Spirit). Paul predicated his statements that possession of the Spirit was the universal marker of Christian identity upon the liminal ritual process that

Luke both describes and prescribes.<sup>1)</sup> The individuals that Luke genuinely shows without the Spirit are in a liminal state, they are initiates in the process of becoming part of the people of God, a process that involves both water baptism and Spirit reception (a.k.a., Spirit baptism), and a process that entails both a horizontal dimension (the initiate relative to the group) and a vertical dimension (the initiate relative to God).

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## I. Introduction

This article reflects upon my 2017 publication *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit: An Analysis of the Timing, Mechanism, and Manifestation of Spirit-Reception in Luke-Acts* (Paternoster). While my thinking has developed since the original monograph, most of the exegetical aspects presented here are contained in *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*. The three salient points of progression regard the ineluctable nature of Luke's narrative logic in the Pentecost story, the cogent power of gap filling in Acts 2 and 8, and the irrefragable fact of Luke's use of exemplar/paradigmatic characters throughout Luke-Acts, notably Jesus, Peter, and Paul, to model his ecclesial ideology. As I am now researching anthropology and Spirit experience in the New Testament, I have included some references to anthropology. Finally, I have sought to apply my research to the question

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1) Cf. Clifford Geertz's discussion concerning models 'of' and 'for', *Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Fontana Press, 1993), 93-94.

of integrating Luke and Paul.

## II. Methodology

While Luke is recognised as a theologian, and while narrative-critical methods are in standard use to explicate his theology, interpreters have been reluctant to claim that Luke prescribes any ritual behaviour for his reader, beyond, perhaps, baptism. However, discourse analysis, narratology, and literary analysis can be used to identify structures of normativity within Luke's narrative. Joel B. Green's utilisation of discourse analysis has paved the way. He writes:

At one level, discourse theorists would be concerned with how persons within the narrative respond to the message of baptism. At another, we would inquire into what responses Luke's narrative (and in particular his perspective on baptism) might effect among his audience. In narrative texts, which invite readerly identification with characters within the text, these two horizons often merge.<sup>2)</sup>

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2) Joel B. Green, "From 'John's Baptism' to 'Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus': The Significance of Baptism in Luke-Acts," *Baptism, the New Testament and the Church: Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White*, JSNT.S 171 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 161.

Regarding Luke's historical audience, we know that across the Greco-Roman world people were familiar with the pedagogical use of historical events and characters as models (exempla, παραδείγματα) either to imitate or to eschew. As Matthew B. Roller writes, "Exemplary discourse, then, encompasses all of Roman society, from the loftiest aristocrats to the humblest peasants, laborers, and slaves."<sup>3)</sup> Werner Jaeger states: "The whole of Greek paideia [education] is founded on two very old Greek ideas—paradeigma and mimesis, the model and its imitation."<sup>4)</sup> Luke's readers would have had a strong tendency, ingrained upon them since childhood, either through formal education, where rhetoric was studied,<sup>5)</sup> or through participating in the ubiquitous communal reading meetings common to all social classes,<sup>6)</sup> to view his characters and events as exemplars.

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3) Matthew B. Roller, "Exemplarity in Roman Culture: The Cases of Horatius Cocles and Cloelia," *Classical Philology*, Vol. 99, No. 1 (2004): 6.

4) Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* Vol. 2, Gilbert Highet, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943), 259. Cf., Kristoffel Demoen, "A Paradigm for the Analysis of Paradigms: The Rhetorical *Exemplum* in Ancient and Imperial Greek Theory," *Rhetorica: A Journal for the History of Rhetoric*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1997): 125-58; William Kurz, "Narrative Models for Imitation in Luke-Acts," *Greeks, Romans and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks, eds. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1990), 171-89; John M. Lilley, "The Narrative Presentation of Ethical Paradigms in Dionysius's Roman Antiquities and Luke-Acts" (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 1994). For exemplars in Jewish writing see, Teresa Rash Brown, "Sinners, Idol-Worshippers and Fools among the Men of Heshbon: Ben Sira's Pedagogy in Praise of the Fathers (Sir 44-50)" (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1998).

5) Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 221.

6) See the ground-breaking work of Brian J. Wright, *Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus: A Window into Early Christian Reading Practices* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), esp. 111-15.

It is here that we can combine Green's discourse analysis and the historical context of pedagogical *exempla*. Jane D. Chaplin, drawing upon Joseph B. Solodow, observes, "one of Livy's narrative techniques is to depict an internal audience responding to a person or an event in the very way Livy wants his contemporary audience to do."<sup>7)</sup> Luke employs the same technique. The Pentecost converts, who had just been audience to Peter's sermon, "were persistently devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles" (Acts 2:42). Luke, like Livy, manipulates characters to influence his audience.

But what audience? We are now straddling the fields of discourse analysis and narratology. The 'audience' Livy and Luke influence is the 'implied reader'. This is the ideal reader constructed by the narrative who always responds appropriately to the ideology expressed by the implied author (also a narrative construct). As Wolf Schmid writes, the implied reader is, "the author's image of the recipient that is fixed and objectified in the text by specific indexical signs"<sup>8)</sup> This is not the actual reader, ancient or modern. Nor is the implied reader someone like Luke's Theophilus. Narrator and narratee both exist within the narrative.

Manipulating characters and events to influence the implied reader is

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7) Jane D. Chaplin, *Livy's Exemplary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 51; Joseph B. Solodow, "Livy and the Story of Horatius, 1.24-26," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 109 (1979): 157-58, esp., 158.

8) Wolf Schmid, "'Implied Reader', Paragraph 2," *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, Peter Hühn, et al., eds. (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2013), [http://www.hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php?title=Implied Reader&oldid=2015](http://www.hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php?title=Implied+Reader&oldid=2015) (accessed 22 May, 2018). See also, Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 137-38.

the function of literary devices. Such include: focalisation (orienting the reader's attention to the 'focalised'<sup>9)</sup>), functional redundancy (purposeful repetition),<sup>10)</sup> narrative asides (comments directed overtly to the reader),<sup>11)</sup> narrative spokespersons (characters who represent the implied author's ideology, e.g., God, Jesus, and sometimes Peter), action peaks/didactic peaks (peak: an episode 'characterized by unusual grammatico-stylistic features')<sup>12)</sup> type-scenes (a standard, recurring scenario),<sup>13)</sup> exemplars, and amplification (ἀξίσεις, used in ancient rhetoric for expanding repeatedly upon a theme).

By these one identifies what is brought before the implied reader's attention, emphasised, commented upon, and marked for emulation; thus, resolving the perennial problem of disambiguating the merely incidental to the story from what is aligned with the implied author's ideology. That is, differentiating between what is described and what is didactic; distin-

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9) Cf. Michael Toolan, *Narrative, A Critical Linguistic Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2001), 60. MiekeBal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 4th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 132-53.

10) On functional redundancy, cf., Ronald D. Witherup, "Functional Redundancy in the Acts of the Apostles: A Case Study," *JSNT* 48 (1992): 84.

11) Steven M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts*, JSNT (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992), 36.

12) R. E. Longacre, "Interpreting Biblical Stories," Teun A. van Dijk, ed., *Discourse and Literature: New Approaches to the Analysis of Literary Genres* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1985), 172-73, 176; cf. Robert E. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse* (New York: Plenum, 1996), 37.

13) Cf. Walter Arend, *Die Typischen Scene bei Homer* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1933); Robert Alter, "Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 5, No.2 (1978): 355-68; Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 47-62.

guishing the narrated from the normative.<sup>14)</sup> For example, Peter goes up on the roof to pray (Acts 10:9). While the exemplaric Peter sometimes serves as a normative spokesperson, this behaviour lacks any literary device specifying it as normative. Luke gives no narrative aside, “God heard him because he ascended the roof” or, “all the faithful were regularly praying on the roof,” nor does an apostle declare: “repent, be baptised, and ascend the rooftop to pray!” Rooftop prayer is normal but not prescribed.<sup>15)</sup> Thus, while we know that Greco-Roman educated Luke<sup>16)</sup> is predisposed to deploy characters and events didactically, we also have the critical tools to specify precisely what he is putting forward as an *exemplum* (παράδειγμα), and how he is advancing it, whether positively or negatively, and to what degree, either as normal or normative.

This paper will also employ concepts from the anthropology of religion to interpret the data from narrative-critical analysis. Anthropology of religion helps us understand human behaviour as it relates to the ultimate beliefs of society. By studying Luke’s presentation of early Christianity in the same way one would study any small religious group, viz. any ‘sect’, we can avoid distancing ourselves from what may be considered as distasteful or strange behaviours, for example, tongues speech. Narra-

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14) Cf. Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 2nd ed. (Bletchley: Scripture Union, 1994), 106.

15) David J. McCollough, *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit: An Analysis of the Timing, Mechanism, and Manifestation of Spirit Reception in Luke-Acts* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2017), 78.

16) Luke’s educational ‘level’ is debated. Cf. Sean A. Adams, “Luke and Progymnasmata: Rhetorical Handbooks, Rhetorical Sophistication and Genre Selection,” A.W. Pitts and M.R. Hauge, eds., *Ancient Education and Early Christianity*, LNTS 533 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 137-54.

tive-critical analysis indicates it played a role in Luke's community. Anthropology of religion, working in tandem with narrative exegesis, may help assess how it functioned within the social group.

### **1. Part I: The Liminal Spirit in Luke-Acts**

While it is almost a cliché to claim that Luke knows no common ritual because he seems to vary the way the Spirit comes in his Spirit-reception scenes, application of literary, discourse, and narratological analysis undermines this *consensus gentium*. Luke is not woodenly repetitive. He is coherent and internally consistent. With narrative progression one reads Luke's scenes sequentially, observing the unfolding of the story, noting how questions raised (or gaps left) in initial scenes are answered (filled in) in subsequent scenes. With focalization, working in concert with literary tools such as narrative asides, functional redundancy, didactic peaks, type-scenes, exemplars and amplification, one identifies prescriptive narrative structures and their level of normativity. Finally, with the concept of "entity representations" (developed by Catherine Emmott, University of Glasgow) one monitors what the implied reader knows about any particular character, setting, aspect of the plot, theme, or ideological perspective of the story (e.g. Paul, Antioch, persecution, the growth of the Word, the validity of the Christian sect, etc.) at any particular point in the storyline.

This sequential, progressive reading of the Spirit reception scenes in Luke-Acts, with each scene's salient points evaluated in terms of focal-

ization, narrative asides, etc., accumulates a well-rounded picture showing that Luke specifies a coherent, internally consistent model of ritual initiation that allows for limited, minor variation within a standard ritual structure. Finding minor perturbations within an otherwise stable ritual process comports well with the ‘real world’ findings of anthropology; as Roy Rappaport observes, even the most invariant rituals exhibit some degree of variance (cf. Catholic Mass, individuals may choose not to receive communion).<sup>17)</sup>

Luke’s presentation of initiation, and within that, Spirit reception, involves liminality. That is, he presents the Spirit as being given to initiates during a ritual process that takes a certain amount of time to be completed. This is not to be understood as identical with James Dunn’s concept of conversion-initiation, which is vertical in nature, i.e., God responds to human faith actualized in water baptism, and which occupies no more temporal space than is required by the split-second moment of belief.<sup>18)</sup> Rather, Luke’s initiate undergoes a multi-element ritual process before leaving the “betwixt and between” experience of liminality<sup>19)</sup> and entering the believing community as a full-fledged member. Luke presents Christian initiation as consisting of belief in the kerygma, repentance, immersion in water, prayer by the initiate for the Spirit, prayer with han-

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17) Roy A. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 36.

18) James Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970), 100, see also, 37, 81, 91, 94-96.

19) Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1969), 95.

dlaying by particularly powerful ritual elders to transmit the Spirit, and, climactically, dissociative tongues speaking that is consistent with the traditional tongues speaking practices of the community (viz. modeled after the Pentecost story) and that is conceptualized as the experience of Spirit reception. Finally, the initiate partakes of table fellowship with the believing community. Belief/repentance and table fellowship form book-ends for the ritual process. Elements in the middle of the process may vary, but belief/repentance and table fellowship remain fixed.

Before studying the ritual process presented in Luke's story, a narrative analysis begins with identifying the implied reader. William S. Kurz argues cogently against Joseph B. Tyson that the reader is not simply a Gentile Godfearer, but a Christian.<sup>20</sup> Luke's first address to Theophilus (who is the narratee, not the implied reader, though in Luke-Acts, the two are closely aligned) speaks of 'us' and states that Theophilus has been 'instructed' (Lk 1:2, 4). Loveday Alexander, appealing to practice in ancient scientific writing, affirms that *κατηχήθης* should be understood here as 'instructed' not merely 'informed'.<sup>21</sup> Theophilus has not simply been told about Christianity, he has been instructed in it. Kurz continues by citing how Paul prophecies to the church (Acts 20:29-30) similarly to Jesus who made provision for his church—the Eucharist, apostles and proph-

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20) William S. Kurz, "Images of Judaism in Luke-Acts," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 61, No.2 (1993), 388-90, esp. 389. Also, William S. Kurz, *Reading Luke-Acts, Dynamics of Biblical Narrative* (Louisville:Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 13-15.

21) Loveday Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), 139, 141-42.

ecies (Lk 22:19-20, 29-32, 35-37). Robert Maddox points out that Luke argues from the Hebrew Scriptures and makes insider allusions to those scriptures (Lk 8:9-10; 9:28-36). Moreover, he notes that many of Jesus' parables are spoken for his disciples (Lk 8:9-15; 11:5-8; 12:1-12; 12:35-48; 16:1-9; 17:7-10).<sup>22)</sup> Finally, Luke's Peter character voices our very question in Luke 12:41, "Lord, do you say this parable to us or also to all?" Jesus replies, "Who, then, is the faithful and wise steward?" Luke's implied reader is not merely a God fearer, but a Christian.

What presupposition pool, then, would an instructed Christian reader bring to Luke's text? In particular, what can we expect Luke's reader to know about Christian initiation? Here literary analysis and historical inquiry are necessarily juxtaposed. Obviously, we cannot anachronistically assume characteristics of modern Christianity. From the Hebrew Scriptures our implied reader would be aware of the concept of transmission of the Spirit from a master to an apprentice, often via physical contact: Moses to the Seventy Elders, without physical contact (Nm 11:25); Moses to Joshua via handlaying (Dt 34:9); Elijah to Elisha via a mantle (2 Kgs 2:13); Samuel to Saul and to David via anointing oil (1 Sm 10:1; 16:13). From Paul's letters we know that Paul thought every Christian in his first century world had been water baptised and had had a Spirit experience (Rom 6:3-5, 8:9; Gal 3:27; 1 Cor 12:13). Since Paul's Christians were not baptised the split-second they believed Paul's preaching, there is an aspect of liminality present in Paul's concept of Christian initiation.

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22) Robert Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982), 12-15, 28.

Paul, however, while referencing elements of initiation, does not discuss the process. He does not address the status of initiates who have believed but have not yet been to the baptismal pool and, though he affirms that one cannot be a Christian without the Spirit (Rom 8:9), he does not say when the Spirit is given to initiates, whether at the moment of decision or later in the water of baptism or at some other point during an initiation process. Therefore, while we can know that the implied reader would come to Luke-Acts having undergone a liminal Christian initiation, we do not know, in advance of reading Luke-Acts for ourselves, the details of that initiation. This is the task of narrative analysis.

How then does a narrative-critical approach flesh out Luke's ecclesiology, in particular, his ritual initiation structure? A sequential reading begins where the story does, with the Spirit experiences of Elizabeth, John, Zacharias, Mary, and Simeon. Here, the reader associates Spirit experience with miraculous conception, loud prophecy, physical movement and guidance. Here, particularly righteous, or exceptional individuals within the people of God experience the Spirit. However, the nativity stories, while involving the Spirit, modeling prophecy and even tangentially including initiation (John and Jesus' circumcision), do not inaugurate a new nexus of ongoing Spirit activities within these characters. Luke's first initiatory Spirit-reception scene, Jesus' baptism (Lk 3:21-22), is presented as inaugurating the Spirit's work upon Messiah. It presents the Spirit coming after Jesus' immersion and during his prayer, thus making prayer integral to the baptism ceremony, but linking the coming of the Spirit to the prayer immediately following immersion, but not to the wa-

ter of immersion perse.

Later, in chapter eleven, Jesus teaches on shamelessly persistent prayer, encourages his followers to ask their Father for the Spirit, and then relates the story of a demoniac initially delivered from his demon but later repossessed. The reader is led to ask herself what the demoniac should have done to prevent repossession and the foregoing narrative about persistent prayer for the Spirit provides the answer. His house was clean, but empty and thus vulnerable. In this way, Luke encourages initiates, that is, all who experience the delivering power of the finger of God acting through Jesus, i.e., the New Moses' in his New Exodus ministry, to persist in prayer for the Spirit at the time of their deliverance from bondage. Luke presents persistent prayer for Spirit experience as belonging to Christian initiation.

Luke's next Spirit reception scene is Pentecost. When the reader comes to Peter's 2:38 promise that if the crowd will repent and be baptised, they will receive the very same gift of the Spirit that they saw the 120 had received, the implied reader, having previously witnessed Jesus' baptism and prayer, already has an expectation that prayer for the Spirit will follow immersion. Having progressed sequentially through the story, the implied reader will not now expect the Spirit to come in the water, but rather in the prayer that immediately follows the water. Both the water and the prayer for the Spirit are one liminal initiation process. There is no separation of Spirit reception from Christian initiation here. Spirit experience belongs integrally to the Christian ritual process. Yet, neither is there automatic reception of the Spirit at the moment of belief, for each of the

3,000, having believed Peter's preaching, and having made the decision to repent and be baptised, must wait their turn in line before they can actually be immersed and then receive the Spirit. Liminality is present.

This was not a corporate experience, as with the 120, but a series of individual ritual experiences. Luke does not show his reader the moment of Spirit reception for each of the 3,000. Luke's narrative camera fails to capture those thousands of individual moments. All Luke says is that 3,000 were baptised. The reader knows, however, because Peter, the Spirit-baptised apostle, promised it, that upon their repentance and baptism, they would each receive the Spirit. Through the explicit, poetically redundant statements of his leading character, at a climactic point in the story, at the programmatic beginning of his second volume, Luke normativised individual Spirit reception as the climax of Christian initiation: "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all those far away, as many as the Lord our God should call" (2:39).

But, by what mechanism did the 3,000 receive the Spirit? The reader expects, based upon the previous story of Jesus' immersion, prayer and Spirit experience, and upon Jesus' teaching on persistent prayer, that the 3,000 will pray at their baptisms and receive the Spirit in association with the prayer—not the water. However, in not explicitly showing the Spirit reception experiences of the 3,000, Luke left a narrative gap (cf. Meir Sternberg; Michal Beth Dinkler).<sup>23)</sup> The reader wonders whether the lacu-

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23) Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Michal Beth Dinkler, *Silent Statements: Narrative Representations of Speech and Silence in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2013).

na will be filled in later.

Before moving on to how the narrative gap is filled in, we must review the Pentecost narrative in terms of the manifestation of Spirit reception. What does it mean in the story to ‘receive the Spirit’? Luke focalizes dissociative tongues speaking, which he understands as real languages, repeatedly from multiple angles. The narrator states that tongues speaking occurred. Then the crowd asks three times about the tongues speaking. Then some of the crowd mock the tongues—“they are drunk” (i.e. they were dissociating). Luke then has Peter answer the questions and mockery of the crowd. Peter’s stance ‘with the eleven’ unequivocally presents him as a narrative spokesperson delivering the ideological viewpoint of the implied author. Peter informs the crowd that, “this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel” (2:16). The crowd asks and Peter answers. The referent of discourse between Peter and the crowd is the dissociative tongues speaking. In good *peshet* style, Peter identifies the dissociative tongues speaking as the prophetic outpouring of the Spirit promised in the Hebrew Scriptures. That is, the innovative practices of Luke’s sect are in continuity with the sacred texts.

Having equated the dissociative tongues speaking experience with the experience of the Spirit, Luke then presents the converse. Peter announces that Jesus, crucified, buried, resurrected, ascended and exalted, has received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and “he poured out this which you even see and hear” (2:33b). What then did they see and hear? Luke has presented the crowd as inquisitive, yet the crowd never asks about the wind or fire that had been narrated previously. All the

crowd asks about is the tongues speaking. The implied reader knows that what they saw and heard was what they had been asking about—seemingly inebriated tongues speaking. Hence Luke’s second equation: The experience of the promised Spirit is dissociative tongues speaking.

Luke, having constructed two narrative equations, moves on to a third. In response to the crowd’s appeal for help—‘What should we do?’—Peter instructs them: “Repent, he says, and let each of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children and to all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God should call” (2:38-39). In this third equation, the gift of the Spirit, already defined as dissociative tongues speaking, is rendered as the promise in perpetuity; Luke permanently locks dissociative tongues into his initiation ritual. That is, Peter has stated:

1. The dissociative tongues experience is the prophetic Spirit experience (2:16).
2. The promise of the Holy Spirit given by the Father is the dissociative tongues experience (2:33).
3. The gift of the Spirit/the promise is for all who repent and are baptised (2:38-39).

Therefore, as Hans Windisch wrote in 1908, “When Peter at Pentecost promises all repentant the gift of the Holy Spirit, they should all, therefore, themselves experience what they just then from the disciples

had heard and seen: glossolalia and witness speech 2:33, 38; cf. 4:31.”<sup>24)</sup> While it remains to be seen whether Luke, through poor editing, later contradicts himself, the implied reader expects no such contradiction on the part of the implied author.<sup>25)</sup> Going forward in the narrative, to receive “the Promise”, the gift of the Spirit, is to dissociate and speak in tongues.

However, I previously argued that, “. . . Luke has *not explicitly excluded* other possible manifestations (or non-manifestations) of the Spirit. This leaves the narrative door open for Luke to later suggest that the Spirit could manifest his arrival some other way, or even in no visible manner at all.”<sup>26)</sup> I further argued that just as Luke later modified the ritual sequence of Acts 2:38, so too, he could modify ‘the expectations generated by Acts 2:16, 33, 38-39.’<sup>27)</sup>

However, what I did not consider is that no narrative device specifically requires the Acts 2:38 sequence of repentance, baptism and Spirit reception to *always* occur in that specific order. So, while Luke does emphasise the sequence, i.e. it is uttered by a normative spokesperson at a critical point in the storyline and is consequently a programmatic statement, he does not explicitly state that it will *always* be the same. However, Luke’s argument that the promised Spirit experience is the dissociative tongues

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24) “Wenn Petrus zu Pfingsten allen Bußfertigen die Gabe des heiligen Geistes verheißt, so sollen sie alle an sich erfahren, was sie soeben von den Jüngern gehört und gesehen haben: Glossolalie und Zeugenreden 2 33.38 vgl. 4 31,” Hans Windisch, *Taufe und Sünde im ältesten Christentum bis auf Origenes: Ein Beitrag zur altchristlichen Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 1908), 93.

25) Cf. Green, “From ‘John’s Baptism’ to ‘Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus’: The Significance of Baptism in Luke-Acts,” 160.

26) McCollough, *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, 125.

27) *Ibid.*, 122.

experience and the promised Spirit experience is for all, *does* have a locking mechanism to it. All receive the Promise. The Promise is the tongues experience. All, therefore, receive the tongues experience. Luke locked tongues into his initiation ritual. I accurately presented Luke's argument up to the point of its conclusion, but did not follow through.

In terms of anthropological analysis, initiates to Luke's sect were expected to become holy spirit-possessed and manifest that possession through dissociative tongues speech. This type of experiential initiation ritual could be maintained while the Christian group was still a small sect and initiating relatively few converts. As the sect grew to become a church, and had to initiate large numbers who may not have had the same religious convictions and effervescence as the early converts, spirit-possession as an initiation ritual died out. However, in the early days of the sect, ritual possession by a 'holy' spirit, and especially by a spirit identified as a manifestation of the Jewish God, must have had special appeal as a defense against a world filled with evil, 'unclean' spirits, as an immediate experience of one's deity, and as a means of facilitating the intense *communitas* described in Luke's statements summarizing community life (e.g. Acts 2:42-47).

Returning now to the matter of narrative gap-filling, the next Lukan story in which new initiates receive the Spirit is Acts 8 (Acts 4 deals with initiated community members having a renewal of their liminal Spirit experience). Here we find Luke narrating that the apostles prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Spirit, that the apostles were laying hands upon them and that they were receiving the Spirit. Then, Luke presents the pro-

cedure from the perspective of a character: “but Simon, perceiving that through the laying on of the hands of the apostles the Spirit was given, offered them money ...” (8:18).

Simon’s observation is not qualified with some statement as, “Simon, supposing the Spirit was given by the laying on of apostolic hands” or “Simon, incorrectly assuming the Spirit was given by the laying on of apostolic hands.” Luke is perfectly willing to supply such a qualification if needed, e.g., “[the sailors], supposing they had achieved their purpose” (Acts 27:13) or “[the jailor], supposing the prisoners had escaped” (16:27) or “[Paul and his companions go to the river] supposing prayer to be there” (16:13). No, Luke presents Simon perceiving that the actual procedure in use by the apostles was handlaying. In an unqualified manner, Luke states that Simon saw how the apostles transferred the Spirit. That is, Luke does not provide a caveat such as, ‘on this unique occasion’ or ‘uniquely here in Samaria’. On the contrary, Luke combines redundant focalization of the handlaying rite with normative, exemplar characters. Peter and John, representing the authority and praxis of Jerusalem, demonstrate for the implied reader the impartation method in use—the ritual practice sanctioned by the implied author.

In this way, Luke fills in the narrative gap from Acts 2. Now the reader knows how the 3,000 received the Spirit. They repented, were immersed, prayed, received prayer from apostles and had apostolic hands laid upon them. Thus, the reader has added new information to her composite pic-

ture<sup>28)</sup> of Christian initiation: in addition to personally praying for the Spirit, the initiate must allow the community leaders to pray and lay hands upon him/her to receive the Spirit.

Anthropologically, we find here another reason for the spirit-possession ritual to fall into disuse—the failure of skilled ritual elders capable of evoking spirit-possession in initiates. Jesus was clearly a gifted charismatic healer and visionary, and he had apparently gathered around him other similarly talented individuals and/or trained them, apprentice fashion. However, as the charismata became routinized, so the place of the charismatic ritual elder diminished. A new generation of initiators arose without the skills of their forebears. They simply laid hands upon initiates, and/or chrismated them, but did not invoke spirit-possession. The locus of power had shifted from being invested in the ritual elder, to being the property of the ritual act itself. Handlaying and/or chrismation began to be perceived as working *ex opere operato* and initiates were assured that the ritual had done its job, though of course, the manifestations of apostolic times were no longer are needed.

We also find liminality in the story of Saul's conversion. In the first iteration of the story (9:1-19), Jesus assures Ananias that Saul is 'safe' to initiate. In Saul's second recounting of his experience (22:10) he explains that Jesus identified himself to him, and then he responded by asking, "what should I do, Lord?" In this statement, Saul is submitting him-

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28) Cf. the technical term, "entity representation" used in *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit* and drawn from the discourse analysis study of Catherine Emmott, *Narrative Comprehension: A Discourse Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

self to obey the one he formerly had persecuted. He knows Jesus is raised from the dead and he calls him Lord (τί ποιήσω, κύριε). According to the story logic, Saul has become of follower of Jesus. Of course, Ananias still goes through the initiatory rituals (22:16), water baptism and calling upon the name of the Lord and, at some point, Spirit reception (which is not automatic, but mediated by Ananias, according to his own assertion, “Jesus sent me so that you . . . may be filled with the Holy Spirit” 9:17c). Nevertheless, the reader knows that Saul has already submitted to Jesus as Lord. Here Luke deftly identifies what is essential: not the ritual form, but the experiential reality. However, the ritual form is not to be dispensed with, it too is necessary for acceptance into, or perhaps better put, acceptance by, the community of Jesus’ followers.

But, where then is the liminality in the Cornelius story? The Spirit comes (10:43-44) precisely at the moment of belief! This is true, but what follows? Water baptism. Luke does not neglect the necessary water ritual. Both water baptism (aligning the initiate with the group in terms of social pressure to conform morally, viz. as symbol of ‘repentance’) and Spirit reception (orienting the initiate to the deity as the ultimate in ordering classification<sup>29</sup>) are necessary for acceptance by the believing community, symbolized by table fellowship (cf. Acts 10:48; 11:3). This is classic Mary Douglas grid/group theory.

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29) Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London/New York: Routledge, 2003), 62-63, cf. her discussion of grid and group in relation to dissociative trance on page 109: “The weaker the social constraints, the more bodily dissociation is approved and treated as a central ritual adjunct for channelling benign power to the community.”

Furthermore, Dunn is absolutely correct, according to the story logic, to see the gift of the Spirit as a purifying force<sup>30)</sup> (though, as Turner rightly observes, one not to be equated with forgiveness of sins<sup>31)</sup>). As one progressively reads the story from beginning to end, one remembers that at Pentecost Luke presents the Spirit's coming as associated with fire and thus fulfilling the purificatory role that John the Baptist prophesied of back in Luke 3. So, when the reader arrives at the Cornelius episode, in the reader's concept of the Spirit (i.e. the entity representation for the Spirit), the Spirit is already understood as purifying believers. Consequently, the reader will understand God's "purifying their hearts by faith" (15:9) as precisely the work of the Spirit whom they received by faith. In Luke's order of salvation, forgiveness of sins takes place at the moment of faith and this allows for the Spirit to come and purify the heart. Sanctification, though progressive (e.g., Simon the repentant sorcerer) belongs to Christian initiation. Lukan Spirit experience is not solely about power for witness, but about purity as well. Luke's link of John the Baptist with the forerunner/Elijah figure of Malachi 3 and 4 (cf. Lk 1:17, 76; 7:27) and Messiah's refining work of purification (Luke 3:16), which Luke understands to be accomplished through the Spirit, make this clear (cf. Andrew Perry).<sup>32)</sup>

Finally, then, the reader comes to the last Spirit reception scene in

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30) Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 81-82.

31) Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts*, JPT.S 9 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 382.

32) Andrew Perry, "Eschatological Deliverance: The Spirit in Luke-Acts" (Ph.D. diss., University of Durham, 2008).

Luke-Acts, the story of the Ephesian disciples. Regardless of how one defines them (they were disciples of John, members of the people of God, but not yet Christians) liminality is present in the ritual process. They believe Paul's instructions about Jesus, then they are baptised, then Paul lays hands upon them and then they receive the Spirit. All of this takes time. Paul did not baptise them all at once, nor did he lay hands upon them all at once, he had to do each ritual act separately for each individual. To make the point clear, Luke does not present a non-individuated corporate experience of the Spirit, rather, he presents individual reception experiences in a liminal ritual process.

Furthermore, in parallel with another main exemplar character, Peter, Luke shows Paul imparting the Spirit through the handlaying rite. Paul embodies the ecclesial ideology of the implied author (cf. the exemplaric passage in Acts 20:17-38 noted by William Kurz).<sup>33)</sup> Paul demonstrates the standard ritual process. Every detail of the full entity representation for initiation is not repeated, for the reader already knows that apostles and initiates pray. Luke delimited the ritual structure: belief in Jesus as Messiah, baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus, handlaying, Spirit reception manifested in tongues speech with a control element (i.e., something intelligible), in this case, prophecy.

In conclusion, we ask of the implied reader, who has progressed through Luke's two volumes from beginning to end, what, then, is the accumulated picture of Spirit reception and Christian initiation with regards

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33) Kurz, "Narrative Models for Imitation in Luke-Acts," 175.

to liminality and ritual? What concept did the reader amass while reading the Spirit reception scenes sequentially, in the order of their occurrence? First, prayer follows immersion and the Spirit is linked to the prayer, not the water. Moreover, in apostolic teaching, belief, repentance, and immersion precede Spirit reception; nevertheless, repentance, immersion and Spirit reception are not separated from each other by any significant length of time, they all belong to the same liminal ritual process. Also, receptivity to prayer and handlaying by powerful, especially gifted ritual elders is required of initiates. The Spirit's coming is specifically attached to the handlaying rite. However, people other than apostles can function as ritual elders if they are gifted with the ability to impart the Spirit. Also, the Spirit can come without the handlaying rite when a powerful ritual elder preaches. Though this does not always occur, it is a possible variation of the ritual. Finally, immersion and handlaying by a gifted ritual elder for reception of the Spirit are not to be separated by any length of time, but should be performed together during a short ritual process. This is why the implied reader would not find Luke's stories of liminality conflicting with what she/he knew from Paul. Paul could use Spirit experience as a community boundary marker precisely because all initiates received the Spirit during the Christian ritual process.

## **2. Part II: The Liminal Spirit and the Ritual Framework of Luke and Paul**

The anthropological concept of liminality provides a solution to the

apparent conflict between data from Luke-Acts and data from Paul's epistles regarding Spirit reception. Paul's statements about a universal Christian experience of the Spirit were predicated upon a common liminal initiation practice. Paul does not describe the liminal experience of initiates, but he simply assumes that his readers are fully initiated. Consequently, he can use Spirit possession as a ritual boundary marker delimiting the Christian community, signifying belonging to Christ. Luke, however, details scenarios in which candidates for Christian initiation experience liminality. That is, Luke shows initiates traversing the ritual space between being outsiders to The Way, and being insiders. That in-between part is called the liminal stage (from *limen*, or "threshold").

The conflicting data can be highlighted by comparing Peter's instructions to the crowd on Pentecost with Paul's statements to the Romans. Peter declares: "repent, and let each one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." As the 3,000 were not all baptised at the precise instant of their repentance, there was liminal space between the moment of decision to repent, the concomitant resolution to get into the line of repentant people, and the moment of immersion in water, after which the Spirit was to be given. The gift of the Spirit was distinct from the moment of repentance/belief, but not subsequent to the liminal initiation ritual.

Paul, however, states that, "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his" (Rom 8:9). One could argue that Paul envisaged an automatic, silent coming of the Spirit at the moment of initial faith, followed later by various gift manifestations; whereas Luke chose to speak of the

manifestations as the ‘coming of the Spirit’ and either ignored the ‘silent coming’ idea, or did not know about it, or knew about it but did not believe in it. One must then argue that Luke’s presentation of Paul in Acts 19, where Paul asks the Ephesians whether they had received the Spirit when they believed, is a purely Lukan construct and that the Paul of the epistles would never have asked such a question.

Yet Paul, when speaking of water baptism, assumes all have been baptised (Rom 6:3-5; Gal 3:27). Moreover, Paul links water baptism to identification with the burial and resurrection of Christ—with the believer’s very identification with Christ. Clearly Paul is not claiming that water baptism occurred at the moment of decision to follow Christ. What is Paul doing? Paul is theologising from a common, universal initiation ritual. He is using elements of that standard ritual process as boundary markers of Christian identity. All Christians were water baptised. All Christians publicly confessed Jesus as Lord. All Christians received the Spirit. Paul does not address the matter of exceptions to his general statements. He does not write about the status of initiates. He does not speak of a person who has believed but not yet had the chance to be baptised. He does not address the question of belief in isolation from the opportunity to publicly ‘confess with your mouth’. Most significantly, he does not theologize about the status of the initiate who has believed but not yet experienced the Spirit after baptism.

We return to Luke. Luke does depict genuine believers in Christ who are without the Spirit. In his programmatic Pentecost story, the 3,000 had to be baptised in order to receive the Spirit, and that, naturally, involved a

time interval between the moments of conviction of/belief in the truth of the message preached, conscious repentance based upon the new belief, decision to line up to be baptised, and the actual moment of immersion in water, after which the Spirit was given. Luke at length describes the Samaritans as genuine believers who had been baptised, but had not received the Spirit (interestingly, Dunn has retracted his former claim that the Samaritan belief was faulty).<sup>34)</sup> Saul, regardless of when he believed in Jesus, whether on the road to Damascus, or sometime during this three days of blindness, or at the moment Ananias laid hands upon him, or at the time of his immersion and calling upon the name of the Lord, received the Spirit, not merely by his faith alone, but by the mediation of Ananias. Cornelius' house did indeed receive the Spirit at the precise moment of belief in the message of forgiveness of sins through Jesus, but again, they did not receive apart from the presence of Peter, a character in the story already known to possess the gift of being able to impart the Spirit. The Ephesian Twelve, regardless of whether they were Christians or disciples of John prior to meeting Paul, received the Spirit individually at the hands of Paul after they had been baptised in Jesus' name. Liminality was present.

Yet, despite Luke's depiction of liminality for initiates during Christian initiation, Luke does not depict communities of believers being left indefinitely without the Spirit. Lack of the Spirit, due to some breakdown

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34) Cf. James Dunn, "Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts," *The Christ and the Spirit: Pneumatology*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 222-42, esp. 240, cf. 228.

in the initiation process, is anomalous. It is not acceptable. It must be remedied immediately. Dunn is perfectly right to emphasize that believers' identity as Christians is bound up with their possession of the Spirit.<sup>35)</sup> For Luke, fully initiated Christians are immersed in water and possess the Spirit. Initiates may, temporarily, during their liminal journey through the ritual process, lack such distinguishing markers. But, this temporary deficiency is always rectified and initiates become full-fledged members of the Christian community. If, due to the exigencies of the mission field, the ritual process breaks down, Luke expects apostles to come down from Jerusalem and repair any breach.

While the programmatic narratives of Pentecost and Samaria establish the ritual structure of belief, repentance, baptism, prayer, handlaying and Spirit reception, questions about the status of the initiate during the process vis-à-vis God and the community remain. Luke precisely explicates the ritual dimensions: vertically with regard to God sins are forgiven at the moment the initiate believes the message of forgiveness through Jesus' name, thus allowing the possibility for the Spirit to be immediately received, thus purifying the initiate (cf. Acts 10:43-44; 15:8-9); horizontally with regard to the community the divine imprimatur of the Spirit must be followed up by water baptism (cf. Acts 10:47-48).

There is, therefore, no contradiction between Luke and Paul. Neither are Paul and Luke using the same terminology (Spirit reception) to describe different events (soteriological indwelling vs. empowering for mis-

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35) Dunn, "Baptism in the Spirit," 240.

sonary service).<sup>36)</sup> It is simply that Luke describes the ritual process, and Paul describes life among the already initiated. When Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that “we all” were baptised into one Spirit and given one Spirit to drink, he theologises from the ritual process narrated in detail by Luke. Every initiate was baptised in the Spirit and brought into the New Covenant experience of the Spirit and given the Spirit to drink. This happened when hands were laid upon the initiate right after he/she was baptised in water. Water baptism then Spirit baptism—that was the ritual process.

It is not that Paul is dependent upon Luke, but that Luke describes the ritual process that precedes Paul. Thus, Luke’s delineation of liminal ritual process informs not only our reading of Romans 8:9, where Paul uses Spirit possession as a community boundary marker, and 1 Corinthians 12:13, where Paul employs terminology remarkably similar to Luke’s to describe the common initiatory experience of the Spirit, it also guides our reading of 1 Corinthians 6:11. There Paul theologises the elements of the standard initiation ritual: washing in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctification by the Spirit are identifiable as water baptism and Spirit reception. After having been baptised and, subsequently, after having received the sanctifying Spirit, the new convert is fully initiated into the Christian community and can be said to be “justified”—declared righteous as a member of the people of God.

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36) As is argued in the standard Pentecostal works: William P. Atkinson, *Baptism in the Spirit: Luke-Acts and the Dunn Debate* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011); William W. and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000).

So too, Titus 3:5 references water baptism and Spirit reception—God, in his mercy, saved “us” (the author, whoever that was, and his ancient audience) “through washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,” and so we are “justified” and become “heirs.” In both 1 Corinthians and Titus, the initiate’s entrance into the people of God is thought of in terms of the rituals accompanying that liminal journey. From this perspective of location within the λαὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, the new member of God’s people can be declared righteous/justified and an inheritor of all the blessings of belonging to God’s family.

### III. Conclusion

Luke’s ritual process is liminal. It is internally consistent while allowing for minor variation within the fixed ritual structure, a phenomenon matching the flexibility of ‘real world’ rituals. Ritual power to impart the Spirit resides in the ritual elders, not in the ritual itself. Luke theologised about Spirit reception from what can be considered spirit-possession events characterized by dissociative tongues speaking. Narrative analysis shows that, while the wind and fire of Pentecost are not normativised, Luke shapes a normative structure regarding tongues speech, prescribing it as a standard element of sectarian initiation. Paul predicated his statements that all Christians possess the Spirit upon the ritual process that Luke described and prescribed in such detail.

Consequently, the currently fashionable doctrine among Pentecostals

that one receives the indwelling (Pauline) Spirit at conversion and then subsequently receives a Lukan empowering for witness experience must be jettisoned. Indwelling and Spirit baptism are the same. Max Turner and James Dunn are correct on that point. However, we must stretch Dunn's vertical conversion/initiation complex in a horizontal direction. Spirit reception, in Luke and Paul, is neither instantaneous nor automatic, it is liminal and mediated. Spirit reception is liminal in that it takes place during the process of becoming a Christian—horizontal with regards to the community, vertical with regards to God. Spirit reception is mediated in that it is imparted by the action of powerful ritual elders. The community knows someone has received the Spirit because Spirit reception is manifested physically in dissociative tongues speech.

In terms of applied theology, Pentecostals, if they wish to follow the scriptural prescription for Christian initiation, must not tell new believers that they have the Spirit until the new believer actually dissociates and speaks in tongues. Ministers gifted in imparting the Spirit must impart the Spirit to the new convert immediately following water baptism. Baptismal services must be constructed with this in mind. Participation in the Lord's supper, symbolising the beginning of life within the Christian community, then would follow baptism and Spirit reception, just like Luke taught us.

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국문초록

## 간극의 성령: 누가와 바울에 있어서의 의식 경험, 의식 입문

데이비드 J. 맥콜로

이 소논문은 두 부분으로 나뉘어 논의된다. 첫 번째 부분에서는, 널리 받아들여지는 생각과는 반대로, 누가가 그리스도인 입문에 있어 논리적이고 내적으로 일관된 모델을 제시한다는 것을 입증하기 위해 문자 그대로의 담화 분석 및 서사학적 접근법을 사용한다. 이런 독특한 방법론적 결합은 누가 연구에 있어 오랫동안 성가시게 한 문제, 즉 이야기 전개에 있어 단순히 부차적인 것과 암시된 저자의 이념을 나타내는 것을 어떻게 명확히 해야 하는지를 다룬다. 결과 데이터는 인류학적 범주의 견지에서 논의된다.

두 번째 부분은 (성령 없는 그리스도인이 가능하다고 보는 듯한) 누가와 (성령 없는 그리스도인은 불가능하다고 주장하는) 바울에게 있어 명백하게 상충되는 두 데이터 세트를 조화시키는 문제를 다룬다. 바울은 성령을 소유하는 것이, 누가도 묘사하고 제시하는 간극의 의식 과정에서 그리스도인 정체성의 보편적인 표식이었다고 단정했다. 누가가 순수하게 보여주는 성령 없는 개개인은 간극의 상태에 있으며, 그들은 하나님의 백성이 되는 부분의 과정, 즉 물침례와 성령받음(소위, 성령침례)에 수반된 과정이며, 수평적 차원(집단과 관련된 입문)과 수직적 차원(하나님과 관련된 입문)을 수반하는 과정에서 신입자가 된다.

## Keywords

Spirit Baptism, Ritual, Focalisation, Liminality, Tongues Speaking

성령침례, 의식, 초점화, 경계성, 방언

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