

ALSOM

THE 142 - ASSEMBLIES OF GOD HISTORY, MISSIONS, and GOVERNANCE INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES - [Module 4 - The Assemblies of God Begins](#)

ORGANIZATIONAL COUNCIL of the ASSEMBLIES OF GOD Hot Springs, Arkansas, 1914



Original leadership in 1914: (Left to Right)

Standing: J. Welch, J.R. Flower, D. Opperman,
Howard Goss, Mack Pinson.
Seated: T.K. Leonard, E.N. Bell, Cyrus Fockler



The First General Council - Hot Springs, Arkansas, 1914

- Mack Pinson's sermon on the "Finished Work of Calvary" identified the movement as committed to progressive sanctification, not second-definite-work sanctification of the Holiness Movement.
- Named the organization "General Council of the Assemblies of God" based on Hebrews 12:23 (KJV), and "ecclesia" – a called out assembly.
- [Agreed on sovereignty of the local church and "voluntary cooperation" among churches \(now considered 2 hallmarks of the Assemblies of God\).](#)
- Approved a "Preamble and Resolution on Constitution"
- Gave two restrictions for ministers—men who had been divorced and remarried and women were not allowed to hold credentials
- Elected the first General Chairman (E. N. Bell) and Secretary (J. Roswell Flower)
- Elected a twelve-member presbytery
- **NOTE:** The [sovereignty of the local church](#), the concept of a [cooperative fellowship](#), the concern for [Scriptural worship, order, methods](#), and the [fellowship based on the Spirit's supernatural ministry and mission](#), [were established before the Statement of Fundamental Truths.](#)

"RESOLVED, that we recognize ourselves as a cooperative fellowship of Pentecostal, Spirit-baptized saints from local Pentecostal Assemblies of like precious faith throughout the United States and foreign lands to be known as the General Council of the Assemblies of God whose purpose is not to usurp authority over the various local assemblies, nor to deprive them of their scriptural and local rights and privileges, but to

recognize and promote scriptural methods and order for worship, unity, fellowship, work and business for God; and to disapprove unscriptural methods, doctrines, and conduct, endeavoring to keep the unity of Spirit in the bonds of peace, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13)."

THE NEW FELLOWSHIP'S FIRST GREAT TEST – SOUND DOCTRINE ...

A NEW "REVELATION" HAD COME -

The Absolute Unity (Oneness) of the Godhead and Baptism in the Name of Jesus Only

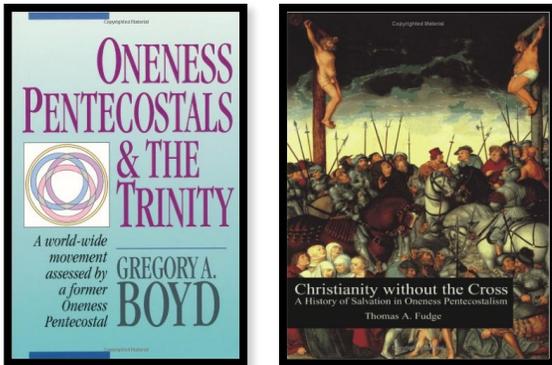


I visited Arroyo Seco Park, site of the 1913 camp meeting.

On these grounds began the most radical, heretical, enduring division in Pentecostal history.

- The "new revelation" had begun at a camp meeting in Arroyo Seco, Los Angeles CA in 1913.
- Jesus Name Baptism – Jesus as the Name of the Father, Son, and HS
- Oneness – the absolute unity of the Godhead. A denial of the doctrine of the Trinity.
- Soon developed into cardinal heresy ...
 - Required both water baptism in Jesus' Name (born of water), and
 - Required Spirit-baptism with speaking in tongues (born of the Spirit)
 - ... in order to be saved.
 - Sabellianism - the ancient heresy begun by Sabellius that denied the Trinity, taught the absolute unity of the one-person godhead.
 - Oneness proponents taught God as One Person, manifesting himself in three ways at different times - first as Father, then as Son, finally as Holy Spirit..
- At the 1914 AG Council, everyone agreed to preach no new doctrines until they had discussed them with one another. The Oneness converts refused to honor the 1914 Hot Springs agreement.
- **1916 – the AG Council at Stone Church, Chicago adopted the first version of the Statement of Fundamental Truths – it was strongly Trinitarian**
- Oneness adherents voted against every tenet. They had to leave the AG.
- The fledgling AG lost every preacher and church in Louisiana but one.
- Many independent Pentecostal churches that had been reluctant to join the new Fellowship began to join when they saw the commitment to orthodox faith and sound doctrine.
- Oneness Pentecostals formed various smaller networks, uniting the largest into the United Pentecostal Church in the 1940's.
- **Oneness Pentecostalism remains a heretical movement: It denies the Trinity, requires Spirit-baptism (tongues-speaking) for salvation, AND requires water baptism (in Jesus' Name) for salvation.**

Best Resources on Oneness Pentecostalism



Statement of Fundamental Truths (SFTs)

When the first version of the SFTs was adopted in 1916, it was with a minimalist understanding on some points. Some of the points were clearly far more cardinal and important than others.

FROM THE PREAMBLE TO THE SFTs ...

- ‘The Statement of Fundamental Truths is not intended as a creed for the Church, nor a basis of fellowship among Christians, but only as a basis of unity for the ministry alone...The human phraseology employed in such statement is not inspired nor contended for, but the truth set forth in such phraseology is held to be essential to a full Gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all truth in the Bible, only that it covers our present needs as to these fundamental matters’.

The AG Founders did not see 16 Fundamental Truths as set in stone, and they have been modified through the years.

Assemblies of God Headquarters was first established in Findlay, Ohio, and moved a year later to St. Louis, Missouri. It was not long before it was moved again to its present location: Springfield, Missouri. In its current location, headquarters is now known as the National Leadership and Resource Center.

When promoting Springfield as the prospective final location of headquarters, AG leaders told the Fellowship that “Springfield’s weather is most like that of southern California!” (NOT TRUE!! 😊)

In 1919 the Missionary Department was formed to handle missionary finances. They received missionary offerings and distributed to the missionaries on the field.

Revenues from the sales of Gospel Publishing House and the Pentecostal Evangel began providing the primary funding for General Council personnel, including administrative costs for the Missionary Department.

The Sin of Racism

The Pentecostal revival had begun as an interracial, cross-cultural movement.

Anglos and people of color were represented at all levels of leadership and participation.

Soon, however, in parts of the United States the revival began to incorporate the sin of racism into its beliefs and practices.

The White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan at a Raymond T. Richey meeting, 1920's.



It took decades for the Assemblies of God to acknowledge the sin of racism.

The Pentecostal Three-Selfs Theory

Pentecostal missionaries, as they had done when they were Pentecostal pastors and church planters in the U.S., followed the methods of the apostle Paul as they planted churches. Their goal was to plant churches that grew to be ...

- self-governing,
- self-financing, and
- self-propagating.

Teaching the Faith

The General Council took action to teach the faith through the use of written documents and literature:

- Statement of Fundamental Truths
- Assemblies of God Constitution and Bylaws
- Literature printed through Gospel Publishing House
- *Pentecostal Evangel* articles
- Sunday school materials and tracts

Early Bible Institutes

Several Bible institutes were founded to prepare ministers, evangelists, and missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission before Christ's return. Although they had little outside financial support, these early Bible institutes were considered successful for several reasons:

- Only the most dedicated and disciplined students were accepted.
- Schools required high standards of holiness.
- Schools operated in faith, encouraging students to trust in God.
- They offered a simpler, briefer preparation to be steadily built upon throughout life

THE FOUNDERS and SECOND GENERATION always did the BEST THEY COULD DO at the time in preparing men and women for ministry.

The churches and Fellowship had very little money. They could not initially afford colleges, universities, or seminaries.

The US population was also poorer, more blue-collar, more rural and small town, and less well educated than today.

Those generations of Pentecostal believers, one income families, with no televisions or busy distractions, spent far more time daily and nightly in bible study and prayer than subsequent generations (1960's and forward).

Bible Schools to Colleges to Universities

The need for ministerial training quickly led to the establishment of Bible schools.

A history of creativity, consolidation and change ...

- 1919: Glad Tidings Bible Institute, San Francisco
- 1920: Southern California Bible Institute; BA in 1939
- 1922: Central Bible Institute; BA in 1949
- 1924: Zion Bible Institute
- 1926: Latin American Bible Institute: California and Texas
- 1927-1940: Southwestern iterations
- 1930: North Central Bible Institute
- 1934: Northwest Bible Institute
- 1931-1939: Eastern Bible Institute – multiple locales/names – now Valley Forge Christian College
- 1935: Southeastern Bible Institute (New Brockton, Alabama)
- 1948: Trinity – classes after fall harvest and before spring planting
- 1953: Evangel College - first AG school emphasizing liberal arts and other non-ministerial education.
- 1973: Assemblies of God "Graduate School" (Seminary)
- The AG grew at a rapid pace during the 1920's and 1930's, despite the Great Depression that began in 1929.
- BEREAN SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE – 1940's
- GLOBAL UNIVERSITY – 1990's

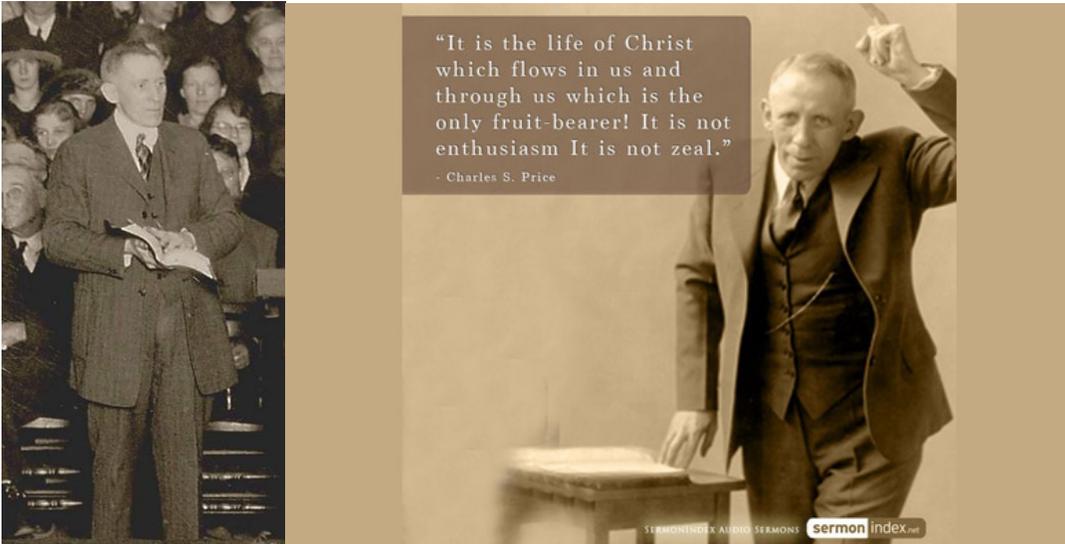
Several of our Assemblies of God universities now offer Masters and Doctoral degrees.

Growth 1920's – 1940's. Growth from grassroots local church outreach was aided by extended salvation-healing meetings. Foremost among evangelists were Aimee Semple McPherson and Dr. Charles Price.



An AG minister for 3 years, her crusades across America brought growth to many AG churches. "Sister Aimee" settled in Los Angeles, built Angelus Temple in 1923, and began the Foursquare Gospel Movement. Powerful preaching, healings, media, radio, drama, outreach to the poor, and church planting brought tens of thousands to Christ.

Dr. Charles Price was a well-educated minister who was baptized in the Holy Spirit at Angelus Temple. He soon began preaching evangelistic crusades in cooperation with the churches in cities across the nation. By many accounts, the healings and salvations in these meetings were the most powerful that all who saw them had ever witnessed. Significant local church growth accompanied Dr. Price's crusades. He was known as a minister of great integrity.



World War II and the Assemblies of God

- Seventy-six thousand Assemblies of God men and women served in the military.
- Others worked in war-related industries.
- The Servicemen's Department was established.
- *Reveille*, a magazine for service personnel, was launched.
- **Some Assemblies of God ministers were denied chaplaincy appointment by the government because of their unaccredited education. This revealed a need for higher educational standards for Assemblies of God ministers.**
- World War II was transformational for the Assemblies of God.
- AG laity came into contact with a far wider range of American people and culture than ever before.

Benefits of the Assemblies of God Joining the NAE

- The NAE did not think Pentecostals were heretics; this helped to legitimize the fellowship.
- The NAE gave evangelicals a voice in politics.
- The NAE office in Washington, D.C., would help protect Assemblies of God investments in gospel radio programs.
- Pentecostals profited through NAE agencies that helped missions efforts, Sunday schools, and accreditation of Bible schools.
- Joining the NAE led to the establishment of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America.
- **JOINING THE NAE DEMONSTRATED THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD COMMITMENT TO ORTHODOXY, EVANGELICALISM, AND THE HISTORIC CHURCH.**

TEACHING THE FAITH

The Assemblies of God saw some of their greatest growth as they increased their emphasis on Christian Education through Sunday Schools beginning in the 1940's and continuing for 30 years.



Marcus Grable started his career with GPH as a janitor with a passion for Sunday school. He was appointed leader of the Sunday School Promotion Department in 1935. During his time in office, he made many contributions:

- He sent pastors free copies of *Successful Sunday School* by Ralph Riggs.
- He introduced the Training for Christian Service course.
- He set standards for local Sunday schools.
- He sponsored national and regional SS conventions

- He was largely responsible for the success of AG Sunday School and discipleship for decades.

Sunday School became the greatest discipling ministry in the Assemblies of God.

*Sunday School soon **increased the biblical literacy** of generations of Assemblies of God people.*

Sunday School helped teach the Assemblies of God (and other Pentecostal churches) the Bible and orthodox Christian doctrine.

The Christian Education ministry through Sunday School for all ages helped the Assemblies of God recognize and reject many false doctrines that continually arose within the Pentecostal / charismatic movement.

The declining emphasis on Christian Education and Sunday School beginning in the 1990's, and the rising emphasis on "revival" and big events as the answer to slowing growth rates resulted **in a crisis of biblical illiteracy by the year 2000**. False doctrines and practices began to permeate the Pentecostal movement and the Assemblies of God more deeply as biblical illiteracy increased.

THE INFLUENCE OF FUNDAMENTALISM on the ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

The increasing influence of Fundamentalism on the Assemblies of God was **very detrimental** in many ways.

Please read the following definition of Fundamentalism very carefully: ...

"Fundamentalism usually has a religious connotation that indicates unwavering attachment to a set of irreducible beliefs. However, fundamentalism has come to be applied to a **tendency** among certain groups—mainly, though not exclusively, in religion—that is characterized by a markedly strict literalism as it is applied to certain specific scriptures, dogmas, or ideologies, and a strong sense of the importance of maintaining ingroup and outgroup distinctions, leading to an emphasis on purity and the desire to return to some previous ideal from which advocates believe members have strayed. Rejection of diversity of opinion as applied to these established "fundamentals" and their accepted interpretation within the group is often the result of this tendency."

As a religion, ideology, philosophy, or movement ages, some kind of "fundamentalism" usually arises within that school of thought or practice.

Therefore, a "fundamentalist" movement can arise, and has arisen, in such diverse contexts as Communism, Marxism, Islam, Hinduism, Catholicism, or American Evangelicalism.

In American Christianity, Fundamentalism was a movement that arose within evangelicalism and sought to resist modernism, liberalism, and protect the Scripture, and the person and work of Jesus Christ.

- **Driven by fear ...** loss of cultural influence, loss of political power, loss of biblical authority
- Sought to protect biblical authority by resorting to literalistic interpretation of most Bible passages
- Eventually began attacking everyone and everything in the Christian Church that disagreed with any of their hermeneutics, principles, positions, or methods
- Eventually opposed advances in science that they perceived as threatening to Scripture
- **Soon Became increasingly sectarian, narrow, rigid, paranoid, punitive.**
- **Accused everyone who disagreed with the new Fundamentalist approach of being compromisers, backsliders, or "Liberals" and tried to drive them out of various evangelical denominations.**

There were several reasons that the Pentecostal movement and the Assemblies of God allowed themselves to be so influenced by the Fundamentalist movement ...

- Fundamentalism *appeared* to be the most conservative, “Bible-believing” version of evangelicalism.
- They were the gatekeepers for who gets in and stays in the “true Bible-believing” Church.
- The Assemblies of God wanted to be accepted and began adopting some of the attitudes and ways of Fundamentalism, reading their writers and using their textbooks.
- **This strengthened the negative influence of Dispensationalism within the AG.**
- **Pentecostal and AG attitudes toward many things were negatively affected:** Women in ministry, racial reconciliation, compassion ministry, eschatology, education, the Great Traditions churches (Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, etc.), and other evangelical churches.
- **The influence of Fundamentalism was highly detrimental to the spirit, ethos, and trajectory of the Pentecostal movement and the AG.**

WHEREVER FUNDAMENTALIST INFLUENCE WAS STRONG, THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD BEGAN TO BECOME MORE LIKE FUNDAMENTALISM THAN LIKE ORIGINAL PENTECOSTALISM ...

1. Sectarian, narrow, rigid
2. Paranoid, fearful of change, given to conspiracy theory thinking (dispensationalism was like this too)
3. Always checking boundary markers – who is really one of us, who’s in, who’s out, LITMUS TESTS
4. PUNITIVE – always ready for a purge, ready to punish and drive away non-fundamentalists
5. Began seeing a “liberal” or “compromiser” under every rock, behind every seminary desk
6. ANTI-INTELLECTUAL, suspicious of education (**NOTE: the founding generation of the AG, as well as Pentecostalism in Great Britain and Europe, included many leaders with very good biblical / theological educations, but this declined in the next 2 generations).**)

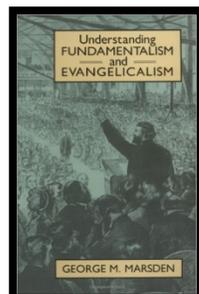
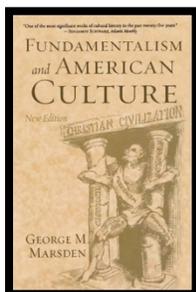
THE SAME DECLINE of EDUCATION IN SECOND and THIRD GENERATION LEADERS WAS ALSO TRUE OF FUNDAMENTALISM. For example, like many Christian leaders, some of the founders of Fundamentalism were very well educated in Bible, theology, and history, and did not all believe in a global flood or a young earth, held a variety of eschatological views, supported social welfare programs for the poor, opposed war, and even had no problem with evolutionary creation.

There was a diversity of belief.

But, subsequent generations of Fundamentalism became increasingly narrow and sectarian through the decades.

Similarly, after the first AG founders passed from the scene, subsequent generations of AG leaders were denied entrance to good Christian colleges, were less well-educated than the founders, and increasingly came under the influence of Fundamentalism.

Therefore, until AG colleges began to improve and until after the influence of Fundamentalism began to wane in the 1970’s and 1980’s the AG became more fundamentalist and less Pentecostal in temperament.



The best resources to understand Fundamentalism ...

THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD and HEALING

Neither the Assemblies of God, nor any other Pentecostal denomination, has ever taught that it is always God's will to heal us immediately every time we are sick, or deliver us immediately from every trial or difficulty, or to give us abundant material prosperity.

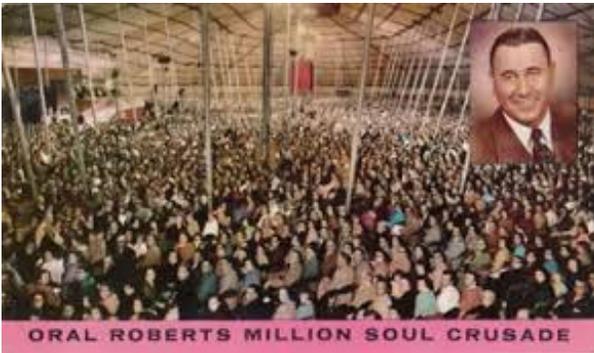
The Scriptures, the Ancient Church, no part of the Church in history has ever taught such things.

These doctrines are from the hyper-faith / health-and-wealth / positive confession movement.

They began invading the P/c movement in the 1950's and afterwards.

THE SALVATION-HEALING MOVEMENT

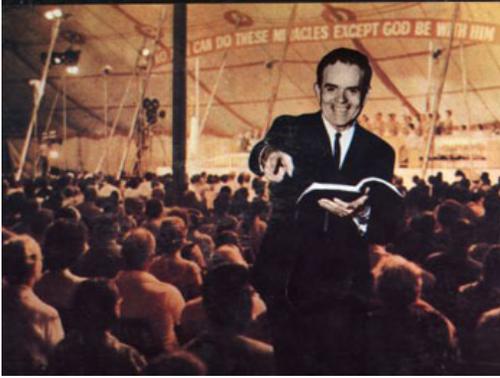
In the late 1940's Pentecostal evangelists, including many AG ministers, began traveling across America in larger numbers than ever before. They networked with local pastors in crusades, focusing primarily on salvation and on healing ... prayer for the sick. This movement grew steadily through the late 1940's and into the mid-to-late 1950's.



Jack Coe's 10,000 Seat Tent



A. A. Allen



Gordon Lindsay



William Branham

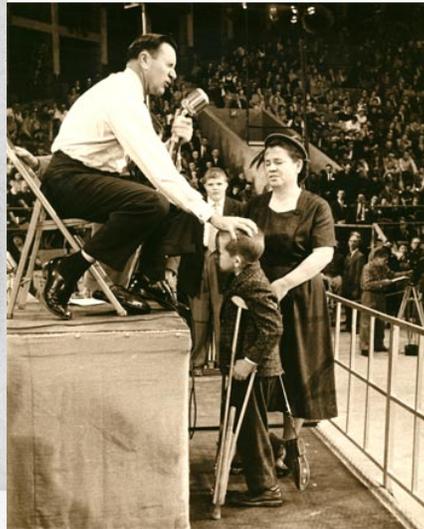


Gayle Jackson



Rev. Gayle Jackson

Oral Roberts



T. L. Osborn



Jack Coe



JACK COE PREACHING IN PITTSBURGH CAMPAIGN

In the late 1950s Jack Coe died of polio. The Salvation-Healing Movement slowly began to wane. Some of the more polished evangelists moved into small arenas, large churches, and hotel ballrooms. Oral Roberts founded ORU in 1963.

The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship and Women's Aglow began and drew many unchurched and mainline Protestant and Catholic people into hotel ballroom meetings, into the Pentecostal / charismatic experience, and often into the Assemblies of God.

Kathryn Kuhlman became a leader of the new, more polished group of healing ministers.

Benny Hinn was associated with her ministry, but after her death Hinn became increasingly heretical.

Many hundreds of thousands of people were brought into the Pentecostal movement through the Salvation-Healing Movement.

Only local church evangelism and Sunday School brought more people into the church and into the AG.

END MODULE 4

PROCEED TO MODULE 5 (Middle and Later Development of the AG)