

Reverend Frank Chikane as a catalyst for shifts in Pentecostal beliefs and practices

**Author:**Mnyalaza T. Masuku¹ **Affiliation:**

¹Research Institute for Theology and Religion, College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

Corresponding author:Mnyalaza Masuku,
masukumt@penta-net.co.za**Dates:**

Received: 21 Sept. 2023

Accepted: 18 Nov 2023

Published: 27 Feb. 2024

How to cite this article:

Masuku, M.T., 2024, 'Reverend Frank Chikane as a catalyst for shifts in Pentecostal beliefs and practices', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45(1), a2999. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v45i1.2999>

Copyright:

© 2024. The Authors.
Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

Reverend Frank Chikane represented shifts in Pentecostal beliefs and practices. He found it difficult to accept Christians who spoke in tongues on Sundays but oppressed others on Mondays. He found this hypocrisy to be the worst contradiction he had to contend with. He recognised the separation of spiritual, physical and social. He divided the church's service to the world into three categories. The first is the 'status quo', that is the church, which ensures stability as long as the political system gives it space to proclaim the gospel. He called the second category 'passage theology'. This refers to those who see themselves as passers-by in this troubled world, and therefore do not care about the politics of this world. The third category is the 'involvement' category. Of these three categories, Chikane chose the third. Based on the category of involvement, the author argues that Chikane is the epitome of shifts in Pentecostal beliefs and practices. To this end, the author will uncover and examine the core beliefs and practices of Pentecostalism, setting out the factors that gave rise to Chikane and also highlighting those that mark shifts in his spiritual agency. In the end, the author concludes that Chikane is indeed a catalyst for shifts in the practice of the African Pentecostal tradition today. The pattern of methodological approach followed in this article is the study of synthesised literature from libraries, particularly the sources that assisted me to gain insight into Chikane.

Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications: This article argues that Rev. Frank Chikane, through his ministry praxis, epitomises shifts in Pentecostal beliefs and practices. Although it is located in the field of missiology, it also has interdisciplinary implications for disciplines such as sociology, practical theology, and church history.

Keywords: Chikane; Pentecostalism; shifts; Africa; Evangelical Christians; beliefs and practices; Azusa street experience; SACC.

Introduction

Traditionally, evangelical Christians support, the government of the day passively and are reluctant to take a stand on political issues. Under apartheid, this represented a dilemma for black evangelicals. Most of them experienced the evil effects of the regime on a daily basis. But they were unable to articulate their opposition to apartheid in religious terms (Denis 2021:706).

The world has witnessed shifts and changes in various aspects over the years. These waves of change did not stop at Pentecostalism in terms of beliefs and practices. These changes have been referred to as the transformation of Christianity or 'the change in Christianity's centre of gravity' (Anderson et al. 2010:13). This phenomenon has been observed since the founding of this movement in Jerusalem 2000 years ago until today, as it grew and touched different contexts of the world. Anderson et al. (2010:13) recognises that Pentecostalism, in all its diversity, both within and outside of older churches, was probably the world's fastest-expanding religious movement in the 20th century, spreading to almost every nation on earth by the beginning of that century.

Africa was also one of the key places where this Christian movement experienced major shifts and transformations in beliefs and practices. Although this movement has experienced remarkable growth over the years, the impact in this regard has been more dramatic than ever, particularly at the beginning of the 21st century. Agencies for change in Africa could be located within the experiences gained in the political, economic, social, religious, military, technological sectors, among others. In addition, Africa also experienced pandemics such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), among others. All these dynamics led to shifts and changes in Pentecostalism, which also impacted related beliefs and practices.

Read online:

Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

Mzondi (2021:87) has correctly identified Dr. Frank Chikane as undoubtedly the most renowned African Pentecostal leader in South Africa (SA). Denis' warning (2021:709) is therefore important in locating Chikane's spirituality from the beginning, when he reiterated: 'All Pentecostals are evangelical but not all evangelicals are Pentecostal'. Chikane proved to be one of the most important symbols, catalysts and embodiments of shifts and change in Pentecostal belief and practice in SA. The author therefore seeks not only to identify and display but to examine and interrogate Chikane's beliefs and practices from his stance as a Pentecostal Christian. He argues that Chikane is the embodiment of changes in Pentecostal beliefs and practices regarding the practice of ministry in the 21st century. The author's strategy will be to uncover and question the core beliefs and practices of Pentecostalism, outline factors that gave rise to Chikane, and highlight those that marked changes in his ministry praxis. In the end, the author concludes that Chikane is indeed a catalyst for shifts and change in contemporary African Pentecostal practice.

Uncovering and examining the *sine qua non* of Pentecostal beliefs and practices

There is a considerable confusion over the use of the term Pentecostalism. Journalists and even scholars often refer to Pentecostalism as if it were one phenomenon, whereas in reality it is a complex social movement with many different strains. For example, there are the classical Pentecostal denominations, such as the Assemblies of God and Foursquare Gospel Church, and then there is a plethora of indigenous and independent Pentecostal churches. Some of these churches emphasise the prosperity gospel of health and wealth, while others focus on evangelism, healing, and ecstatic worship (Miller & Yamamori 2007:1).

It is well documented that Pentecostalism is an expression of Christianity that dates back to the 1st century. This occurred when the Holy Spirit visited the disciples of Jesus Christ, who then spoke in tongues and thereby healed the sick, prophesied, and founded a network of churches throughout Asia Minor. This ecstatic experience of the early Christians was domesticated, although Christianity was a state religion under Constantine and this religion was consequently organised into a hierarchical structure in the following centuries (Miller & Yamamori 2007:17). It must be recognised that it is not a uniform phenomenon as it has many faces as it spreads around the world (p. 19).

The so-called Azuza Street Revival in Los Angeles, United States of America (US) in 1906 could be viewed as modern Pentecostalism in the 20th century. Kgatle (2022:1) observed an attitude of non-racism at this event that attracted more black people in the South African context. From this experience, classical Pentecostal missionaries carried this religious movement to other parts of the world, including Africa, particularly SA and Liberia, between 1906 and 1912.

Chikane (2019:365) interprets the Azuza experience as the implementation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, as described in Acts 2:1–13. Anderson et al. (2010:1) are therefore correct when they argue that the majority of Pentecostals are found in non-Western countries, and that by spreading their wings they have managed to adapt to different cultural contexts. Lindhard (2014:3) confirms that 'during the first half of the twentieth century, missionary Pentecostal churches were established all over sub-Saharan Africa ...'.

Kgatle (2022:1) locates the arrival of Pentecostalism in SA with the arrival of two American missionaries: J.G. Lake and T. Hezmalhalch who founded the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in South Africa in 1908. The AFM was not racist from the start. Kgatle (2017) describes how this church developed into racial divisions:

The AFM started as a non-racial church. Early attempts to introduce racial separation in worship were resisted by the founding missionaries. When the missionaries left the country to return to their homelands, the church was set on a course of racial separation in compliance with the racial ideology of the country. (p. 2)

Other scholars dispute the Azuza experience as the origin of Pentecostalism. For example, Asamoah-Gyadu (2004:11) argues that elements of Pentecostalism such as speaking in tongues were observed before the Azuza experience, citing countries such as India and Haiti as examples. In addition to India on this list, Smith (2010:1) also adds Chile to point out that it is to some extent questionable to consider the Azuza experience as the sole source of modern Pentecostalism.

Kgatle (2022) follows Miller and Yamamori (2007:25ff.) and identifies five types of Pentecostalism. Firstly is classical Pentecostalism, represented in Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God, which have a connection to and are influenced by the Azuza experience. Secondly is indigenous Pentecostal denominations with no connection to North America. An example of this is the Winners Chapel, which was founded in Nigeria in 1983 and spread throughout Africa (p. 26). Thirdly is independent neo-Pentecostal churches that have one or more branches but refuse to develop into a denominational form of organisation. They are founded by entrepreneurs who are not satisfied with the current religious environment (Miller & Yamamori 2007:17). Their charismatic pastors lack formal seminary training or theological training (p. 27). Fourthly is charismatic renewal movement, whose origins are linked to St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, where a spontaneous outbreak of speaking in tongues occurred in 1960 (p. 27). Fifthly is proto-charismatic Christians. They do not belong to a Pentecostal or Charismatic church, but rather embrace the qualities of these traditions and do not identify as such. They seek to follow the example of Jesus Christ and follow the model of the early Christian church, which they believe is filled with the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (p. 28).

However, Kgatle (2022:4; cf. Kgatle 2019) adds prophetic Pentecostalism as his fifth type. Here members sometimes approach the Prophet one-on-one for advice about their life challenges, which usually involves paying a fee.

Miller and Yamamori (2007:2) describe progressive Pentecostalism as those typical Pentecostal movements that attempt to promote social action. He agrees that Pentecostalism was otherworldly, emphasising personal salvation and excluding any attempt to deal with social realities. This also confirms the apocalyptic return of Christ. However, this social action refers to projects such as community development exercises without addressing their causal factors. Miller and Yamamori (p. 2) speaks of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians who have joined right-wing repressive governments. He also points to Pentecostal churches that emphasise conversion as their sole mission to the world. He recognises that for Pentecostals the Holy Spirit is everywhere in their lives, in their prayers, in worship and in daily life (p. 3).

Although Miller and Yamamori (2007:4) describe progressive Pentecostalism as socially friendly, he cautioned that they do not take the same approach as social gospel or liberation theologians, and that they are relatively apolitical. They do not try to reform social structures or question government policies. They embrace capitalism and work within government systems. Denis (2021:706) indicates that they could passively support 'the government of the day and are reluctant to take a stand on political issues. Under apartheid, this represented a dilemma for black evangelicals'.

It is understood that this movement is too diverse and that not all Pentecostals agree on the validity of its characteristics. However, Miller and Yamamori (2007:29) argue that there are four elements that affect all types of Pentecostals. Firstly, they are legalistic and otherworldly. Legalism lays its emphasis on the prohibition of membership, for example prohibition of jewellery, makeup, ballroom dancing, consumption of alcoholic beverages, long-sleeved dresses for women. Secondly, they are prosperity gospel, health and prosperity churches. This is characteristic of independent churches and indigenous denominations. These are more common in poor communities where televangelists play a common role. Thirdly, there is a progressive group that rejects sectarian tendencies and participates in community development programmes. They were modelled on the work of Jesus, who preached and cared for people's social needs. Fourthly, it is the routine Pentecostal movement. They shed their sectarian heritage and adopted elements of contemporary culture. However, they are still full of spirit, but in a controlled way. For example, speaking in tongues is an orchestrated ritual rather than a spontaneous expression of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Miller and Yamamori (2007:16) suggested what a typical Pentecostal service might be. He shows that the first part consists of 30 min of worship music led by a band, youth

choirs can perform as well as dancing cheerleaders. There is also a performance during the offering. This is followed by a 45-min sermon and another service. There's an upbeat band that gets people dancing as they leave the church. According to Miller and Yamamori (p. 17), Pentecostal services are more ecstatic and lively than the routine liturgical forms of the mainline churches. Kgatle (2021) presents a definition of African Pentecostal worship that reflects the same sentiments when he says:

... worship in an African context is holistic, concerned with the body, soul and spirit, allowing the worshiper to participate and be part of what God is doing through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, every worshiper must feel the presence of God through the Holy Spirit when gathering to worship God. (pp. 169–170)

The main characteristics of Pentecostalism were identified by Anderson et al. (2010:1) based on his interpretation of the Azuza experience as: speaking in tongues, healing and prophesying. Smith (2010:12) adds that the *sine qua non* of all variants of Pentecostalism is belief in the immanence of God, direct, personal access to the divine with the accompanying spiritual power. He also recognised, 'holiness in social behaviour, baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, Biblical literalness, emphasis on prayer, and fervency of worship' (p. 21). Anderson et al. (2010:3) also observed that leadership is predominantly male and uses communication technology (p. 3). The divine healing and prosperity gospel is also added by Brown (2011:3). Brown prefers the term 'divine healing' to 'faith healing' or 'spiritual healing' because it emphasises the love of God as the source of healing rather than human faith (p. 4). Monique and Amos (2015:262) adds music to the Pentecostal liturgy, while Smith (2010:9–10) further identified spontaneity.

Factors that gave rise to Chikane

Chikane was raised as a conservative, evangelical Pentecostal (Sider 1988:9). He was born and raised in the AFM, which was white-controlled and considered very conservative. Mzondi (2021:89) confirms that Chikane was 'taught that African Pentecostal Christians should focus on heaven and distance themselves from addressing prevalent injustices caused by apartheid'.

His parents were James and Erentia, a family of eight children, five boys and three girls (Chikane 1990:23). His father became the pastor of a church which, according to Mzondi (2021:87), was affiliated with the AFM. Kgatle (2022:1) identified the AFM as the largest Pentecostal church in SA. Chikane was born on 03 January 1951 in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga province, then called Eastern Transvaal. Since 1957, his father had a house in Soweto and the children came to him for better education, while his mother remained in Bushbuckridge and only came to live with them permanently around 1962 and 1963 (Chikane 1990:23–24). Chikane completed his primary and high school education in Soweto with excellent results in mathematics. This prompted him to enrol for the BSc. degree from the then University of the North (now University of Limpopo), Pietersburg (now Polokwane) in 1972 (Chikane

1990:41). Mzondi (2021:87) states that he did not complete his studies because he was expelled because of his involvement in student politics.

His activities at the university in student affairs suggested the direction he would take in his ecclesiastical practice. Mzondi (2021) is therefore correct in saying that:

Chikane ascribed his involvement in politics to his role in student politics and the influence of a senior pastor in the AFM West Rand who observed and shared with him that God had called him. (p. 87)

For example, when some students were imprisoned or were on the run from apartheid forces, he saved the situation. Chikane was therefore elected to head the Students Legal Aid Fund. He catered for the well-being of incarcerated students, their families, and the student body (p. 25). He was one of the students who celebrated Mozambique's freedom at the so-called Frelimo Rally in 1974 (p. 25). They were harassed by apartheid police for this action. He also provided testimony to the Snyman Commission, whose mission was to determine the causes of the campus riots of September 1974 (p. 25). He testified against the university and the police, which jeopardised the completion of his university studies.

His courage and determination were evident in the fact that he persistently followed his thoughts despite his mother's discouragements. At some point they were attacked by police with sjamboks and dogs for holding unlawful gatherings on campus, resulting in injuries and detention of many students. This created a leadership vacuum in the Student Representative Council (SRC) and he had to fill this void with the few remaining students. He sacrificed his studies as he was supposed to write his BSc final exam amid this cloud of student protests. Because he forced himself to write in these conditions, he fainted during exams and was admitted to Polokwane Hospital. Despite the medical certificates he submitted, he was subsequently refused the *aegrotat* test. This interruption of his studies caused him to complain; 'Thus, although I had done all my work for the degree, I had been ground down. All my work and knowledge remained "non-certificated"' (Chikane 1990:26–27).

In 1974, Chikane began training to become a pastor in the AFM at what was then Potgietersrus (now Mokopane, Limpopo Province). Because of what he described as 'some personal pressures from home', coupled with the lack of adequate teaching staff at the college, he requested training through correspondence (Chikane 1990:43). From 1975, he worked as a temporary teacher of mathematics and physics in Soweto (p.43). During this time, he also did some evangelistic work until he completed his pastoral training in 1979, was placed on probation for a year, and was ordained a pastor in early 1980 (Chikane 1990:47).

Chikane's spiritual agency towards shifts on Pentecostal beliefs and practices

So when it comes to the evangelical and Pentecostal faith I can say like Paul that if any person thinks that he or she has reasons for confidence in the Spirit, I have more; born and brought up by a devout Pentecostal family, a Pentecostal of Pentecostals; as to evangelism, an evangelist at heart and, as to God's power, a believer in the works and deeds of power in the name of the Lord. (Chikane 1990:49)

Chikane was born into a Christian family. His father was pastor of AFM in Soweto since 1975. A house church was founded in his parents' home, which later became a branch of his church. Although he took his first steps into congregation responsibility at the age of eight, at the age of 18 in 1968 he served as secretary of the congregation and a member of the parish council (Chikane 1990:31). The AFM that shaped Chikane's spirituality was a classic Pentecostal gathering. It has characteristics of Pentecostalism, which generally include participatory services, sharing of individual experiences throughout the week, and prayers with and for the sick (Chikane 1990:31).

Having addressed the *sine qua non* of classical Pentecostal beliefs and practices, attention now turns to areas of these phenomena in which Chikane made shifts in his ministry praxis.

Spirituality

When it comes to spirituality, Pentecostals are notoriously distant from the realities of the world. Pentecostalism is based on an otherworldly community that is engaged in social services and takes into account the holistic understanding of the Christian faith. According to Wacker (2003:19), Pentecostals felt alienated in this world, 'pilgrims passing through foreign territory' who felt 'homesick at home', a restless celestial orientation evident throughout their lives. Miller and Yamamori (2007:212) points out that this differs from the social gospel of mainline churches because it is modelled on the example of Jesus caring for people's physical needs. Wacker (2003:20) referred to them when he stated; 'Holy Spirit-filled believers not only lost interest in politics but also proved oblivious to many of the day-to-day recreations that most people considered simple and legitimate pleasures of life'.

In contrast, Chikane represented a holistic form of spirituality. He argues in terms of his spiritual upbringing, which was influenced by his traditional African cosmology:

There was no conception here of a dualistic world of the spiritual which was different from that of the social. Our services of worship, our spiritual activism was launched within the very social dynamics of our society. In any case, the African world-view of life and its conception of some form of deity was never

dualistic. Africans' total life experiences were understood and interested in relation to their God. (1990:33)

In light of the given quote, Chikane believed in a God who is not indifferent to people's problems but is deeply involved in their sufferings. He did not join a God who created the world, retreated to some heavens, and thus turned against his creation. Likewise, in a situation of injustice, God cannot be a spectator, but rather actively side with the victims of oppression.

In terms of biblical hermeneutics, the question posed by Miller became important when he said; 'How literally or metaphorically the Bible is to be understood' (2007:148)?

Literalism

Pentecostals lean more towards the side of literalism. Miller and Yamamori (2007:148) argues that Pentecostals do not dismiss the role of reason, but simply give weight to the narrative of God's supernatural intervention in the world and downplay the importance of tradition. The Holy Scripture thus simply embodies God's thoughts (p. 73). If the Bible is to be taken literally, its teachings must be vigorously defended and articulated.

In contrast, Chikane (1990:51), who was confronted with this situation, began searching for the liberating side of the Bible. He did this by reinterpreting and rereading the Bible in light of the South African political context. He defended himself by arguing that white people were misusing and interpreting the Bible to achieve their own oppressive goals. He further argued that the church's practice unfortunately contradicted its own mission and that the Bible needed to be freed from this captivity (Chikane 1990:51).

Another dimension of Chikane's use of the Bible could be seen in light of the torture he experienced. This was evident in his constant harassment by apartheid security forces, who even poisoned him (Chikane 2020:10; Lubbe & Ferreira 2008:165). The picture of his torture is well explained by him as follows:

I couldn't walk because they beat me up so much. They really assaulted me badly. There was blood all over that interrogation room. They made me clean up my own blood. They attempted to crush my testicles, and did all sorts of other things. It was quite a horrifying experience. (Sider 1988:10)

From that point on, he began to question the Bible and ask God profound questions in the light of his own suffering. He therefore asked the question about the meaning of loving one's enemy, the meaning of the gospel in his situation, the power and concern of God, why God would allow this evil and whether he cares. Chikane viewed the experience of Jesus Christ's redemptive act on the cross as an encouragement for his own suffering, the fact that Jesus did not let the cup pass for the sake of humanity. The experiences of the apostles, who also experienced persecution and even death, kept Chikane alive. The following Bible texts also kept

him going: 1 Peter 3:14–18; 1 Peter 4:13; Colossians 1:24. Chikane consoled himself by ultimately understanding these texts to mean: 'Christ suffered and called us to be prepared to suffer to complete the work he had started by laying down his life for the world' (1990:55).

Intellectualism

Regarding intellectualism and academia, the element of neglect of intellectualism and academia is elaborated by Onyiah et al. (2018) as follows:

Unlike established traditions, however, Pentecostals did not go about writing academic treatises until recently; rather, their missionary fervour and ethos is reflected in songs, prayers, testimonies, and missionary biographies.

He further points out that their missionaries were largely inexperienced but prided themselves on a common qualification: the overwhelming conviction that they had been filled with the Holy Spirit to spread their message to the far corners of the earth. At times they defied the conventions of the time and in some cases gave their lives for their cause. Smith reiterated this lack of intellectualism as follows:

Pentecostals appear anti-intellectual, poorly trained in leadership, and their claim to be a latter day apostolic movement along the lines of primitive church described in the Book of Acts seems extremely presumptuous, elitist, and indifferent to two thousand years of intervening church history. (2010:10)

Contrarily, Chikane advocated intellectualism. Mzondi (2021:87) displays his credentials so well that he has 'a master's degree in public administration, and he is a visiting professor at the School of Governance at the University of Witwatersrand'. His resume shows that after earning his diploma in counselling from the Pan African Bible College of the AFM in 1979, he also earned a Master of Public Administration from the J.F. Kenney School of Governance in 1995. In 1992, he earned a master's degree in religious studies from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As a result, Chikane authored books, academic articles, and read articles at academic conferences at home and abroad (Chikane 2020:10). Chikane (1990:70) was particularly keen to extend service to the intelligentsia as he felt that they were being ignored while the poor were being given attention. His insistence on attending university in 1972 was also driven by his desire to better understand the black intelligentsia in order to serve them effectively. Maserumule (2013:93) after reviewing his book; 'Eight days in September, the removal of Thabo Mbeki', led him to describe Chikane as 'an intellectual hero'.

Temperament

In terms of temperament, Pentecostals hold a view of life in the heavenly world or sacred space in which the timeless, true, and universal values of Scripture unquestionably prevail. In this real world, they see themselves as aliens or pilgrims crossing a foreign territory (Wacker 2003:19). The heavenly mindset dominated Pentecostal thinking and lifestyle. It was observed that those who spoke in tongues

seemed to live in another world. They took pride in spending hours or even days in prayer and singing, to the point of forgetting to eat. They had no interest in political elections or the politics of this world (p. 20).

In contrast, Chikane pointed out that pastoral care has two dimensions that must be kept in 'creative tension'. He stated that there are spiritual and social sides that are vertical and horizontal. The ability to strike a balance between these two was essential to effective ministry in the oppressive context of apartheid SA. His Pentecostal spirituality emphasised the vertical dimension of spirituality over the horizontal. Balancing this pendulum was necessary for relevant official practice in the oppressive scenario. Chikane put it this way: 'I needed a deeper form of spirituality beyond my evangelical and Pentecostal training' (1990:49).

Theological training

Regarding theological training, Kgatle (2021:174) acknowledges that '... many African Pentecostal pastors have never received a formal theological training'. Miller and Yamamori (2007:195) also add that Pentecostal pastors were trained in areas other than theology. Their only basic theological training was based on reading the Bible. This highlights the fact that Pentecostals are missionary by nature and place this aspect at the centre of their spiritual practice. Onyinah et al. (2018) captured it as follows: 'Pentecostals have always been wary of the overly academic nature of theological education'. Guided by Paul's words that 'the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life' (2 Cor. 3:6 NRSV), Pentecostals have always relied on the inspiration of the Spirit in their 'theological education'. For example, Nathan Harriman urged his disciples not to waste their time searching for a 'Systematic Theology' but to absorb the Word through their spiritual pores (Wacker 2003:82).

Chikane contradicted this principle even further and studied theology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, where he obtained a master's degree in religious studies in 1992 (Chikane 1990:70). Mzondi (2021:87) further points out that in addition to a master's degree in theology, Chikane also had a diploma in theology. He also began studying theological literature privately to expand his understanding of the theology of mission Chikane (1990:60). Williams (1998:1) noticed the influence of theological education in Chikane when she stated; 'Frank Chikane had been shaped by certain kinds of theological education and experiences in church during the struggle'.

Politics

Regarding politics, Pentecostals are known to be detached to the realities of the world such as racism, politics, and other social issues or ills or society. Wacker (2003:20) touched on their detachment from politics when he stated: 'Holy Spirit-filled believers not only lost interest in politics but also proved oblivious to many of the day-to-day recreations that most people considered simple and legitimate pleasures of

life'. But Afro-Pentecostalism according to Yong and Alexander (2011:5) had to deal with a variety of reality of problems such as economic and political realities, spirituality, ethics and so forth. He further adds that black Pentecostal church leaders historically had to wrestle with problems such as the relevancy of theology, mission strategies, gender roles, mission strategies, among others.

In contrast, Chikane took a different approach. De Gruchy (1995:211) shows Chikane, who supported prophetic ministry. As general secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), he praised social programmes of this body for their significant contribution to the democratisation of SA. Referring to the SACC programme called; 'Standing for the Truth Campaign', Chikane stated:

... it did contribute significantly, within the context of the Mass Democratic Movement spearheaded by the UDF, to the events that led to the unbanning of the liberation movements in February 1990. (De Gruchy 1995:211)

Mzondi (2021:88) states that Chikane subscribed to 'non-dichotomous perspective of *Ubuntu*'. This is a perspective of non-separation between church and politics. Therefore, it is understandable when Makofane and Botha (2019:88) identified and listed Chikane among some of the well-known religious leaders such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Rev. Dr Beyers Naude, Dr Allan Boesak, and Dr Brigilia Bam, who are considered champions of prophetic witness against apartheid in SA.

Because Chikane pursued what he described as 'horizontal ministry' (1990:12) that promotes participation in socio-political and economic issues that affect people's lives, his church, the AFM, at some point accused him of involvement in what they said called politics. Pursuing the aforementioned non-dichotomous perspective of ubuntu, he struck a balance between vertical and horizontal ministry. Mzondi (2021:87) states that, 'He was suspended as the pastor of the Kagiso AFM church because of his political views, and was detained as a political prisoner several times'. While Pentecostals chose to pursue the vertical dimension of ministry over the horizontal, Chikane wanted to strike a balance between them through social engagement. Matthew 22:36–40 considers both dimensions of ministry (Chikane 1990:63). Chikane was therefore tortured and suspended by both the state and the church between 1977 and 1978 (1990:61). Denis (2012) projects the experiences of Chikane so well:

The case of Frank Chikane, a pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission who was twice detained, tortured in the presence of a deacon of his church and dismissed from the ministry for his political opinions in the early 1980s, showed the impasse with which black evangelicals were confronted. (p. 708)

The background to this view, as Wacker (2003:196–198) further pointed out, is that Pentecostals viewed themselves primarily as religious beings and only secondarily as social beings. Pentecostals expected that the Lord would return at any time, so social issues meant little to them.

Liberation theology

In relation to liberation theology, Miller and Yamamori (2007:214) argue that Pentecostals tend to have an organic tone that emphasises harmony and purity. They further argue that liberation theologians tend to use metaphors that suggest images of opposition, conflict and struggle, thus reflecting their Marxist orientation. Chikane calls this the status quo approach of the church (1992:1).

Boundaries

In terms of boundaries, in the light of Wacker (2003:177), what was the relationship of converts to one another or to outsiders? Why did they draw boundaries? Some conflicts with outsiders brought them to court. Disputes arose with religious bodies, men and women, who held Pentecostals' deepest convictions on matters of faith and church practice. In contrast, Chikane (1990:59) widened the net beyond the Pentecostal line to include outsiders. He promoted relationships with members of other denominations. For this reason, in 1978 he founded an interdenominational Christian youth club in Kagiso, Krugersdorp. Furthermore, Chikane (1992:1) embraced the entire Kagiso community beyond Pentecost. His church eventually became the lifeline of the entire community in terms of community assistance and development programmes. He was also ecumenically involved, having served as general secretary of the SACC.

Pentecostals and society

What does Pentecostal ethics mean for society? Wacker (2003:196–199) argues that they viewed themselves as religious beings first and social beings second. They expected the lords to return at any time, so social matters meant little to them. First generation converts interacted with the external environment in various ways. They were forced to come out of their corner because they had to make a living, for example, educating children, preparing for death, starting a household, among others.

In contrast, Chikane made it clear before the West Rand District Committee while his church expected him to focus only on spiritual dimension of ministry and when he responded; 'the social is not a secondary ministry but the very essence of my work as a pastor' (1990:63). He understood the Pentecostal conundrum so well when on the basis on Matthews 22:36–40 stated; 'My contention was that the Pentecostals and most evangelical churches emphasise the first commandment over above the second'(p. 63).

The nation (State)

What do Pentecostals think about the nation? Wacker (2003:217) defines nation as a symbol for country and state. Land represents cultural and emotional symbols associated with the place. The state represents political and governmental structures. The nation represents both. The early Pentecostals were determined to separate themselves from the state. No loyalty to the state as this was seen as an earthly invention.

The state, like the Tower of Babel, signalled at best human arrogance, at worst the enthronement of godlessness, immorality, greed and violence. No double followers of the Kingdom of God and the Emperor (p. 218).

In contrast, Chikane's relationship with the state could be derived from two opposing states, namely apartheid and democratic states in SA. He was an opponent of apartheid and had no loyalty to it. On the other hand, he was loyal to the democratic government, in which he even served but later opposed it when it became corrupt (Chikane 1990, 1992). By this approach, Chikane believed in what De Gruchy (1995) called, 'critical solidarity'. This he explains:

It means that the church remains prophetic in its stance towards a new democratically elected government, that it must continue to stand for the truth, but now on the basis of shared commitment to the realisation of national reconstruction. (p. 222)

Leadership

Regarding leadership ethics, Wacker (2003:141) warns that the early Pentecostals did not claim to have leaders because the Holy Spirit directed everything. Of course, certain men and women seem to be able to handle things. Those who operated in the pulpit, arranged meetings and published periodicals viewed themselves only as instruments or vessels directed by the Lord. They claim that the revival came about without human leadership and that this is how they have operated ever since. One author, Aimee McPherson, did not claim authorship of his book; *This is that*, but said that he was only an instrument of the Holy Spirit. Smith (2010:10) argues that Pentecostals are poorly trained in leadership. However, contrary to Wacker's view, Pentecostal recognise and respect their leaders with the understanding that they are dependent on the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

In contrast, Chikane's leadership qualities, from high school, were clear. His activities at the university in student affairs gave clues to the direction he would take in his ecclesiastical practice. For example, he stood up and took a stand to save the day when there was a gap in student leadership, when some were arrested or fled from apartheid security forces. Chikane was therefore elected to head the Students Legal Aid Fund, with the other two serving as joint trustees. He was also General Secretary of the SACC (1992:1). De Gruchy (1995:214) acknowledges the contribution of his leadership to peace initiatives as Secretary General of the SACC. The leadership path becomes even clearer when one considers that he was and still is; Pastor and President of Apostolic Faith Mission International; Deputy President of the SACC; Moderator of the Church Commission on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches; and former director of the Institute for Contextual Theology (Chikane 2019:363).

Worship services

Regarding worship services, praxis appears to have been compromised. This can be understood from Wacker (2003:99–100), who argued that Pentecostals did not theorise

their worship services. He further argued that these services oscillated between anti-structural and structural impulses, thus emphasising the practical aspect more than theory. Planned church services, such as those held in the so-called mainline churches, were viewed as nominal Christianity. Acts such as public crying, screaming, death-like prostration, among others were viewed as signs of repentance to God. An important part are the miracles when the Holy Spirit heals the sick. Wacker called this approach, a planned spontaneity.

The worship service that informed Chikane was structural, which might have laid his foundational format that shaped his subsequent worship structure. What is unfamiliar is an item of sharing the text among congregants after the sermon. Chikane outlines this service as follows:

Services for worship are participatory. People sing together, share their individual experiences during the week, and pray with and for those who are sick. The pastor ... selects a text, preaches on it and lets as many members of the congregation as possible, express their view about the text, or respond to it. (1990:31–32)

Testimonies

In terms of testimonies, personal faith stories about spiritual journeys were important to Pentecostals. They believed this had normative implications for others. Most of the time in their services was devoted to witnessing. According to Wacker (2003:58), testimonies reflected a three-stage sequence: The first was about the problem that led one to seek spiritual assistance (i.e., accepting Christ as personal Saviour), the second was about the event itself in detail, and the third was about explaining the benefits. Chikane's statement was not only theorised but also put into action, conveying a gospel message that was clear to those outside the Pentecostal faith and practice. For this reason, Sand convincingly concluded:

Frank was a good man. He had suffered cruelty and needlessly. His sin was that he was a peacemaker. At one point he held out his hands to us and said, they have never even held a live gun! (in Chikane 1990:30)

War

Regarding the ethics of war, Wacker (2003:223–224) argues that Pentecostals adopted pacifism and just war theory. In contrast, Chikane was a member of a liberation movement. This liberation movement had a military wing called *uMkhonto we Sizwe* (MK). He was also an apologist for the participation of communist countries in the struggle of the oppressed, which included military assistance against Western and apartheid propaganda (1990:119). Another militaristic element became apparent when he analysed the two options, which Mr. P.W. Botha will face if he does not end apartheid. These options were either pressure from some Western countries or direct confrontation by apartheid forces and the oppressed masses, which could lead to a bloodbath (p. 138).

Conclusion

Chikane proved to be a committed Christian who lived according to his spiritual beliefs as a faithful servant of Christ and as a result felt the *stigmata of the cross* from his church and apartheid state. He was expelled from the church and tortured by police because of his Christian beliefs and practices. In his ministry praxis, he challenged classical Pentecostal beliefs and practices in many ways.

As shown in this study, this servant of God made progress in challenging the *sine qua non* of Pentecostal belief in various areas, namely Spirituality, biblical hermeneutics, intellectualism, temperament, theological education, politics, liberation theology, customs, boundaries, society, nation, leadership, worship, testimonies, and war.

Chikane looked like a rebel in the eyes of his church. Ironically, he was finally honoured when he was elected to the senior leadership positions in his church such as; head of Composite Division of the AFM and in 1996, deputy president of the united AFM of SA, and the president of AFM international. This reconciliation and happy ending in his church suggested that his church had reached a point where it accepted him as he was, with his ministry practices which it had previously rejected as political. His acceptance by his church showed that he was therefore an epitome of shifts in Pentecostalism today.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The author has declared that no competing interest exists.

Authors' contributions

M.T.M. is the sole author of this research article

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the author and the publisher.

References

- Anderson, A., Bergunder, M., Droogers, A.F. & Van, D.L.C. (eds.), 2010, *Studying global Pentecostalism: Theories and methods*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J.K., 2004, *African Charismatics: Current developments within independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, BRILL, Leiden.
- Brown, C.G., 2011, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic healing*, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, Cary, NC.
- Chikane, F., 1990, *No life of my own. An autobiography*, Skotaville, Braamfontein.
- Chikane, F., 1992, *The Church's role during the period of transition*, paper read at breakfast briefing of Diakonia, Durban, 12 August 1992.
- Chikane, F., 2019, 'The Apostolic faith mission: The case of a lone mission and Evangelism journey outside the conferences on World Mission and Evangelism', *International Review of Mission* 108(2), 363–374. <https://doi.org/10.1111/irom.12290>
- Chikane, F.C., 2020, 'Stop the rot!', *New Agenda: South African Journal of Social and Economic Policy* 78, 10–13.
- De Gruchy, J.W., 1995, *Christianity and democracy. A theology for a just world order*, David Phillip, Claremont, CA.
- Denis, P., 2021, 'The splintering of South African evangelicalism during the last decade of eapartheid', *South African Historical Journal* 73(3), 706–726. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2021.2000020>
- Kgatle, M.S., 2017, 'A socio-historical analysis of the sections in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa from 1908 to the present', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 38(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v38i1.1668>
- Kgatle, M.S., 2019, 'Reimagining the practice of Pentecostal prophecy in Southern Africa: A critical engagement', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 75(4), a5183. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i4.5183>
- Kgatle, M.S., 2021, 'Spirituality of liberation in African Pentecostal worship and its implications for Black Theology', *Black Theology* 19(2), 168–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14769948.2021.1955178>
- Kgatle, M.S., 2022, 'Peculiarities in the Pentecostal tradition: Disciplinary and decolonial perspectives in a South African context', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 43(1), 2519. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v43i1.2519>
- Lindhard, M., 2014, *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and impact of pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial societies 2014*, Brill, Leiden.
- Lubbe, H.J. & Ferreira, G.M., 2008, 'The national prosecuting authority's policy and directives relating to post-truth and reconciliation commissions prosecutions', *South African Journal of Criminal Justice* 21(2), 151–167.
- Makofane, K. & Botha, N., 2019, 'Christianity and social transformation in post-apartheid South Africa: From prophetic quietism to signs of prophetic recovery', *Acta Theologica* 39, 88–103. <https://doi.org/10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup28.6>
- Maserumule, M.H., 2013, 'Eight days in September, the removal of Thabo Mbeki. Book-review', *Politeia* 32(1), 201.
- Miller, D.E. & Yamamori, T., 2007, *Global Pentecostalism: The new face of Christian social engagement*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Monique, M.I. & Amos, Y., 2015, *The spirit of praise: Music and worship in global Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*, Penn State University Press, University Park, PA, viewed 26 May 2021, from <http://search.ebscohost.com.uplib.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1029529&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Mzondi, A.M.M., 2021, 'John LM Dube's leadership: Evaluating Frank Chikane, Kenneth Meshoe, and Mmusi Maimane as leaders', *Conspectus: The Journal of the South African Theological Seminary* 31(1), 83–96.
- Onyinah, O., Donkor, E. & Clarke, C., 2018, *African Pentecostal missions maturing: Essays in honor of apostle Opoku Onyinah*, African Christian Studies Series, Pickwick Publications, Eugene, OR, viewed 27 May 2021, from <http://search.ebscohost.com.uplib.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1840763&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- Sider, R., 1988, 'Interview with Rev. Frank Chikane', *Transformation* 5(2), 9–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026537888800500202>
- Smith, C. (ed.), 2010, *Pentecostal power: Expressions, impact and faith of Latin American Pentecostalism*, Brill, Leiden.
- Wacker, G., 2003, *Heaven below: Early Pentecostals and American culture*, First Harvard University Press paperback edn., Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Williams, J., 1998, 'Africanisation, liberation and transformation in theological education', in E. Getman & J.R. Cochrane (eds.), *Report of the Third Annual Workshop of the National Initiative for Contextualising Theological Education*, Salty Print, Cape Town.
- Yong, A. & Alexander, E.Y., 2011, *Afro-Pentecostalism: Black Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in History and Culture*, NYU press, New York, NY.