

Pentecostalism in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: A glance at the past, present and future through the lens of three fundamental dimensions

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This article is a prospective analysis of the past, present and future of the Pentecostal movement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Central to the doctrinal identity of this movement is the belief in baptism in the Holy Spirit, together with the ensuing gifts understood to flow from this experience. The study contends (argues) that spiritual formulations have never served to safeguard the doctrine from decline; indeed, the reverse appears to be the case. Situated within a systematic reconstruction framework, the research advances the view that the abandonment of the core dimensions, often under the guise of progressiveness, would lead to the rise of a new expression of Pentecostalism in the DRC. Given the study's transformative orientation, an analytical method was employed to achieve the stated objectives. Both diachronic and synchronic perspectives were integrated, with particular attention to three Pentecostal dimensions (Christocentric and biblical, prophetic and pneumatological, and eschatological).

Contribution: The present article undertakes an examination of three fundamental dimensions of Pentecostalism. It issues a call to Pentecostal Christians to exercise vigilance in safeguarding the movement's core tenets to counter the proliferation of divergent forms of Pentecostalism. Such forms of Pentecostalism are characterised by practices, such as personality cults, which stand in tension with fundamental biblical teachings.

Keywords: Pentecostalism; DRC; Christocentric; universality; missionary passion; baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

The earlier article, *Spirituality in Pentecostalism in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A missiological reflection on constitutive elements*, published in 2024, examined the constitutive features of Pentecostal spirituality in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and their implications for doctrine and church growth. This study underscored certain incoherencies between contemporary expressions of Pentecostal spirituality in the DRC and Pentecostal pneumatology, particularly concerning the practice of charismatic gifts (Bondo 2024:4).

Owing to its dynamic and progressive character, the Pentecostal movement in the DRC constitutes the subject of an in-depth analysis in this article, examined through three dimensions: Christocentric and biblical, prophetic and pneumatological, and eschatological.

This study adopts both a diachronic and synchronic perspective, structured around the central doctrinal element that defined the movement, namely, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the accompanying spiritual gifts. It is argued that the erosion of three fundamental dimensions would inevitably give rise, in the future, to a distinct form of Pentecostalism, marked by practices that stand in contradiction to core biblical teachings. Consequently, the study seeks to address the following questions: *Has Pentecostalism in the DRC forfeited its original Pentecostal identity? What prospects await Pentecostalism in the DRC concerning the preservation or transformation of these fundamental dimensions?*

Research methods and design

This article provides an analysis of the past, present and future of the Pentecostal movement in the DRC. It seeks to demonstrate that the erosion of its fundamental dimensions could give rise to

a distinct form of Pentecostalism, characterised by practices that contravene its foundational teachings. As part of this transformative study, the analytical method was employed to achieve the stated objectives. This approach forms part of a systematic reconstruction process, both internal and external, as highlighted by Webster (2007:5–7). Given that the analytical method engages directly with themes and their practical implications, rather than speculative questions, it was applied to examine theoretical constructs and elucidate their logical components (Smith 2008:159). The adoption of this methodical framework enables a detailed, practice-oriented doctrinal exposition.

In addition to the analytical method, the study also adopted documentary analysis. It is noteworthy that the existing literature provides substantial historical context on the subject under investigation.

Accordingly, the documentary analysis was conducted in accordance with the model proposed by Machi and McEvoy (2022), which enabled researchers to thematically organise the literature and identify inconsistencies and taken-for-granted assumptions. These perspectives were crucial for constructing a well-founded and persuasive argument.

Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism, in its contemporary form, constitutes a Christian religious movement that emerged in the early 20th century. The term 'Pentecost' derives from the account in the Acts of the Apostles (2:1–7), which depicts a moment of profound spiritual fervour (Stronstad 2012:52). The movement¹ arose against the backdrop of a global upheaval in religious thought, acquiring its symbolic identity through the experiential phenomenon of baptism in the Spirit. Its origins are commonly traced to 01 January 1901 at C.F. Parham's Bible school in Topeka, Kansas and its subsequent popularisation through the Azusa Street Revival of 1906. Over time, the Pentecostal understanding of baptism in the Holy Spirit had evolved to encompass a broader significance than its initial interpretation within the holiness tradition. It is estimated that at least a quarter of the world's two billion Christians report having experienced this phenomenon. The movement is principally characterised by its emphasis on baptism in the Holy Spirit and the associated spiritual gifts, including glossolalia, divine healing and prophecy (Rodriguez-Gungor 2025:2).

With regard to baptism in the Holy Spirit, it is important to recognise the diversity of perspectives concerning its nature. This diversity is evident both within and beyond evangelical

circles, particularly among theologians (Lee 1994:171). For some, baptism in the Holy Spirit constitutes an experience of sacramental grace. By contrast, others contend that it is an experiential reality which fosters harmony, functioning simultaneously as a transformative encounter and as a source of holiness and mission (Macchia 2020:5). Within the framework of neo-charismatic theology, a significant proportion of adherents interpret baptism in the Holy Spirit as an event associated with the rite of water baptism or other initiation rites.

It is apparent that, although the evangelical affirmation concerning Jesus Christ in his fourfold office has long been regarded as a defining tenet of Pentecostalism, on this day, this fourfold office of Jesus has undergone reinterpretation (Land 1992:46). He has increasingly become the focal point of Pentecostal theological discourse, assuming a quintuple (fivefold) role as Saviour, Sanctifier, Baptiser of the Spirit, Healer and the coming King. Consequently, the evangelical perspectives on baptism in the Holy Spirit mentioned above are no longer upheld by Pentecostal scholars across the globe.² For instance, Alvarez (2002:141) observes that baptism in the Holy Spirit constitutes an event that discloses a new reality, radically reconfiguring one's relationship with God and bestowing extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, the Korean theologian Yun (2003:23–44, 147–162) observes that, among the many noteworthy features of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement, 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' represents its most distinctive doctrine. This study thereby corroborates Anderson's (2000:244) assertion that the foundational presupposition of all Pentecostal theology is the centrality of the spirit baptism experience. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is thus construed less as a doctrinal formulation than as an experiential encounter. Its centrality to the Pentecostal identity is indicative of a process of dogmatisation, as is evident in its incorporation within various doctrinal systems (Macchia 2006:21). Accordingly, most Pentecostal churches worldwide continue to ascribe considerable importance to this doctrine.

In addition to the points already noted, research conducted by various scholars, notably Stronstad (1984, 2012), Menzies (2000), Macchia (2006) and Fee (2000), amongst others, has highlighted the exegetical basis for the subsequent experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit. The analysis of several New Testament texts, particularly 1 Corinthians 12:13, Acts 1:5, etc., has identified three principal domains of the Holy Spirit's activity: salvation, sanctification and service. These domains are mutually interdependent and complementary. As Duffield and Van Cleave (1983:243–245) observe, there is a crucial distinction between the Holy Spirit baptising believers into the Body of Christ (an operation of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor 12:13) and baptism with the Holy Spirit

1. Two centres are widely acknowledged as significantly shaping the radical obedience characteristic of this religious form. The 'white' community at the Topeka (Kansas) Bible School, founded in 1900 under the leadership of Methodist Pastor Charles F. Parham, and the 'black' community of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, led from 1906 by Baptist Pastor William J. Seymour. Owing to the diversity and independence of the movements represented in the statistics, any attempt at definition inevitably lacks precision, and Pentecostalism will likely never be comprehensively delineated. Within the Congolese context, for instance, only about one-third of the observed phenomenon can be classified as classical Pentecostalism, while the remainder demonstrates indirect historical links to the Azusa Street revival.

2. Even though Pentecostals appear to be more advanced than Evangelicals in their comprehension of the full Gospel, it is nevertheless crucial to underscore that the Fivefold neglects Christ's role in creation. It can thus be concluded that the field of pneumology tends to engender a narrow understanding of the subject whilst concomitantly failing to embody a holistic representation of Pentecostal theology. Awudi (2025:5) estimates that the Pentecostals must develop a comprehensive response that integrates the main Christian doctrines into an integrated vision of creation.

(an operation of Jesus, Ac 1:5,8). The former, administered by the Spirit, relates to the believer's incorporation into Christ, whereas the latter, conferred by Jesus Christ, signifies the initiation of a spiritual role or ministry. This centrality in Pentecostal identity has led to doctrinal consolidation, as reflected in the theological formulations (Macchia 2006:21). Furthermore, this centrality has contributed to the proliferation of centres of revival and renewal (eds. Womersley & Garrard 2005:24).

In light of the foregoing, it is essential to recognise that Pentecostal theology is fundamentally a theology of encounter, rooted in the experience of Pentecost. This encounter involved a personal engagement with the biblical narrative of God's salvific history, fulfilled in Jesus and made present through the agency of the Holy Spirit (Vondey 2017:14–15). In this respect, global Pentecostalism was originally characterised by a threefold dimension: Christocentric, prophetic, and eschatological.

Christocentric dimension: The Christocentric nature of the message

In its nascent phase, Pentecostalism centred its messages on Christ. As with other Protestant traditions, Pentecostals understood the central message to be embodied by Jesus Christ (Nel 2023:8), who affirmed a new form of personal relationship with God (Yong 2020a:1). Its theology and spirituality originated in, and were oriented towards, Jesus Christ (Land 1992:19–46). At this point, however, the perspective requires further qualification.

Despite accusations that the Pentecostal movement places excessive emphasis on the manifestation of charismatic phenomena (pneumocentric), even a cursory examination reveals its profoundly Christocentric character (Klaus 2005:325). Pentecostals maintain that the prerequisite for encountering Christ is the revelatory work of the Holy Spirit (Nel 2023:8). The Holy Spirit was regarded as the principal agent in actualising the Christ-event in the present, thereby implying the necessity of a life governed by biblical precepts (Alvarez 2002:141). In this sense, early Pentecostals sought to experience the Christ of the New Testament, convinced that their Christ was indeed the Christ attested therein. Consequently, the Christological affirmations of the New Testament constituted the foundational principles of Pentecostal Christological understanding (Stronstad 1984, 2012), while the Old Testament was frequently employed to substantiate their Christological concerns. For this reason, Pentecostals contended that attentiveness to the presence of the Holy Spirit was indispensable, because it is the Spirit of Christ that manifests the presence of Christ in the believer's daily life and enables authentic spiritual experience (Rm 8:9; Phlp 1:19).

Prophetic dimension: The universality of the Holy Spirit's activity

The Pentecostal understanding of the relationship between God and humanity is marked by universal inclusivity.

This perspective underscores the notion of universality, establishing a correlation between the perceived divine presence and the Pentecostal perceptions of divine action. Within this framework, Joel's prophecy (2:28–29) is understood as applying to all individuals who demonstrate repentance, irrespective of their geographical location or historical period. In this sense, Peter's declaration that the prophetic gift of the Spirit is potentially universal (Ac 2:38–39). Pentecostals, therefore, identify this dimension as a fundamental element of their worldview (Yong 2000b:175).

This perspective, a fundamental tenet of Pentecostal belief, affirms that divine communication with humanity, manifested through revelations, visions, dreams and prophetic utterances, is intended to be universal in scope. It rests on the conviction that such universality is essential for ensuring continuity and permanence in the process of divine-human communication. In Joel's discourse, this universality is expressed in its temporal dimension, extending from generation to generation, as articulated in Acts 2:39. In continuity with Joel's reasoning, the gift of the Holy Spirit also embraces young and old, women and men, enslaved and free (Ac 2:17–18). Peter's appropriation of Joel's prophecy underscores this inclusivity, situating Pentecost within the ongoing tradition of charismatic activity. Such an understanding provides a corrective to spiritual reductionism. It paves the way for a form of Christian theology that acknowledges the transcendence and immanence of God, the universal and particular aspects of divine revelation and the personal and communal elements of Christian faith.

This finding substantiates the claim that baptism in the Holy Spirit, together with the accompanying gifts, constitutes the fundamental essence of ecclesiastical life (Hocken 1976:65).

Fee (2000:38–39) likewise advocates this view, arguing that the Church should consist of spirit-filled individuals in whom charismatic gifts manifest in a visible and enduring manner. In this regard, many Pentecostals reject the notion that the Gospel should be divided into two distinct eras: one characterised by signs (the apostolic age) and another devoid of such manifestations (the post-apostolic age) (Moorhead 1922:199). This conviction, which encourages members to seek baptism in the Holy Spirit, accords with Luke's pneumatological perspective, which Pentecostals identify as a legacy of the early church (churches of the apostles) (Nel 2017:14).

Alongside Joel (2:28–29), Pentecostals drew upon other passages from the Old Testament, such as Isaiah (32:15), Jeremiah (31:31–33) and Ezekiel (36:22–32), to elucidate and affirm the Bible's doctrine of the universality and continuity of the work of the Holy Spirit. From this perspective, believers were exhorted to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit, to remain attentive to His voice and to heed His message in both the present and the future.

Eschatological dimension: Passion for the lost

The history of Pentecostalism is marked by the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. It is through this belief that Pentecostals have actualised the reality of the triad described in Acts (2:1–41). In this regard, three elements are particularly significant: experience, eschatology and evangelism. The first element, 'experience', is characterised by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, supernatural signs and charismatic phenomena (1:1–13). The second element, 'eschatology', is defined by the *eschatological* interpretation of the event (2:14–36). The third element, 'evangelism', is expressed in the call to repentance, offering hope to those who believe (2:37–41) (McClung 2006:3–5). This framework undergirds the eschatological outlook that anticipates the Church's experience of tribulations, from which it would escape through the first stage of the Second Coming (eds. Kay & Dyer 2004:26). In this sense, Pentecostal missions sustained a fervent eschatological passion and were nourished by the experience of Spirit baptism and the exercise of charismatic gifts.

Returning to the pioneers of the movement, by applying Joel's prophecy and the events of Pentecost (Ac 2:17) to the phenomena they had witnessed, Seymour and the early members proclaimed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the eschatological gift of the Spirit (Stronstad 1982). The doctrine of baptism in the Holy Spirit was adopted as a means of equipping all believers, regardless of gender, for missionary engagement. This understanding served as a renewed impetus for evangelism and sacrificial missionary service, accompanied by heightened optimism and faith-filled triumphalism (Bondo 2020:29). In this regard, Pentecostals emphasised Jesus as the embodiment of the comprehensive gospel, portraying him in his quintessential role.

When this holistic gospel, which promises a complete solution to the challenges facing humanity, is proclaimed, the kingdom of God will come (Kärkkäinen 1999:44).

This understanding has been a central conviction of Pentecostalism since the Azusa Street Revival.

The experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit was perceived as a conflagration destined to spread throughout the world; in other words, a last-days revival preceding the imminent second coming of Christ. Consequently, Azusa came to be regarded as a pivotal symbolic event (an icon) for Pentecostals, representing the location where God enacted the eschatological plan for the restoration of the Church (Liardon 1996:63). This conviction was deeply interwoven with an eschatological sense of urgency and a fervent commitment to the salvation of lost souls (McClung 2006:3–5), giving rise to a distinctly Pentecostal missiological approach.

In light of these points, it is important to note that Pentecostalism in its early days was characterised by an

eschatological urgency and a missionary passion for lost souls. This understanding affirmed that the Holy Spirit was, for Pentecostals, the most central symbol and the most relevant category for denoting divine action in the church and the attitude expected towards lost souls. This provides the rationale for Christians to receive spiritual gifts: the confirmation of the Gospel message and the edification of other believers. This aspect enabled the integration of the three fundamental dimensions of Pentecostalism into its missionary endeavours.

Pentecostalism in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Deviation from its original identity

Has Pentecostalism in the DRC deviated from its original identity? The response to this question is by no means straightforward. However, it is widely acknowledged that Pentecostalism in the DRC represents one of the most rapidly expanding religious phenomena in the history of Christianity. This movement emerged to address the shortcomings of traditional Christianity, which had proved incapable of offering solutions to the existential and practical problems people faced (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013:30; Garrard 2009:7). Unfortunately, based on my observation, the Pentecostal churches that were expected to provide such solutions appear to be progressively deviating from their original identity, which comprises three dimensions: Christocentric, prophetic, and eschatological.

Message and testimonies: Loss of Christocentric prominence

In the DRC, some Pentecostal pastors seem predominantly to emphasise their perceived blessings, in contrast to the previous discourse, which articulated their salvation together with the associated transformation and healing. The primary focus of services is not on their previous discourse, but rather on the quest for material blessings, financial deliverance and the combating of individuals suspected of engaging in sorcery believed to cause mediocrity in life (Bondo 2020:198).

Pentecostals around the world are recognised as people shaped by the Bible (Davies 2013:249–62). The Bible was regarded as programmatic, dynamic in authority, a living guide and a life-transforming text that engaged readers through the Holy Spirit. The Bible reading process was both creative and purposeful, intending to achieve a specific outcome. Consequently, Pentecostals did not approach the text as a simple construct to be admired but rather as a resource from which they could draw spiritual treasures (Nel 2023). Consequently, they employed biblical texts to validate the experience of the Holy Spirit and the life of Christ. The movement's message was consistently and universally grounded in the principles and teachings articulated in the New Testament. However, Pentecostal preaching, once characterised by its compelling and spontaneous nature, has transformed, becoming increasingly focused on

transcendence and social testimony, a transcendence that has its origins in traditional practices. It is evident that in various traditions of the DRC, experiences of transcendence are evident, with consequences relating to the pursuit of honour and material possessions.

Decline of the universality of the gift of the Holy Spirit

Pentecostalism today in the DRC certainly seems to be losing the universality of the gift of the Holy Spirit. In a local church context, for example, the prophet is viewed as the sole source of answers to spiritual questions, similar to traditional religion leaders who dominate the lives of their followers (Bondo 2024:1). This understanding is further elucidated by the observation that offerings are required for the sealing of a pastor's grace or a prophet, and others are made to redeem the work, finance, or marriage, which are presumed to have been captivated by malevolent spirits.

This perception establishes the pastor or the prophet as a central figure in acting as the sole provider of both material and spiritual blessings. The most significant consequence of this understanding is the emergence of personality cults and the erasure of the concept of the universal priesthood (priesthood of all believers) (Pt 2 2:5, 9). However, the charismatic experience should sustain a constant corporate and universal dynamic between theory and practice among the members. Therefore, it is important to remind members of the Pentecostal interpretation of charismatic experiences.

The early Pentecostals conceptualised Joel (2:28–29) when the prophet announces the outpouring of the Spirit of God on 'all flesh'. Peter reiterates this claim to stress that, in the last days, the gift of the Holy Spirit is universally available as the gift of grace (Ac 2:39). The establishment of this doctrine in the early church (as depicted in the Acts of the Apostles) provided the foundational basis for the development of Pentecostal jurisprudence, thereby empowering each adherent and encouraging members to embody the quintessence of charismatic experience (Cox 1994:3–12).

Moreover, the Apostle Paul also emphasises the corporate reality of the church. He further elaborates on this concept, underscoring the notion that the Holy Spirit serves as the animating presence of God within the Christian community and the individual believer's life. The Christian congregation (community of saints) is no longer merely a building belonging to God (1 Cor 3:9), but the dwelling place of God Himself; the locus of His presence is found (1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16). This understanding was considered by early Pentecostals in the DRC to be intrinsic to the movement, with each member being expected to experience the essence of Pentecostalism (Cox 1994:3–12). In light of the preceding discourse on the diminution of the universality of the gift of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism

in the DRC, it is feared that the future may be characterised solely by transient, ostensible revivals.

Lack of doctrinal integrity

Pentecostalism is not monolithic in its theology (Ambrose 2012:72). It drew inspiration from the experiential theology of the book of Acts and developed elements from various theological traditions originating in different churches and movements throughout history, while simultaneously questioning their theologies concerning baptism in the Holy Spirit. Pentecostalism demonstrated an uncompromising stance towards evangelical Protestant, traditional Catholic and Orthodox theology on this issue (Anderson 2013:2). Unfortunately, the movement today appears to be adopting an equivocal position, accommodating non-Pentecostal doctrines, particularly concerning baptism in the Holy Spirit, which stands in stark contrast with its initial intransigence.

In the DRC, although the doctrine of baptism in the Holy Spirit still enjoys support within Pentecostalism, the essence is no longer the same. For example, the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit is now assimilated with that of conversion (cf. 1 Cor 12:13). However, the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gifts that follow it are devoid of any soteriological connotations (Stronstad 1984:64). The observation is not unwarranted. For if regeneration is to be conceptualised as a series of moments in Christian life in which all experiences are brought together, then from this perspective, the charismatic experience (experience of service) would be fundamentally interpreted from a soteriological perspective. This point of view is also supported by Macchia (2020:11), when he points out that the narrative foundation of the New Testament (all four Gospels and the book of Acts) makes Jesus' baptising in the Spirit programmatic for understanding his messianic charismatic mission and its fulfilment in the life of the people of God (Mt 3:11–12; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33; Ac 1:5).

Unfortunately, the number of Pentecostal pastors in DRC who readily accept those non-Pentecostal teachings and appropriate them to the extent of designating and transforming them into Pentecostal doctrines is high. This progressive compromise is partly explained by the lack of doctrinal integrity about the initial position of the subsequence of baptism in the Holy Spirit and its charismatic aspect (Petts 2007; Stronstad 1984). For this purpose, the movement seems to have effectively relinquished its adherence to the fundamental principles that initially propelled it, opting instead to prioritise a more opportunistic or pragmatic outlook. It may be argued that the fundamental teaching of the earlier Pentecostal movement has been superseded by a desire to break free from all Pentecostal principles and constraints. Yet, by virtue of its own hermeneutics, Pentecostalism is an authentic expression of Christian faith and not a subgroup of any previous movement (Johns 1995:3–17).

The future of Pentecostalism in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in terms of these fundamental dimensions

In the evolution of Protestant theology, the Reformed tradition emphasised the action of the Holy Spirit in the process of initiation into conversion (Wilcox 1997:113–128). Subsequently, the Wesleyan tradition stressed the action of the Spirit in holiness or sanctification (Lederle 1988:9; Robbins 2004:120). Finally, the Pentecostal tradition, for its part, asserted the charismatic activity of the Spirit in worship and service, as Stronstad (1984) points out. Duffield and Van Cleave (1983:243–245) clarify the connections between this notion and other conceptions of baptism in the Spirit, thus providing valuable insight for understanding Pentecostal theology. Despite this clarification, Pentecostalism is interpreted by some pastors in the DRC to correlate baptism in the Holy Spirit with regeneration, while also associating it with water baptism conferred in the name of Jesus. Those pastors deliberately adopted a position of Oneness Pentecostals or Unitarian³ Pentecostals to maintain that there is only one person in the Trinity: Jesus. This branch of Pentecostals regards the Trinitarian (or triadic) formula 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit' as simply denoting the title or office of the one God, whose name is Jesus (Lederle 1988:19).

Because theological statements to date appear not to be grounded in an experiential Pentecostal theology, the fear is that the future may hold only further purportedly short-lived revivals. For it is clear from church history and contemporary experience that the charismatic activity of the Holy Spirit cannot thrive in a climate that is hostile or indifferent to this dimension of the Holy Spirit's activity (Stronstad 1984:46).

Conclusion

The Pentecostal movement in the DRC was initially founded on the principle of reviving the enthusiasm and vitality of the early Church through charismatic phenomena. In the context of a reflection on Pentecostal experiential theology, it appears that the movement's approach is centred around three fundamental axes: The biblical and Christocentric dimension, the universal dimension, as well as the eschatological perspective. Spirituality, an integral facet of religious praxis, was manifested in these dimensions, continuously expressed during gatherings and serving as the foundational principle for ministry and action. It is noteworthy that, despite the persistence of the doctrine of baptism in the Holy Spirit within Pentecostalism, the study highlights a transformation of its essence.

³The designation 'Oneness Pentecostals' is generally preferred over 'Unitarian Pentecostals' because the historical Unitarian Pentecostal (Universalist) movement originated within the liberal and rationalist Congregationalism of New England, which denied Christ's divinity. For this reason, they are also referred to as 'Jesus only' (Lederle 1988:19).

It is important to note that most current members of Pentecostal churches belong to the third and fourth generations of the movement. There is a risk of complacency and a danger of adopting the form of Pentecostalism without possessing the personal conviction, experience and power of Pentecost. To illustrate this point, it is important to note that members may become Pentecostal because of their church affiliation, even in the absence of a personal experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, imperative to return and reaffirm the Pentecostal identity in this country, the DRC.

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Competing interests

The author declares that no financial or personal relationships inappropriately influenced the writing of this article.

CRedit authorship contribution

Mayuka G. Bondo: Writing – original draft. The author confirms that this work is entirely their own, has reviewed the article, approved the final version for submission and publication and takes full responsibility for the integrity of its findings.

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Disclaimer

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