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John Stott, Michael Harper and the Charismatic Renewal in England

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The charismatic renewal in the early 1960s was a significant development in global Christianity, creating theological and pastoral debates and disagreements with both local and international dimensions. This article sets the controversy between the leading Anglicans John Stott and Michael Harper within the wider cultural context that impacted the initial rise of the charismatic movement, and its subsequent growing global acceptance. The Stott-Harper debates contributed notably to the long-term domestication of the charismatic movement within an established Church, keeping most charismatic Anglicans within the Evangelical tradition. Conservative Evangelicals were enabled to adjust constructively to the growing 'charismatisation' of global Evangelicalism.

In the summer of 1962, an Anglican curate in London shared with his rector a new and unsought experience of the Holy Spirit that he had undergone. It was the first indication that the nascent charismatic renewal had reached the leading conservative Evangelical Anglican church of the time. The events that unfolded were eventually to significantly shape attitudes to the emerging charismatic tradition.

The rise and spread of the charismatic renewal, or neo-Pentecostalism, was a notable trend in late twentieth-century global Christianity. It became a powerful force in British Christianity and was destined to 'transform large sections of the Evangelical movement by the end of the [twentieth] century'.[1] This article explores the complex interplay between theological issues and the inter-personal dynamics that were a feature of

Particular thanks are due to David MacInnes, John Maiden, Andrew Atherstone, Ian Randall and Richard Turnbull for their comments and help in accessing a number of the sources used in this article.

[1] B. Stanley, *Global diffusion of Evangelicalism: the age of Billy Graham and John Stott*, Leicester 2013, 181; D. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in modern Britain*, London 1989, 229.

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debates between proponents and opponents of the charismatic renewal[2] in the 1960s and 1970s within Anglicanism, and the longer-term impact of this controversy by the end of the century.

Why the charismatic renewal emerged when it did has attracted significant discussion. Hugh McLeod has described the distinctive atmosphere of the early 1960s in the Western world, serving as a bridge between postwar attempts to return to normality, and the experimentation and iconoclasm of the late 1960s.[3] 1962 and 1963 were key dates in this particular controversy, by which point significant social, cultural and religious change was well under way. Civil law in areas of family life and sexual practice was becoming steadily disconnected from its previous Judeo-Christian roots. It became widely accepted that there were spheres of private behaviour in which the individual should be guided only by conscience, and in which the law had no place. Personal experience was considered of equal value to other sources of authority.[4] Although a far from adequate measure of religious belief, churchgoing and affiliation in Britain were in marked decline in the period,[5] and were in 'free fall' from the tipping point of 1963.[6] Most forms of measurable religious activity – numbers of clergy, baptisms, Sunday school attendance and church membership – followed a similar pattern.[7]

A notable plurality of beliefs and world-views emerged. The idea that Christianity was founded on unchangeable orthodoxies was giving way to an openness to questioning settled ideologies in the light of new knowledge and new experience. As a result, collective identities rooted in confessional and ideological subcultures weakened.[8] Within Christianity, openness to alternative perspectives ranged from Roman Catholicism's Vatican II, to the radical theological writings of the Anglican bishop John Robinson. The culture of respect and deference previously shown to institutions and the establishment, including the Church of England, began to be questioned. Whether through overt protest, or satire, there was merciless exposure of anything considered pomposity, blandness or false trendiness.[9]

Freshness of thought also brought elements of destabilisation. Calls grew for the laity to have a greater role in church life, and non-authoritarian styles of leadership were adopted. Christianity, it was suggested, needed

[2] The label 'charismatic' was first attached to the movement in the United States in 1962: P. Hocken, *Streams of renewal: the origins and early development of the charismatic movement in Great Britain*, Exeter 1986, 184.

[3] H. McLeod, *The religious crisis of the 1960s*, Oxford 2007, 82. [4] Ibid. 67–8.

[5] See K. Ward, *Losing our religion? Changing patterns of believing and belonging in secular Western societies*, Eugene, Or 2013, 9, and C. Brown, *Religion and the demographic revolution: women and secularization in Canada, Ireland, UK and USA since the 1960s*, Woodbridge 2012, esp. ch. iii. The reasons for this decline are debated in C. Brown, *The death of Christian Britain: understanding secularisation, 1800–2000*, London 2001.

[6] Brown, *Death*, 188. [7] McLeod, *Crisis*, 61–6. [8] Ibid. 73. [9] Ibid. 69.

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to break out of an irrelevant religious subculture that did not relate to the needs of contemporary society or use language which people understood.[10] Cultural change clearly impacted religious practice, but in turn changing patterns of religiosity shaped cultural norms.

The degree to which the emergence of the charismatic renewal was connected to such profound changes has been debated. Andrew Walls wrote of the 'infinite translatability of the Christian faith',[11] and Evangelicalism has proved one of the Christian traditions most translatable to new contexts and cultures. Therefore, the charismatic movement could be seen as an attempt to translate a renewed vision of Evangelical religion into the changed culture of the 1960s.[12] Michael Harper, the curate who shared his experience with his rector John Stott in 1962, believed that 'The climate of opinion was against such a movement until the sixties.'[13] This discontinuity with what had gone before is seen in the fact that, despite there being significant points of cross-over in terms of personnel and teaching, charismatic renewal did not coalesce with the older classic Pentecostal tradition. Instead, the charismatic renewal was particularly noted within mainline denominations.[14]

The emerging charismatic churches of the 1960s do appear to have especially been attractive to young and educated people, the social grouping most affected by the new counter-cultural currents. They largely led the protest against traditional institutions and bureaucracies, and a technocratic society dominated by scientific rationality. For them, the counter-cultural self-expression and idealised community offered by the charismatic movement were attractive alternatives and so it could be seen as a 'product of the diffusion of cultural Modernism'.[15] In contrast, churches in the Pentecostal tradition tended to attract adherents from the working class.[16]

However, there were other aspects of the new movement that seemed less than counter-cultural. Charismatics continued to appeal to the authority of the Bible, and some held very traditional views on male leadership. Much of the success of Charismatics was owing to their ability to, for a new age, blend innovation and adaptation with retention of previous belief and values.[17]

[10] Ibid. 1–5, 81.

[11] A. F. Walls, *The missionary movement in Christian history: studies in the transmission of faith*, New York 1996, 27.

[12] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 248.

[13] M. Harper, *As at the beginning*, London 1965, repr. 1966, 84.

[14] D. Bebbington, 'Epilogue: charismatics, Pentecostals, and contemporary culture', in A. Atherstone, J. Maiden and M. P. Hutchinson (eds), *Transatlantic charismatic renewal, c.1950–2000*, Leiden 2021, 240–4. There are significant debates about areas of continuity and also differences between Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement.

[15] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 233.

[16] Ibid. 246.

[17] McLeod, *Crisis*, 72, 139.

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John Stott and Michael Harper

In this context, the high-profile disagreement between John Stott (1921–2011), the rector of All Souls, Langham Place, London, and his then curate Michael Harper (1931–2010), was particularly significant. At the time All Souls lay at the heart of post-war Anglican conservative Evangelicalism, and the outcome of this controversy, which stretched from 1962 to 1977, was to play a notable part in shaping the direction that the charismatic renewal took, and also the response of conservative Evangelicals to the movement.

The influence of Stott and Billy Graham on the postwar recovery of Anglican Evangelicalism should not be overplayed,[18] but clearly these two men ranked as key global figures in the Evangelical theological tradition in the forty years after 1960. Graham said of Stott that 'He represents a touchstone of authentic biblical scholarship.'[19] Harper was a far more junior figure in 1962, but his curacy at All Souls gave him a degree of prominence, and in subsequent decades he went on to be called 'the beloved father to Anglican Charismatics everywhere'.[20] Although the events in 1962 and 1963 at All Souls were to be repeated in other congregations, the prominence of the church and its leaders made them of far wider importance.

Stott enjoyed a close working relationship with his curates. In regular team meetings and retreats he was interested to hear their views and was responsive to them. Although a senior, and revered, figure, his curates appeared to enjoy working with him and learned much from him.[21] In this working environment, his curates were not afraid to share their own views, and they were willing to challenge Stott in a number of areas.[22]

Through the 1960s, both Stott and Harper were acutely aware of the significant social and religious changes that were underway. The idea that Christianity needed to be reimagined as a 'religionless Christianity' was reflected in John Robinson's *Honest to God* (1963), but what Harper wanted was renewal of a different kind – 'a reassertion of the truth of the

[18] M. Smith, 'Evangelical parish ministry in the twentieth century', in A. Atherstone and J. Maiden (eds), *Evangelicalism and the Church of England in the twentieth century: reform, resistance and renewal*, Woodbridge 2014, 206–26.

[19] Billy Graham in 'The Time 100', *Time Magazine*, 18 Apr. 2005. This listed Stott as among the one hundred most influential people in the world.

[20] E. Thomas, 'Directors corners', *Sharing of Ministries Abroad USA* x/1 (1995), 1, quoted in A. Atherstone and J. Maiden, 'Anglican Evangelicalism in the twentieth century: identities and contexts', in Atherstone and Maiden, *Evangelicalism and the Church of England*, 45.

[21] T. Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: the making of a leader: the early years*, Downers Grove, IL 1999, 273. This refers to comments from John Collins, an All Souls curate for six years.

[22] See idem, *John Stott: a global ministry: the later years*, Downers Grove, IL 2001, 27–9.

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old theology and morality – but brought back to life again by the power of the Holy Spirit'.[23]

Stott held a strong pneumatology. He subtitled his 1990 commentary on *Acts* 'Seeing the Spirit at Work', and observed, 'There can be no life without the life-giver, no understanding without the Spirit of truth, no fellowship without the unity of the Spirit, no Christlikeness of character apart from His fruit, and no effective witness without His power.'[24]

In the late summer of 1962 Harper shared with Stott a profound spiritual experience he had recently undergone. Stott's approach was to test each and every religious experience by its scriptural basis, and its fruit. He initially wondered if Harper's experience was related to revival, in which he had a long-standing interest, shared by other Evangelical leaders, including Martyn Lloyd-Jones of Westminster Chapel in London.[25] He wrote to his parishioners about the potential disorder that religious revival could bring:

> Perhaps the very word 'revival' conjures up for us scenes of emotional exuberance, to which there is a deep-seated aversion in the British character … Extremes and enthusiasms embarrass us. But there is no need to be anxious! The God who bids us 'stir up' the gift that is within us has also given us the spirit of power, love and self-control.[26]

These comments indicate he did not reject the place of experience and emotion in Christianity, but Stott was cautious about such matters. He probed whether Harper's experience belonged to such 'extremes and enthusiasms', or whether it came from the spirit of 'power, love and self-control'. Harper was invited to speak about his experience at the All Souls staff away-day on 19 October of that year.

Stott took detailed notes of what Harper shared. Harper stressed that his experience had been unsought, and had not come through human intervention, but when preparing a series of sermons on Ephesians. He reported an experience of feeling 'spiritually on top', and even of having no natural sleep for two weeks. When he subsequently preached he felt enormous freedom. Harper had shared what had happened with his wife Jeanne, and after several days she too had the same experience. Harper reported a transformed prayer life, and the Bible was 'a new book. Can't stop reading it … everything leapt off the page'. He reported 'More blessing in one month than four years.'[27]

[23] Harper, *Beginning*, 96.
[24] J. Stott, *The message of Acts*, Downers Grove, IL 1990, 60.
[25] A. Chapman, *Godly ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical movement*, Oxford 2011, 72.
[26] J. Stott, 'Rekindling the inner fire', *All Souls* (Jan. 1960), 13–14.
[27] Idem, handwritten notes, 19 Oct 1962, John Stott papers, Lambeth Palace Library, London (hereinafter cited as LPL), on Pentecostalism 1962–95, 5/22, fos 231–3. Stott's notes correspond closely with the account of Michael Harper's experience given in Jeanne Harper, *Visited by God: the story of Michael Harper's 48 year long*

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Their rector had great affection for Harper and his wife, and Harper's admiration for Stott was immense. However, in a startling admission during his talk to the staff team, Harper reported two results of his spiritual experience. One was the 'toppling' of the idol he had made of the ministry, the other was the toppling of the 'idol' he had made of John Stott. This reflects the complicated personal dynamic behind the events that unfolded, and how what followed was more than simply a theological debate. Although Stott was the senior clergyman, Harper now felt a new 'freedom' to challenge him in events that followed. In allowing Harper to share at the staff meeting, Stott showed his usual openness to hear what his curates had to say, and interest in the input of others as he formulated his own response, but in so doing he surrendered an element of control over events. Aware of the potential for division within All Souls, Stott asked that what had been discussed be kept 'Confidential'.[28]

He requested a period of careful reflection, and led the staff in a series of Bible studies to assess the basis for such experiences.[29] The Harpers were also studying the Scriptures together. Their conclusion was that there were two distinct operations of the Holy Spirit – 'one to put the seed of eternal life quietly in the heart and the other to anoint with power'. Harper believed that the teaching of the Spirit would bring the Churches together and heal the broken body of the Church.[30] Very soon, the danger of exactly the opposite happening at All Souls became apparent.

Meeting with Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Although Harper claimed his experience in 1962 was new and unsought, thought about such matters was already circulating in Evangelical circles in London. Indeed, that year was a pivotal one in the development of the charismatic renewal in England. Its origins have been traced to 1959, and events in the California parishes of Frank Maguire and Dennis Bennett. In 1960 Bennett made public his experience of the Spirit and speaking in tongues. However, in the complex genesis of the movement, lay proponents were as much key players as the more well-known clerical proponents.[31] Charismatic renewal was promoted through the magazine

ministry, Cambridge 2013, 6, and R. Low, 'An interview with Michael Harper', *New Directions* (Oct. 1966), in Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 21.

[28] Stott, handwritten notes, 19 Oct. 1962, Stott papers, 5/22.

[29] Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 22, 3.

[30] J. Harper, *Visited by God*, 6–7.

[31] J. Maiden, *Age of spirit: charismatic renewal, the Anglo world, and global Christianity, 1945–1980*, Oxford 2023, 50–2. See also D. J. Bennett, *Nine o'clock in the morning*, Plainfield, NJ 1970.

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Trinity, copies of which were being sold in Britain in 1962.[32] In September of that year, Philip Hughes made an influential, and initially positive, assessment of neo-Pentecostalism after a visit to the USA. In an article published in the *Churchman* Hughes urged earnest prayer that 'the Acts of the Holy Spirit may be powerfully manifested once again in the church of our day'.[33]

Hughes was a close friend and confidant of Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and on 8 October 1962, eleven days before the All Souls staff away-day, 'the Doctor' had introduced the subject of Hughes's report at the Westminster Fellowship, a gathering of Evangelical ministers interested in Reformed theology. He also read out Bennett's testimony. Lloyd-Jones offered no personal verdict on what he read, but spoke of the need for more 'conscious' dealings with the Spirit of God. He had been preaching regularly about revival, and prayed for it daily. Lloyd-Jones had himself undergone a powerful experience of the Holy Spirit in 1949, which he believed had transformed his ministry. As with Stott, Lloyd-Jones wondered if what was being reported in 1962 was a portent of a future classic revival. Such events often began with intense religious experiences on the part of key individuals.[34]

Harper had often attended the Friday evening expository Bible Studies at Westminster Chapel in the 1950s. He wrote to Lloyd-Jones describing what had happened to him and a few other Anglican clergymen, and they were invited for an audience with 'the Doctor', which took place on 9 April 1963. Harper was accompanied by John Collins (former curate at All Souls and at the time rector of St Mark's Gillingham), David Watson (at the time Collins's curate) and David MacInnes, a young curate at St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, London, where the rector was Dick Lucas, a close friend of Stott's. MacInnes was one of a number of curates who lived at the All Souls vicarage in the years 1961–4, so three out of the four visitors were closely connected with John Stott. MacInnes and the other staff discussed what Lloyd-Jones was preaching with Stott, and sometimes attended the Sunday evening service at Westminster Chapel. Revival was a topic very much in the air.

David Watson's account of this meeting is the one best known, reporting Lloyd-Jones's emphatic conclusion on what he had heard as – 'Gentlemen, I believe that you have been baptised with the Holy Spirit.'[35] However, neither Collins nor MacInnes remembered those famous words being

[32] Stanley, *Global diffusion*, 188.

[33] P. E. Hughes, 'Editorial', *Churchman* lxxvi/3 (1962), 113–35; Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 37. See also A. Atherstone, D. C. Jones and W. K. Kay, 'Lloyd-Jones and the charismatic controversy', in A. Atherstone and D. C. Jones, *Engaging with Martyn-Lloyd Jones: the life and legacy of 'The Doctor'*, Nottingham 2011, 115.

[34] I. Murray, *Martyn Lloyd-Jones: the fight of faith, 1939–81*, Edinburgh 1990, 475, 477.

[35] D. Watson, *You are my God*, London 1983, 56.

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used, which makes Watson's recollection puzzling. Furthermore, Watson himself preferred not to describe second blessing experiences as 'baptism in the Spirit'. Of the three it was Harper who increasingly used the term, but he later attributed its use to comments made by his fellow curate, John Lefroy, after he had shared his experiences with the All Souls team – 'Michael, I believe you've been baptised in the Spirit.'[36] So the provenance of Harper's use of the term is unclear, but it seems not to have come from Lloyd-Jones. Harper makes no mention of Lloyd-Jones in *As at the beginning*, his 1965 account of the early charismatic movement.[37]

Collins and MacInnes recalled Lloyd-Jones carefully listening to their experiences, although there was limited discussion, before 'the Doctor' shared an exposition on 'Steps or stages on the way to Revival in the life of Moses', based on Exodus xxxii and xxxiii. He likened the Church of the early 1960s to the people of Moses's time, characterised by great ignorance and often great sin. The faithful were to respond as Moses did, seeking a greater knowledge of God and sense of his glory. To Lloyd-Jones, Moses's faithfulness was a portrait of how 'Revival starts in a little company or with one man – it doesn't happen in the first instance in the whole church.' He noted that the high point in this encounter of Moses was his request to see the glory and majesty of God, but Moses was granted a vision of only a part of God – 'Revival, over and above all other experiences gives just a glimpse of the glory of God.'[38] Lloyd-Jones appeared to see a connection between the experiences of these young Anglican clergymen and that of individuals immediately before historic revivals had taken place, perhaps hoping this was once more being repeated.

The impression gained by Collins and MacInnes was that Lloyd-Jones believed 'baptism with the Spirit' to be a one-off outpouring on an individual for a specific task, not an ongoing state needing to be replenished regularly.[39] Collins, Watson and MacInnes each came to the conclusion that 'fullness' was more appropriate than 'baptism' for further Christian experiences after conversion. Lloyd-Jones accepted 'baptism with the Spirit' as a post-conversion spiritual experience, but one which brought assurance of faith, and was identifiable with the 'sealing' of the Spirit referred to in Ephesians i.13.[40] Out of the four it was Harper who strongly emphasised

[36] Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 22. This is based on a taped interview with Harper on 27 July 1994. Iain Murray relies on Watson's account in his biography of Lloyd-Jones: *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 477. See also I. M. Randall, 'Lloyd-Jones and revival', in Atherstone and Jones, *Martyn Lloyd-Jones*, 91–113.

[37] Harper, *Beginning*.

[38] From handwritten notes taken by the Revd David MacInnes on 9 April 1963, during the meeting, and shared with the author in correspondence, 5, 27 Oct. 2016.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Murray, *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 487.

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the use of the term 'baptism in the Spirit', although he began to ascribe to it a different meaning to that given by Lloyd-Jones.

Over following years, Harper, Collins, Watson and MacInnes continued to actively discuss the issues raised, and all became key figures in the charismatic movement in the Anglican Church, their ministries all shaped by these events. The personal spiritual renewal of Collins was closely connected to the parish renewal at St Mark's, Gillingham, where Watson was for a time his curate. Hocken reports this as the first English parish to experience corporate renewal.[41] Harper undertook some ministry at St Mark's, which Lloyd-Jones also subsequently visited. Here, in February 1963, nights of prayer for revival were held, and a number reported 'being filled with the Spirit'.[42]

Collins was later rector of Holy Trinity, Brompton, which became one of the largest and most influential Evangelical Anglican churches associated with the charismatic movement and out of which the Alpha evangelistic course came. Watson was a gifted evangelist, and in his later ministry at St Cuthbert's, and then St Michael-le-Belfry, in York, created the model charismatic Evangelical parish, particularly suited to students and middle-class attendees, with services featuring music, dance and drama. Preaching from the Bible remained important, with elders appointed and local home 'area' groups established.[43] MacInnes went on to become rector of the strategic student church, St Aldates, in Oxford, from 1987 to 2002.[44]

For a while Harper appears to have accepted Lloyd-Jones's connection of his experience to revival, and most of the Fountain Trust's speakers and authors located their piety and eschatology within a longer history of revivalism.[45] In its initial mission statement of 1965, the trust's first aim was declared as: 'To pray and work for revival', and the second was 'To minister concerning the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit'. Harper's eschatology set out in 1965 also appears based on a 'latter rain' understanding of history.[46] In 1969 Harper explained that charismatic renewal was not itself revival, but a movement within the churches to establish Spirit-filled communities. Renewal would be 'part of the great outpouring, but only one facet of the whole'.[47]

By the second half of 1963 the enthusiasm of both Lloyd-Jones and Hughes for the emerging charismatic movement had cooled. Both visited the USA independently in May 1963 and met with early charismatic

[41] Hocken, *Streams*, 10, 11, 14.
[42] Watson, *You are my God*, 54.
[43] Ibid. 74–106.
[44] Stanley, *World*, 192.
[45] Harper, *Beginning*. The book is replete with references to Evangelicals such as John Wesley, Charles Finney and D. L. Moody.
[46] Ibid. 20–2.
[47] M. Harper, 'Editorial: ministry of encouragement', *Renewal* xix (Feb.–Mar. 1969), 2–3, quoted in Maiden, *Age of the Spirit*, 102.

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leaders including Maguire. Hughes was disappointed with the emphasis he found on everyone being able speak in tongues, and that this was the evidence of the 'reception of the Holy Spirit'. He found speaking in tongues effectively being 'taught', but reported 'I saw no evidence of powerful preaching, no sense of the awesome majesty of Almighty God, and no concern for purity of doctrine in conformity with the canon of Holy Scripture.'[48]

Although Lloyd-Jones continued to meet with, and counsel, the young Anglican leaders for some time, still referring to them in 1965 as 'good, excellent Christian people', other voices were coming to the table. In August 1964, David Lillie, another British pioneer of the charismatic renewal, wrote to Harper to warn him of Lloyd-Jones's emphasis on reformed theology 'as being the thing which really matters and which alone can meet the spiritual need of serious, intelligent, and spiritual people … I begin to wonder what his motive was in cultivating your fellowship. Did he want to lead you gently into the sure paths of the Puritans and away from these American enthusiasts?'[49] By 1965, Harper, Collins and Watson were adopting the views of charismatic pioneers in America whose thinking had been shaped by David du Plessis.[50]

'Baptism in the Spirit' and du Plessis

The idea of a 'second blessing' that Christians could enjoy promoted by the charismatic renewal was by no means new. It had deep roots in the Wesleyan tradition, and the nineteenth-century holiness movement.[51] It became a feature of the Keswick Convention, and was popularised by preachers and writers such as F. B. Meyer, Reuben Torrey and Andrew Murray, and was sometimes referred to as 'baptism in the Spirit'.[52] Holiness and second blessing teaching featured heavily in reports of the East African revival from the 1930s to 1950s. At St Mark's in Gillingham, discussions were being held in the 1950s as to whether aspects of the

[48] P. E. Hughes to I. Murray, in Murray, *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 478.

[49] Ibid. ii. 491–2; David G. Lillie, of Devon, to M. Harper, 23 Aug. 1964, ibid; Murray, *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 483.

[50] Ibid. ii. 492. After this charismatic foothold was created in London in 1963, a steady stream of American literature and personnel expanded and consolidated the movement: Hocken, *Streams*, 115–27.

[51] See D. W. Bebbington, *Holiness in nineteenth-century England*, Carlisle 2000, 81; J. Kent, *Holding the fort: studies in Victorian revivalism*, London 1978, 78.

[52] S. Barabas, *So great salvation: the history and message of the Keswick Convention*, London 1952; C. W. Price and I. M. Randall, *Transforming Keswick: the Keswick convention past, present and future*, Carlisle 2000, 105–26; O. C. Karmawan, 'The impact of the Keswick and Cambridge holiness movement on British Protestant missions in Asia (1881–1906)', unpubl. PhD diss, Edinburgh 2020.

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revival might be transplanted into the English Evangelical parish long before it became a centre for the charismatic renewal in the early 1960s.[53]

From the 1950s until his death in 1987, du Plessis effectively served as a missionary for global charismatic renewal among the mainline churches. He sought to maintain a continuity between the new movement and early Pentecostalism. Du Plessis promoted a diverse and denominationally indigenised movement without requiring conformity to one particular model, meaning that it was not necessary to leave your denomination in order to experience a new work of the Spirit. This eventually led him to involvement with the World Council of Churches, as well as with Roman Catholics. Such denominational latitude eventually saw du Plessis being dismissed by his denomination, the Assemblies of God in the USA.[54] Lloyd-Jones was especially critical of du Plessis.[55]

Du Plessis was clearly very influential on Harper, including his emphasis on baptism in the Spirit, and his desire to keep the charismatic renewal as a movement within denominations. He stressed that speaking in tongues was the visible sign of the supernatural and the mark of being baptised in the Spirit.[56] Collins, Watson and Harper had made no reference to speaking in tongues in their visit to Lloyd-Jones, and it appears that this emphasis came as a result of the subsequent influence of the du Plessis circle upon them. Lloyd-Jones was suspicious of this significant delay between their initial spiritual experience, and the later adoption of 'tongue-speaking'. He feared that much that was being introduced was psychological: 'Doctrine is being discounted and experience is being exalted at its expense.'[57] It was a concern Stott shared.

The pivotal year of 1964

By the start of 1964, John Collins, John Lefroy, Martin Peppiatt and Michael Harper, all of whom were either All Souls staff or former staff, believed they had been 'baptised with the Holy Spirit'.[58] Some in the All Souls congregation wanted those emphasising these further experiences of the Spirit dismissed, although there is no evidence that Stott was in sympathy with such calls.[59] Harper's respect for Stott remained strong – he

[53] T. Saunders and H. Samson, *David Watson: a biography*, London 1992, 71–2.

[54] J. R. Ziefle, 'Missionary of the Holy Spirit: David du Plessis and the historic denominations', in Atherstone, Maiden and Hutchinson, *Charismatic renewal*, 27. On du Plessis see also J. R. Ziefle, *David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God: the struggle for the soul of a movement*, Leiden 2013.

[55] Murray, *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 479–82.

[56] On du Plessis see Ziefle, 'Missionary of the Holy Spirit', 19–36.

[57] Murray quotes extensively from Lloyd-Jones's annual address to the Evangelical Library, 5 Dec. 1963: *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 469–83.

[58] Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 37.

[59] Ibid. 23.

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described him as 'a very powerful man but easy to work with – an awesome preacher'[60]; 'he listened to what I was saying, gave advice and supported me'.[61] But, he added, 'the turn-off was when I spoke in tongues'.[62] Stott was particularly uncomfortable both with the use of the term 'baptism in the Spirit', and with seeing speaking in tongues as the authenticating sign of it. Stott did not rule out the possibility of glossolalia, but the evidence he saw of tongues speaking left him unconvinced it followed the biblical pattern.[63]

By 1965, Harper was openly promoting his view that 'The receiving or Baptism of the Holy Spirit' was part of 'normal Christian initiation right from the beginning' of the early Church, and that 'there is no statement in the New Testament which would lead us to believe that Christ or the apostles regarded the gifts as temporary.'[64] Harper sought to promote renewal within the congregation, and had no interest in splitting All Souls, and unlike at many other churches and parishes, no obvious division occurred. Also there were no staff changes caused by the issue, and that too owed much to Stott's influence. None the less, Harper was influencing some members of the congregation. One such was Kathleen Clark, who experienced baptism in the Spirit through Harper's influence. She went on to work with the South American Missionary Society, and when David Pytches (a missionary bishop of Chile, Bolivia and Peru) was baptised in the Spirit in 1971, she taught him about the gifts of the Spirit.[65]

When he spoke in January 1964 at the Islington Clerical Conference, attended by some 1,000 clergy and laity, Stott took as his subject 'The Individual Christian and the Fullness of the Holy Spirit'. His message was the fruit of two years of thought, prayer and discussion – he declared: 'I opened my mind afresh to all that was being said, written and claimed.'[66] The address left Harper convinced that, of those 'deeply anxious about the theological implications' of their teaching, John Stott was 'the chief – and gracious opponent'.[67]

In the address, published later in 1964, Stott described the Holy Spirit as 'the neglected Person in the Godhead'. Speaking of the 'recrudescence'

[60] R. Low, 'An interview with Michael Harper', *New Directions* (Oct. 1966), quoted ibid. 21. [61] Dudley-Smith interview with Harper, 27 July 1994, ibid.
[62] Harper, quoted ibid. 23.
[63] Dudley-Smith taped interview with Stott, 9 Sept. 1992, and letter, 24 Oct. 1994, ibid. 22. [64] Harper, *Beginning*, 98, 107.
[65] D. Pytches, *Living at the edge: the autobiography of David Pytches*, Bath 2002, 145. In 1977 Pytches became vicar of St Andrews, Chorleywood, Herts, which was to be another 'model' charismatic Anglican parish, especially after the visit of John Wimber and his ministry team in 1981.
[66] J. Stott to Edward Doring, 29 Oct. 1995, quoted in Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 38.
[67] Harper, *Visited by God*, 8; Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 36–7.

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(a term possibly taken from Lloyd-Jones)[68] of Pentecostalism, Stott argued that any movement should not be assessed on 'the experience of particular individuals or groups, however true and valid those experiences may be'. Instead any evaluation 'must be governed by the Scripture alone'. Stott argued at length that baptism in the Spirit comes at conversion – 'When we repent and believe, Jesus not only takes away our sins, but also Baptizes us with the Holy Spirit.' He refuted the idea that this was an experience for some Christians and not for others, appealing especially to 1 Corinthians xii.13: 'For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body.' He spoke instead of 'the fullness of the Spirit' as a 'blessing to be continuously and increasingly appropriated'. The 'unusual, particular and exceptional ministries of the Holy Spirit' were not to be pressed on other believers as if they were normal, or the secret either of holiness or usefulness.[69] Stott's overwhelming fear was that the charismatic renewal was promoting two classes of Christians, those baptised in the Spirit, and those who had not been, and also a two-stage Christianity.

The deepening Harper-Stott rift

The subsequent correspondence with Harper in 1964 reveals two men who profoundly disagreed, but were still striving to stay on good terms. Stott regularly began his letters 'Beloved Michael'. In August 1964 he wrote:

> how sorry I was … to read that you are freely using this expression 'baptised in the Spirit' and that you are even going to write a booklet soon on 'how to receive the experience'… I must say I had thought that our studies and discussions together had convinced us all that this is not Biblical language for a second and subsequent experience as God's normal purpose. I honestly fear for you, that, without the restraints of our study periods … you are going to become unbalanced and unbiblical in your adoption of 'doctrinaire' Pentecostal views and expressions.

Stott recognises that he is in difficult territory, and closes jokingly, 'I imagine I've written enough to induce an apoplectic fit' and ends 'Love as ever, John'.[70]

Harper responded 'I have been very slow in using the term "the Baptism in the Spirit" until I had studied the subject thoroughly.' He believed that it was scriptural, adding 'I really cannot find an alternative or I would be only

[68] In his December 1963 address to the annual meeting of the Evangelical Library, Lloyd-Jones used the unusual phrase 'the recrudescence, if you like, of interest in the gifts of the Holy Spirit': Murray, *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 480.

[69] J. Stott, *The baptism and fullness of the Holy Spirit*, London 1964, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 19, 35.

[70] Stott to Harper, 'Bank Holiday', Aug. 1964, Michael Harper papers, LPL, correspondence for 1964, letters ff5, items 1, 2, pp. 1, 2.

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too pleased to use it.' He then added of his teachings on the Holy Spirit – 'I am as certain of it as a basic doctrine as I am of justification by faith.'[71]

This clearly disturbed Stott, who replied 'Justification by faith is a doctrine plainly taught in scripture and believed by all evangelical Christians. Your doctrine of the Spirit, however, is not plainly taught in scripture … and has not been believed by the vast majority of evangelicals who have studied the scripture.'[72] Harper's reply to this probably exceeded the bounds of propriety to a senior clergyman – 'I do respect your view – and having held it myself for so long I can understand how hard it is for you to entertain the possibility that you might be wrong.'[73]

Stott replied with some grace: 'It is not true that I have not entertained the possibility that I might be wrong.' He explained that since the staff conference of 1962 he had spent a considerable time 'thinking, praying, reading, studying and discussing', and he had opened his mind 'to his whole issue'. But, he concluded, 'I have become even more convinced that the "Pentecostal" position is not scriptural.'[74] Harper's reply on 7 September was suitably apologetic for any offence caused, but he gave no ground. He resisted the view that 'because at the moment most cannot see this teaching in the scriptures, therefore it cannot be there'. He warned against belief 'in the infallibility of evangelicals rather than that of the Bible'.[75]

By the time *Baptism and fullness* was published in 1964, the issue was affecting many Christian Unions. The then Acting IVF General Secretary, Oliver Barclay, had met with Harper to discuss his views, and wrote to him strongly:

> the emphasis you give is a serious unbalance and one which is sadly diverting attention from the main emphases of Scripture … Is not one of the main thrusts of 1 Corinthians 12–14 that the more spectacular gifts are not the important ones and that Christian character is more important than all the lot put together?[76]

In reply, Harper distanced himself from those who said the 'gifts of the Spirit are of the "esse" of the Church … they are not the most vital aspects of the life of a local church and there are far more important aspects'. However, he stood his ground in asserting that these were not

[71] Harper to Stott, 9 Aug. 1964, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 5/22, fo. 220.

[72] Stott to Harper, 14 Aug. 1964, Harper papers, correspondence for 1964, 1964/46: Letters, Stott, ff5; Stott to Harper, Aug. 1964, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 5/22, fo. 219, item 3.

[73] Harper to Stott, 21 Aug. 1964, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, 5/22, fo. 217.

[74] Stott to Harper, 28 Aug. 1964, Harper papers, correspondence for 1964, 1964/46, item 4.

[75] Harper to Stott, 7 Sept. 1964, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, 5/22, fo. 215.

[76] For example, Oliver Barclay to Harper, 14 Oct. 1964, ibid. fo. 212.

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minor matters and should be included as part of the Christian corpus of teaching.[77] Barclay echoed Stott's words: 'Do consider whether you are becoming seriously and damagingly unbalanced in your ministry.'[78]

Stott was a well-known speaker at Intervarsity Christian Union meetings, and was approached to speak on the charismatic renewal issue, or to offer advice. Some complained he was unsympathetic towards Pentecostalism, although Stott asserted that all he said and wrote was 'in love and in genuine concern for the truth of God and the good of the Church'.[79]

The letter Stott received in April 1965 from the president of the Cambridge Inter-collegiate Christian Union (CICCU), of which he was honorary vice-president, reflects the disturbance created in the Christian student world by the charismatic renewal. The probing question was asked of Stott: 'Is it possible to have the right experience with the wrong theology?' The influence of David Watson, then curate at the Round Church, Cambridge, was noted, especially his emphasis on tongues speaking.[80] Watson eagerly wrote to John Collins about a meeting with those in the Round Church who were spiritually 'hungry and thirsty'. [81] The hearts and minds of a future generation of evangelicals, many of whom would become Christian leaders, were being contested over in these university debates. In February 1963 John Collins told Harper he was praying 'Lord, give us Cambridge.'[82]

Stott's response to the CICCU president's letter sought balance. Much of what was being reported was neither 'divine nor devilish', but instead, 'psychological, especially because it seems to need to be "induced" by the laying-on of hands'. He cautioned against the subjectivity of religious experience, and believed the fruit of the Holy Spirit should be measured in objective realities like increased Christ-like character, conduct and good works, as well as greater activity in evangelism.[83]

[77] Harper to Barclay (copy), 21 Oct. 1964, ibid. fo. 207. Harper acknowledged there had been some division in one Christian union, and wrote that 'The admirable spirit of John Stott's booklet which urges Christians not to condemn others who have had "experiences" seems the right approach where we are frankly puzzled.' But, he believed that denying the exercise of the gifts completely would only encourage 'fanatical elements which spoil all God's gifts'.

[78] Barclay to Harper (copy), 4 Dec. 1964, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, 5/22.

[79] Stephen Crisp (Committee of the London Intervarsity Christian Union), 25 Nov. 1964, and Stott's reply, 4 Dec. 1964, ibid. fo. 200.

[80] S. Baldock to Stott, 28 Apr. 1965, ibid. fo. 197. On the impact of the charismatic movement at Cambridge see I. M. Randall, 'Charismatic renewal in Cambridge from the 1960s to the 1980s', in Atherstone, Maiden and Hutchinson, *Charismatic renewal*, 123–43.

[81] Saunders and Sansom, *Watson*, 66, 75. The vicar of the Round Church, Mark Ruston, had urged his curate to keep the experience as a private matter.

[82] Collins to Harper, 7 Feb. 1963, Harper papers, 1963/4, 7.

[83] Stott to Baldock, 12 May 1965, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, 5/22, 1965.

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It should be noted that Stott's opposition to the charismatic renewal was not fuelled by fear of an increased role for the laity; rather he argued that the laity were 'the vanguard of Christ's army … and the clergy are the servicing organization'.[84] Indeed, the National Evangelical Anglican Congress in 1977 pushed for wider acceptance of 'every member ministry'.[85]

In October 1964 Harper wrote to Stott: 'I do thank God for your wise "opposition" to anything that you see to be wildly unscriptural or unreasonable.'[86] But by then the arguments were well rehearsed, and Stott saw limited value in endlessly repeating them. In fact, between 1965 and 1975 Harper and Stott rarely met. Stott also had little connection with John Collins, whom many criticised for his part in events.[87]

In September 1964, Harper formed the Fountain Trust to bring together 'those whom God had blessed or were seeking blessing', and 'to promote renewal within existing structures',[88] and Harper left his All Souls curacy to become its general secretary. It became a ministry with notable international influence, although it had no formal membership or regular meetings.[89] Harper continued the trust's work until 1980, by which time he felt it had completed its task of implanting renewal into main denominations.[90] Throughout the years 1964–80 Harper was the main propagator of charismatic renewal in England.

Although Harper denied that the views he was promoting were of the 'esse' of the Church, within a few years what he was arguing for was in fact very close to that. In 1969 he reasserted his view that baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues were initial signs in the same way that circumcision and water baptism were. This did not mean that the two always happened together – there was often a time lag between baptism in the Spirit and receiving the gift of tongues due to 'ignorance, fear and prejudice'.[91]

Despite the disagreement with Stott, Harper's organisation retained the Evangelical characteristics of biblicism and crucicentrism which Stott feared were being lost. Harper argued in 1965 that the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit and the outward testimony of the Scriptures should be

[84] J. Stott, *One people: clergy and laity in God's Church*, London 1969, 46.
[85] Nottingham statement of NEAC, 35.
[86] Harper to Stott, 14 Oct. 1964, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, 5/22, fo. 211.
[87] Personal correspondence from David MacInnes to the author, 27 Oct. 2016. MacInnes remembered Dick Lucas at St Helen's being willing for him to teach and preach on the fullness of the Spirit, but preferred him only to speak of the gift of tongues in one-to-one pastoral work. Lucas later became more opposed to the movement.
[88] Harper, *Visited*, 8. On the Fountain Trust see M. Harper, *Power for the body of Christ*, London 1969.
[89] Maiden, *Age of Spirit*, 98–105.
[90] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 230.
[91] Harper, *Power*, 36–7.

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in agreement: 'Everything must be brought to the touchstone of the Scriptures, which must obviously be more thoroughly and carefully read than ever before.'[92] He also warned against the danger of Pentecost and the baptism in the Holy Spirit becoming 'the answer to everything' and the death of Christ losing its central place in the thought and experience of the believer.[93]

National Evangelical Anglican Congress, 1967

In the Stott-Harper controversy, the wider context of preparations for the NEAC of 1967 should not be ignored. Through the 1950s and 1960s Stott had laboured to break the prejudicial association of Evangelicalism with the subjectivism, emotionalism and lack of theological credibility of which it had been accused, and establish it as a credible and acceptable grouping within Anglicanism. The NEAC of 1967 was designed as a signature statement of the life, vibrancy and credibility of Evangelicalism as a tradition within Anglicanism. It has been described as 'the chief landmark in a post-war Evangelical renaissance'.[94]

This helps to explain Stott's challenging letter to Harper in 1967: 'I find myself regretting more and more that you are giving yourself to the promotion of things which are evangelically divisive.'[95] However, Harper's emphasis through much of his ministry on charismatics retaining their denominational loyalty paralleled that of du Plessis. Harper wanted the movement to permeate denominations and not undermine old structures or create new ones. Interestingly, separatism was also rejected by Stott very publicly in his disagreement with Martyn Lloyd-Jones in 1966 at the National Assembly of Evangelicals where the topic was evangelical unity.[96] Stott was deeply concerned about anything that could prove divisive among Evangelical Anglicans. Some charismatics felt unwelcome in their existing churches and left them, as did some traditionalists who felt uncomfortable with the new practices.

The breadth of Harper's ecumenical dialogue raised in Stott the fear that experience might be put before doctrine. As early as 1965 Harper accompanied Dennis Bennett on his visit to speak at a well-attended meeting about the blessing of the Holy Spirit at the Jesuit Heythrop

[92] Idem, *Beginning*, 120. On the characteristics of Evangelicalism see Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 5–17.
[93] Harper, *Beginning*, 125.
[94] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 249.
[95] Stott to Harper (handwritten), 21 Dec. 1967, Harper papers, correspondence for 1968, 1968/32.
[96] On this incident see Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 267; Murray, *Lloyd-Jones*, ii. 522–8; and Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 65–71.

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College.[97] Harper attended three sessions of the Roman Catholic-charismatic Dialogue (1972, 1973, 1975) and was one of only five Protestants to attend the charismatic conference of Roman Catholics in Rome (in 1975).[98] He also helped to organise two International Ecumenical Charismatic Conferences, which challenged the 'anti-Rome' sentiment among some Evangelicals.[99] Despite this, Harper's concern to not lose the support of those in mainstream denominations left him cautious in the face of those advocating radical spiritual warfare.[100]

A change of tone

In the 1970s, the Stott-Harper relationship began to change. There were a number of reasons for this. Harper's view was that by 1975 Charismatics placed less emphasis on baptism in the Spirit as the hallmark of a Spirit-filled person. Evangelicals as a whole also began to embrace new directions in worship, small groups and the exercise of spiritual gifting.[101] On Stott's part there was a growing sense that Evangelical unity, especially Evangelical Anglican unity, was not something that could be presumed upon, and that the increasingly sizeable and influential charismatic group should be affirmed, embraced and kept within the Evangelical family.[102] Stott began to engage in wider dialogue. He conceived and co-chaired the Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission which started in 1977.[103]

Stott also became increasingly globally aware. In the non-Western world, through both classical Pentecostals and mainline denominations, spiritual gifts were coming into increased prominence. In 1973 he preached in Singapore Cathedral, where the Anglican Bishop Chiu Ban It had experienced charismatic renewal. This endorsement by such a prominent Anglican clergyman was significant.[104] Stott was also a leading figure in the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation, attended by 2,473 delegates. They included many from the Global South including

[97] M. Harper, *None can guess*, London, 1975, 121.
[98] H. Y. Au, 'Grassroots unity and the Fountain Trust International Conferences: a study of ecumenism in the charismatic renewal', unpubl. PhD diss. Birmingham 2008, 63. [99] Maiden, *Age of Spirit*, 172. [100] Ibid. 177.
[101] See M. Harper, editorial: 'A narrowing of the divide', *Renewal* lx (Feb.–Mar. 1975), 3.
[102] On Stott's understanding of Evangelicalism see J. Stott, *Evangelical truth*, Leicester 1999. The role of the Holy Spirit is discussed at pp. 97–128.
[103] I. M. Randall, 'John R. W. Stott', in T. A. Noble and J. S. Sexton (eds), *British Evangelical theologians of the twentieth century*, London 2022, 155–75. This dialogue was subsequently published as B. Meeking and J. Stott (eds), *The Evangelical-Roman Catholic dialogue on mission, 1977–1984: a report*, Grand Rapids, MI 1986.
[104] Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 180, 188; Stanley, *Global diffusion*, 24.

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Pentecostals and charismatics. Juan Carlos Ortiz, a Pentecostal pastor from Buenos Aires, declared 'The basis of fellowship, we believe, is the Lordship of Christ … We should live together – the Charismatic and the non-Charismatic – in the same Body.'[105] The Lausanne Covenant itself, which Stott helped to draft, called upon Christians to 'pray for such a visitation of the sovereign Spirit of God that all his fruit may appear in all his people and that all his gifts may enrich the body of Christ'.[106] It also spoke of unity, which Stott so valued – 'our oneness strengthens our witness'.[107] The voice of Christians in the non-Western world clearly impacted Stott.

Ironically, although the charismatic renewal owed a substantial debt to classic Pentecostalism, there were often significant tensions between the two.[108] The Fountain Trust never invited Pentecostal speakers because of their reputation for unguarded statements.[109] Pentecostals feared that charismatics emphasised testimony before Bible, and were in doctrinal compromise because they worked with theological liberals and Roman Catholics.[110]

At the Senior Evangelical Anglican Clergy meeting in December 1974 representatives of the conservative Evangelical and the charismatic Evangelical groupings came together.[111] During a public session at that gathering J. I. Packer urged traditional Evangelicals to relate more positively to charismatic Evangelicals. Stott's public comments after this address were striking: 'I confess that I have tended to be too negative towards this movement, and too reluctant to recognise and welcome whatever within it seemed to be a work of God. I would also like to make a public apology to Michael Harper that I have allowed our friendship to become tarnished over the years, and that I have been slow to meet him and talk with him.'[112]

Then, in 1975, a revised and expanded version of *Baptism and fullness* was published.[113] Stott stated that his aims were to clarify and strengthen parts of the first edition, to correct 'the false rumour' that he had changed his

[105] Quoted in W. S. Mooneyham, 'Acts of the Holy Spirit '74', in J. D. Douglas (ed.), *Let the earth hear his voice: International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne, Switzerland*, Minneapolis, MN 1975, 445.

[106] 'The power of the Holy Spirit', section 14, the Lausanne Covenant, in Douglas, *Let the earth hear*, 8.

[107] 'Co-operation in evangelism', section 7, ibid. 5.

[108] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 231.

[109] Hocken, *Streams*, 144; Maiden, *Age of Spirit*, 100–2.

[110] J. Ward, 'Pentecostal theology and the charismatic movement', in D. Martin and P. Mullen (eds), *Strange gifts? A guide to charismatic renewal*, Oxford 1984, 192–207.

[111] Stott to Harper, 20 Nov. 1974, Harper papers, correspondence for 1974, 1974/68.

[112] J. Stott, 'The maturity of love': part of Stott's address published in *The Church of England Newspaper*, 13 Dec. 1974.

[113] Idem, *Baptism and fullness: the work of the Holy Spirit today*, London 1975, Downers Grove, IL 1976 (quotations are from the 1976 edition). For Stott's explanations for the revisions see Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, 40.

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mind and, importantly, to emphasise the theme of unity, asserting that those of different views should 'remain in fruitful dialogue and fellowship with each other'. Stott again urged all Christians to submit their traditions, views and experiences 'to the independent and objective test of biblical truth'. Theologically Stott's stance had changed little, but bridges were being rebuilt.[114]

The preparations for the NEAC in Nottingham in 1977 presented an opportunity to take the *rapprochement* with Harper further.[115] Between 1975 and 1976 four day-long conferences were held between the representatives of the Church of England Evangelical Council and the Fountain Trust. Those present included Stott, Collins and Harper, Colin Buchanan, Jim Packer, Tom Smail and David Watson. Collins remembered Packer, who was more sympathetic to the charismatic renewal, saying to Stott at various points – 'John, that comment of yours is not fair!'[116]

The outcome of the dialogue was *Gospel and Spirit*, a formal statement issued and subsequently endorsed at the Nottingham NEAC, and published in 1977. Stott's initial critique had been toned down.[117] The document was designed to 'promote unity where there is discord, and mutual understanding where there has been distrust', and 'build bridgeheads for future fellowship'.[118] In the end it was a compromise document. The initial draft, which reflected Stott's hope that the terms 'baptism' or 'baptise into' should not to be used 'for any subsequent experience of, or fillings by, the Holy Spirit after the initial time of turning to Christ', was modified in the final version to: 'there are problems attaching the use of this term to an experience subsequent to a person's initial conversion to Christ'. Then a very significant 'however' followed: 'we see that it may be hard to change a usage which has become very widespread, although we all agree in recognising its dangers'. It was agreed that tongue-speaking was not 'the only, or universal, or an indubitable evidence of the gift of the Spirit'. One revision suggested by Stott was embraced – an expression of sorrow that the meetings had not taken place sooner, which 'has contributed to unnecessary misunderstandings, suspicions and polarisations', adding that 'although we cannot claim to see eye to eye on every

[114] Stott, *Baptism and fullness*, 9–10, 11, 21, 25.

[115] See J. Maiden, 'Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic relations, 1928–1983', in Atherstone and Maiden, *Evangelicalism and Church of England*, 136–61 at p. 157.

[116] Personal recollections of David MacInnes and John Collins shared in correspondence with the author, 5 Oct. 2016.

[117] Church of England Evangelical Council and the Fountain Trust, *Gospel and Spirit: a joint statement prepared and agreed by a group nominated by the Fountain Trust and the Church of Evangelical Council*, Esher 1977, Stott papers, 3/8/7.

[118] 'Evangelical/Charismatic Dialogue', press statement, March 1976, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, collection of documents about the charismatic movement, 5/22/2.

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point, we gladly recognise that what unites us is far greater than what divides us. We share the same evangelical faith. We recognise each other as brothers in Christ and in the gospel'.[119] The stress on balance was strong: 'Both doctrine and experience, word and Spirit, must go together … so we can avoid the two extremes of a dead, rigid and barren orthodoxy, or an uncontrolled, unstable and fanatical emotionalism.'[120]

Dudley-Smith commented that 'few from either side seem to have found it wholly satisfying or convincing'.[121] Harper agreed: 'we didn't reach full agreement; I think there was some very good material in it, and I think it was helpful … but I wonder if anything very good comes out of written stuff; I think the great thing is meeting people and talking things through'.[122] Relationships were restored, but Stott remained unshakeable in thinking that baptism in the Spirit as a second and subsequent experience after new birth was a 'mistaken' view.[123]

The degree to which the charismatic renewal had been accepted within Evangelical Anglicanism is reflected in the reports that the 1977 NEAC 'was conducted very much in the style of a Fountain Trust conference'.[124] There, according to Harper, the divide between the charismatics and the Evangelicals was given the last rites. Harper's intention to promote charismatic experience within existing denominations had succeeded to a major degree.[125] Harper conceded that charismatic renewal 'has no great theologians. Its teaching is varied and unsystematic',[126] but theological fluidity was quite acceptable, as was lack of structure in ecclesiastical organisations.[127] Change became accepted as rapid and normal. In contrast to classic Pentecostalism, shared experience in the Spirit and organisational independence was favoured over structure, with a diffuse, contextualised and open stance being pervasively adopted.[128]

Developments, 1977–2000

By the 1980s disagreements between charismatics and conservative Evangelicals within Anglicanism had become less polarised. Each side had learned from Stott to be loyal Anglicans, and from Harper to avoid denominational divisiveness. Most of those inclined to seek alternative

[119] *Gospel and Spirit*, 4; J. Stott, 'Evangelical/charismatic dialogue': notes for suggested revision to agreed statement, 23 Nov. 1976, Stott papers, on Pentecostalism, 1962–95, 5/22/5. [120] *Gospel and Spirit*, 5.
[121] Dudley-Smith, *Later years*, ii. 155.
[122] Taped interview with Harper, 27 July 1994, ibid. [123] Ibid. ii. 156.
[124] J. Gunstone, *Pentecostal Anglicans*, London 1982, 84.
[125] M. Harper, 'Waving goodbye to charismatic divide', *Church of England Newspaper*, 20 May 1977, 11. [126] Idem, *None can guess*, 8. [127] Ibid. 143.
[128] Ziefle, 'Missionary', 36.

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expressions of worship and experience outside Anglicanism had left by 1980, making the movement appear less divisive or threatening.

Other factors furthered this trend. Just as the emerging charismatic movement in the 1960s was influenced by wider social culture, so too was its growing acceptance in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Changing social attitudes intensified debates over the ordination of women, which absorbed increasing amounts of energy among Evangelicals in the 1980s and 1990s.[129] So too did the growing concern to promote social justice in the light of the social and economic politics of Margaret Thatcher's government and the publication of *Faith in the city* in 1985.[130]

The charismatic movement's stress on self-expression and fluidity in the freedom of the Spirit attuned well with growing postmodern worldviews.[131] This weakened the link between Evangelicalism and the Enlightenment, in which emphasis had been placed on the mind in assessing religious phenomenon.[132] That shift was less comfortable for conservative Evangelicals, who sought a balance between Word and Spirit, and feared a return of liberal Evangelicalism.[133]

From small beginnings – only just over one hundred ministers claimed to have received baptism in the Spirit in 1965[134] – the two decades after 1980 saw the steady 'domestication' of the charismatic movement within Anglicanism.[135] The report for the General Synod, *The charismatic movement in the Church of England* (1981), was commended for study,[136] helping its accommodation as a 'renewal' movement within the global Anglican Communion.[137] The spread of the charismatic movement among

[129] For debates from the period see C. Craston, *Biblical headship and the ordination of women*, Nottingham 1986; D. Spanner, 'Men, women and God', in Melvin Tinker, *The Anglican Evangelical crisis*, Fearn 1995, 72–93; and J. Martin, *Gospel people: Evangelicals and the future of Anglicanism*, London 1997, 109–16.

[130] *Faith in the city: a call for action by Church and nation*, London 1985. All three Evangelical bishops (David Sheppard [a significant contributor to *Faith in the city*], Maurice Wood and Roy Williamson), interviewed in 1986, referred positively to the duty of the Church to make social and political comment: F. Longford, *The bishops: a study of leaders in the Church today*, London 1986, 55–71. Stott himself published *Issues facing Christians today* (Basingstoke 1984), setting out a conservative Evangelical response to social and moral questions.

[131] Stanley, *Global diffusion*, 209.

[132] I. J. Shaw, '"Enthusiasm", "Passion", and religious conversion in the Scottish Enlightenment', *Journal of Religious History* (2021) at <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9809.12740>.

[133] Oliver Barclay letter, *Church of England Newspaper*, 2 Jan. 2009; W. Jones, *Evangelical theology: past and present*, Cambridge 2017, 21–4.

[134] Harper, *Beginning*, 94.

[135] I. Bunting, *Evangelical Anglican way: charismatic and radical, 1967–1988* at <https://www.academia.edu/40664696/> accessed 29 April 2024, 4.

[136] C. Buchanan, *The charismatic movement in the Church of England*, London 1981.

[137] P. Herriot, *Warfare and waves: Calvinists and charismatics in the Church of England*, Eugene, Or 2016, 20–1.

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Anglicans in the Global South was furthered by 'Sharing of Ministries Abroad' launched by Harper in 1979.[138] This pattern was replicated across Evangelicalism as a whole: by the 1990s most of the newer charismatic church groups had been accepted into the Evangelical Alliance.[139] In 1995 it was claimed that 'the whole centre ground of evangelicalism has become gradually "charismaticized"', with previous dividing lines between mainstream charismatics, Pentecostals and independent charismatic groups becoming blurred.[140]

Various surveys confirmed the growing charismatic presence within Anglicanism. A small survey of young Evangelical Anglican clergy in 1980 reported a 'fanning out' especially of secondary interests: 'typically charismatic practices are not enormously widespread, [but] the pressure is for them to increase'. Around 10 per cent observed raising hands in worship in their congregations. None the less, 100 per cent affirmed the conservative Evangelical commitment to the 'Supreme authority of the Bible on matters of doctrine'.[141]

By 1998, around one third of all Anglicans were Evangelicals, and some 35 per cent of Evangelical Anglicans were charismatics.[142] Even the 2001 census conducted by the *Church Times*, a newspaper with a readership more inclined to the liberal and Anglo-Catholic traditions,[143] reported that 20 per cent of clergy and lay respondents had attended the Alpha course in the previous five years.[144] Evangelical Anglicans tended to be younger, and younger Evangelicals tended to be more conservative theologically than older ones, with the number of young ordinands who were charismatic increasing.[145] None the less, church surveys still suggested

[138] Stanley, *Global diffusion*, 200.

[139] A. Walker, 'Thoroughly modern: sociological reflections on the charismatic movement from the end of the twentieth century', in S. Hunt, M. Hamilton and T. Walker (eds), *Charismatic Christianity: sociological perspectives*, Basingstoke–London 1997, 30.

[140] D. Tomlinson, *The post-Evangelical*, London 1995, 14–17. Tomlinson was a house church leader who became an Anglican priest.

[141] B. Hopkinson, 'The foci of identity amongst younger Evangelical Anglican clergy 1980', unpubl. paper based on a survey of the Eclectics, Dec. 1980, questions 1, 4, 5 (no page numbers).

[142] P. Brierley, *The tide is running out: what the English church attendance survey reveals*, London 2000, 146; <https://www.christian-research.org/reports/archives-and-statistics>; Herriot, *Warfare*, 4.

[143] A. Village and L. J. Francis, *The mind of the Anglican clergy*, Lampeter 2009, 29.

[144] *Church Times*, 25 Jan. 2002, 36. Alpha grew out of the leading charismatic Anglican Church, Holy Trinity, Brompton. See S. Hunt, 'The *Alpha* program: charismatic evangelism for the contemporary age', *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* xxvii/1 (2005), 65–82.

[145] Village and Francis, *Anglican clergy*, 49–50; A. Village, *The Church of England in the first decade of the 21st Century*, Cham 2018, 61, 254; T. Harrison, 'Raising the Church of

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that at the end of the twentieth century around 65 per cent of Evangelical Anglicans were non-charismatic.

In his closing address at NEAC 1977, Stott had referred to the participants in the congress as 'conservative Evangelicals'.[146] By 2000, although the number of Evangelicals was growing, the term 'Evangelical' had become more diffuse, subject to a qualifiers such as 'classical', 'charismatic' and later 'radical' and 'open'. After the third NEAC in 1988, Michael Green (1930–2019) wrote to Stott fearing that the Evangelical movement 'is now so disparate and so multiform that it is hard to see it holding together … There is no individual who looks capable of replacing you'.[147]

Generally, the conservative Evangelical stress on doctrine being rooted in Scripture and Anglicanism's Reformation heritage, and the need to differentiate this from other viewpoints,[148] was becoming more difficult to accommodate within Anglicanism in a late twentieth-century context of diversity and adaptability. The charismatic emphasis on revitalising individual Christian lives and ultimately the Church as a whole, through the promotion of experience, appeared to sit more readily in a postmodern world.[149]

Assessment

Stott progressively worked on a definition of Evangelicalism that kept the charismatic movement within it. In 1967 he had called for a 'combination of inflexibility and flexibility, of the negotiable and the non-negotiable, together with God-given discernment to discriminate between them and between their proper spheres'.[150] In 1977 he described Evangelicals as 'Bible people', holding to the supreme authority of the Bible as 'the written speech of God', and as 'Gospel people', proclaiming the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Evangelicals were to be conservative in theology but also radical in the way that theology was applied.[151] The question for him was whether the issues in the debate with Harper and other charismatics were negotiable or not, and whether they were of the essence of the Gospel. His position by the late 1970s was that they were not of the essence of the Gospel. Instead, like mode of baptism, or

England's Spirit level', *Church Times*, 17 May 2013. Of ordinands interviewed between 2001 and 2007, 42% reported some form of personal charismatic experience.

[146] R. Burrows, *Dare to contend! A call to Anglican Evangelicals*, Newcastle upon Tyne 1990, 45; Herriot, *Warfare*, 20.

[147] Cited in R. Steer, *Inside story: the life of John Stott*, Nottingham 2009, 230.

[148] M. Guest, *Evangelical identity and contemporary culture: a congregational study in innovation*, Milton Keynes 2007, 112.

[149] Herriot, *Warfare*, 6, 20.

[150] J. Stott, 'That word "radical"', *Church of England Newspaper*, 24 Feb. 1967, 7.

[151] Idem, *What is an Evangelical?*, London 1977.

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church governance, they were matters over which Evangelical Christians could agree to differ. Therefore, fraternal relations with proponents of charismatic renewal could be maintained. Discussions were also broadened by Harper and Stott to include Anglo-Catholics,[152] and were reflected in *Towards a renewed Church: a joint statement by Catholic, charismatic and Evangelical Anglicans*, published in 1988.[153]

The Evangelical mainstream was where Stott sought to remain, and which he helped to shape, especially among Anglicans. Although in the early 1980s Harper was still calling for renewal within existing Churches,[154] many different expressions of charismatic church life developed both within and outside denominational settings.[155] What encouraged Stott was that most groups in the charismatic movement continued to identify with Evangelicalism, as evidenced by them joining the Evangelical Alliance.[156] The ecclesiological journey of Harper into the Orthodox Church after 1988 is beyond the scope of this article.

Stott and Michael Harper were men of similar gifts. They were influential speakers, able writers, good organisers – to whom followers were attracted. They were also strong-minded, and strong-willed, reluctant to change their minds unless thoroughly convinced they should do so. Harper, the curate, moved out from the shadow of the senior rector whom he had once idolised. He persistently challenged the interpretation made by the very person that Evangelicals regarded as the touchstone of biblical scholarship.

For Stott the Christian bedrock was Scripture: 'Experience must never be the criterion of truth; truth must always be the criterion of experience.'[157] There could be no two-stage Christianity, nor were there two classes of Christians. To Harper, experience led him to Scripture, which in turn reinforced his experience. Although Harper declared he did not see the matter as of the 'esse' of the faith, there were clearly times when he implied otherwise. It was a clash not just of personalities but of fundamental epistemologies.

The personal dimension to the disagreement made it probably the most painful of Stott's ministry. Yet, by the 1970s, he had switched from resisting promoters of the charismatic renewal and its theology, to striving to keep it within the Evangelical mainstream. He wanted them to self-identify as

[152] Stott to Eric Kemp, bishop of Chichester, 24 May 1977, Stott papers 3/8/7–12; Stott letter, 8 Apr. 1977, Stott papers, 3/8/7–1; Eric Kemp note to all members of faith house group, with a copy of *Towards a renewed Church*, 29 Mar. 1988, Stott papers 3/8/7, fo. 5.

[153] E. W. Kemp, M. Harper and J. Stott (eds), *Towards a renewed Church: a joint statement by Catholic, charismatic and Evangelical Anglicans*, Nottingham 1988. See also comments from Eric Kemp on *Towards a renewed Church,* Stott papers 3/ 8/7– 6.

[154] M. Harper, *That we may be one*, London 1983.

[155] Randall, 'Charismatic renewal Cambridge', 143.

[156] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism*, 247.

[157] Stott, *Baptism and fullness*, 15.

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'charismatic Evangelicals', not just 'charismatics'. This, he believed, would keep them from the wilder extremes, or drifting into ecumenicalism. Although Stott's main influence was on conservative Evangelicals, through his disagreement with Harper he also indirectly shaped the Fountain Trust's brand of charismatic renewal. This made it possible for many charismatics and conservative Evangelicals to find common ground, and affirm kinship within the Evangelical family. Harper, for his part, wanted charismatics to have an equal place at the table with the conservatives, and for their perspectives to be considered equally valid.

They helped to shape movements, rather than create structures, and movements are prone to change. Yet, despite Stott and Harper's declining personal influence, both charismatics and conservative Evangelicals continued to be successful in maintaining their own positions and identities within Anglicanism in the last decades of the twentieth century.[158] After 1980, in an increasingly postmodern world, when overall church attendance was falling, the number of conservative Evangelicals and charismatics was growing, affirming the continuing cultural translatability of Evangelicalism. It made them the most 'successful elements in the Church of England, apart from Cathedrals'.[159]

Conservative Evangelicals and Charismatics adapted to each other, and to changing culture, and survived. Furthermore, the charismatic movement within Anglicanism remained largely within its Evangelical wing. At the end of the second millennium there remained a continued strong correlation between identification as charismatic, and adherence to conservative Evangelical theological views on the Bible and core doctrine. It was a movement which was both adapted to postmodern culture, and also counter-cultural. Indeed, a number of charismatics were more theologically conservative than other mainstream Evangelicals.[160] Despite the evident pain experienced by many, the Stott-Harper controversy had contributed to this. It was part of Stott's work as 'the most influential architect of the "new evangelicalism"' that emerged in global Christianity later in the twentieth century.[161]

[158] Herriot, *Warfare*, 13–14.
[159] Ibid. 6.
[160] Village and Francis, *Anglican clergy*, 49–50, 159.
[161] Stanley, *Global diffusion*, 42.

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