

6 More Misconceptions About Pentecostal Christians

Last week, Lee Grady shared his “10 Top Misconceptions About Pentecostal Christians.” I found the column enlightening and I agree wholeheartedly that Oxygen network’s *Preachers of L.A.* and National Geographic Channel’s *Snake Salvation* help forward wrong beliefs about Pentecostals and charismatics.

To use Grady’s words, “You might be tempted to believe all Pentecostals are either money-grubbing charlatans or misguided rural bumpkins. But the truth is never in the media stereotypes.” Be sure to check out Grady’s column for his top-ranking misconceptions. I’m adding a few more myths about Pentecostals and charismatics that I’ve experienced.

1. Pentecostalism isn’t all about the goose bumps. Many people believe that Pentecostals are just after so-called “**Holy Ghost** goose bumps” and seeking **supernatural** experiences like a thrill ride at a theme park. Although you will find expressions of the **supernatural** in healthy Pentecostal churches that believe in the gifts of the Spirit, solid Spirit-filled Christians are also students of the Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Pentecostal universities like Evangel, Lee and Jack Hayford’s King’s University are equipping the next generation of Spirit-empowered Christians with the Word of God. It’s not all about being slain in the Spirit. No, not by a long shot.

2. Pentecostals think they are better than other Christians. Nothing could be further from the truth. Mature Pentecostals and charismatics don’t think more highly of ourselves than we ought (Rom. 12:3). Being filled with the Spirit does and **praying in tongues** does not give us special status in the kingdom of God and any Pentecostal who believes that is not demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit. Oh, and I’ve met proud Christians from many denominations.

3. Pentecostals believe they have a corner on hearing from God. Although I've never met a **prophet** who claims to be a Presbyterian or Episcopalian, any believer has the ability to hear from God for themselves. And I've never met a Pentecostal who claimed that other Christians can't hear the voice of God. Rather, I hear most **Pentecostal** preachers quoting Jesus' words on this topic: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

4. Pentecostals are a bunch of fruits, flakes and nuts. Mature Pentecostals are rooted and grounded in the Word and don't fly off into super-spiritual Hookey-Bookey Land where preachers claim the **Holy Spirit** told them to punch someone in the stomach or lay around pretending to "smoke the Holy Ghost" while they meow like cats. There are extremes in every movement and the Pentecostals are not immune but mainstream Pentecostals don't mock the **Holy Spirit**.

5. Pentecostals manipulate people for money. That's not true, either. Well, some Pentecostals merchandise the saints for financial gain but you can't make a blanket statement about the entire Spirit-filled camp. I've seen plenty of pastors from various denominations hyper-focus on bringing home the bacon. It just so happens that some extreme **prosperity preachers** are so flamboyant about miracle seed offerings that it's left a bad taste in the mouth of many Christians—including God-fearing Pentecostals.

6. Pentecostals are so heavenly-minded that we're no earthly good. Although Paul clearly instructs us to set our minds on things above and not on earthly things (see Col. 3:2) and although evangelicals have historically been on the front lines of the culture wars, I am witnessing a generation of Spirit-empowered believers rise up with social justice in mind.

Maybe you can think of some other myths, misconceptions and lies about Pentecostals and charismatics that I've missed. But

I'll leave you with this thought, which comes right from Grady's mouth: We're not going away.

"Pentecostals only represented 6 percent of all Christians in the year 1980. Today that number has jumped to 26 percent. And the Pulitzer Center reports that 35,000 people join **Pentecostal** churches every day," Grady writes. "Some researchers predict there will be 1 billion Pentecostals in the world by 2025. No matter how you stereotype us, it cannot be said that Pentecostals are on the fringes of society. You might as well get to know us." Amen.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including *The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel* and *The Making of a Prophet*. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website at .