



Evangelical, Sacramental, and Pentecostal: Why the Church Should Be All Three

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Gordon T. Smith (PhD, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University) is the president of Ambrose University and Seminary in Calgary, Alberta, where he also serves as professor of systematic and spiritual theology. He is an ordained minister with the Christian and Missionary Alliance and a teaching fellow at Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia. He is the author of many books, including *Consider Your Calling, Courage and Calling, Called to Be Saints, Spiritual Direction*, and *The Voice of Jesus*.

Uniting Word, Sacrament, and the Spirit for an Ecumenical Church

What would it look like if the church was evangelical, sacramental, *and* pentecostal? Christian communities tend to identify with one of these labels over the other two, with evangelical churches emphasizing the importance of Scripture and preaching, sacramental churches the importance of the Eucharistic table, and pentecostal churches the immediate presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

In his latest book, Gordon T. Smith draws on the New Testament, the witness of Christian history, and years of experience in Christian ministry and leadership to develop a vision for how the church not only can be all three, but needs to be all three in order to appropriate as fully as possible the grace of the ascended Christ.

Smith unites Word, sacrament, and the Spirit in *Evangelical, Sacramental, and Pentecostal*, constructing an ecumenical vision for the church by accomplishing the following:

- Explaining how the heart of the Christian life is one of dynamic union with the risen and ascended Christ.
- Laying out what evangelical, sacramental, and pentecostal mean when speaking of the church.
- Considering how these three angles on the church lead to an “ecology of grace,” where Word, sacrament, and the immediate presence of the Spirit are each known and experienced in the fullness of grace.
- Understanding how both the Gospel of John and the Luke–Acts narrative assume that our union with Christ is evangelical, sacramental, and pentecostal.
- Considering how Lesslie Newbigin, John Calvin, and John Wesley speak to these questions.

As the church navigates the unique global challenges of pluralism, secularism, and fundamentalism, the need for an integrated vision of the community as evangelical, sacramental, and pentecostal becomes ever more pressing. If Jesus and the apostles saw no tension between these characteristics, why should we?

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