

# Pentecostal Power

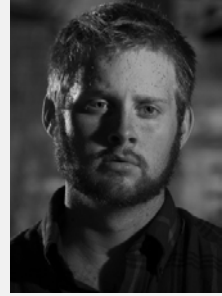
## A Study on the Origin and Conflicts of Glossolalia within Nineteenth Century Mormonism

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### Abstract

As the tenants and structure of Moromonism took shape in the 1800s church members and leadership worked toward an understanding of the role glossolalia — the practice of *speaking in tongues*, would have within the young church.

Jeremy Lofthouse explores how the practice was accepted, tolerated and eventually disabused by church leaders through an investigation of both the role it played for leadership and for congregation members.



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On March 27, 1836, over one thousand settlers on the Ohio frontier gathered for a long awaited church meeting. These people had recently finished the building of the congregation's first church edifice. Destitute and persecuted by society, this was a day of great rejoicing. An attendant recorded that following several speakers and the official dedication of the building, "[a]ll the congregation simultaneously arose being moved upon by an invisible power, many began to speak in tongues and prophecy. Others saw glorious visions and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels."<sup>1</sup>

While this dramatic expression of religious fervor seems alien today, frontier America was a hotbed of charismatic religion. The practice exists today but has been institutionalized in very few Christian denominations, such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of God in Christ and the Apostolic Church. These several denominations are grouped together under a single name: Pentecostalism. Within both the general public and academic circles, glossolalia is a practice viewed as uniquely Pentecostal, while the latter group acknowledges the practice's existence in other denominations in the Second Great Awakening.<sup>2</sup> What makes the Pentecost-like event in 1836 intriguing is the fact that it occurred within another religious community, one whose modern religious practices are far from charismatic or Pentecostal. This Day of Pentecost on March 27th happened among the Mormons.

Academic work on the subject of glossolalia within Mormonism in the nineteenth century is scarce and brief.<sup>3</sup> In his work, *Mormonism in Transition*, Thomas Alexander offers a concise explanation on the transformation of glossolalia in the twentieth century, yet offers very little

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume B-1*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Office, 2008, 306.

<sup>2</sup> Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit: A study of pentecostal glossolalia and related phenomena*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1981); Nils Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal movement: its origin, development, and distinctive character*. Oxford Univ Pr, 1964; Joe Creech, "Visions of glory: the place of the Azusa Street revival in Pentecostal history." *Church History* 65, no. 03 (1996): 405-424.

<sup>3</sup> Claudia Bushman, "Mystics and Healers," chap. 1, 2 in *Mormon Sisters: women in early Utah*, ed. Claudia Bushman (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1997); Mark Lyman Staker, *Hearken, O Ye People: The Historical Setting of Joseph Smith*, (Sandy, UT: Greg Kofford Books Inc, 2010), chap. Four: A New Understanding of the Gift of Tongues in Kirtland and Missouri; Thomas Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 293-294. John Turner, *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet*, (Cumberland, RI: Harvard University Press, 2012), 26, 30-33, 40, 45-46, 52, 64, 100, 131, 157, 163, 189, 195, 214, 264.

insight into the practice's origins.<sup>4</sup> In this paper, I will analyze the origins of glossolalia in frontier religions of the Second Great Awakening, specifically within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After establishing this foundation, I will analyze the internal power struggle between Mormon believers and their leader, Joseph Smith, Jr. The former sought to use glossolalia to gain power in the religion and the founding prophet of Mormonism sought to regulate the practice to maintain order within his newly established religion.

### A Brief History of Christian Glossolalia

Christians widely accept glossolalia, or the practice of speaking in tongues, as originating on the Day of Pentecost as related in Acts 2. Luke recounts:

*And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where [the apostles] were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.<sup>5</sup>*

Glossolalia became for the first-century church an instrument of missionary work, in that it provided the apostles with supernatural abilities to speak to others of foreign tongue and it became a sign of a true believer. Prior to the nineteenth century, extra biblical evidence of the practice is scarce, yet does exist.<sup>6</sup> Statements by early church fathers demonstrate the place of glossolalia in the first two hundred years following the Day of Pentecost.

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 293-294.

<sup>5</sup> The Holy Bible, King James Version, Acts 2:2-4.

<sup>6</sup> Tertullian, "Against Marcion," *Ante-Church Fathers, Vol. 3*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), Book 5, Chapter 8, p. 825-826; Irenaeus, Saint Bishop of Lyon, "Ancient Christian Writers," *Against the Heresies*, Vol. 55, ed. Dominic J. Unger, John J. Dillon, MC Steenberg and Michael Slusser (New York, NY: Newman Press, 2012); Ira Jay Martin, "Glossolalia in the Apostolic Church," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 63, no. 2 (1944): 123-130.

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In the late second century, Montanus, who was formerly a “priest of Cybele, a goddess whose worship also involved mania,”<sup>7</sup> began attracting followers. He mingled Christianity with his earlier manic expressions of faith. These practices included prophecies in tongues, which often contradicted accepted Christian beliefs. Tertullian, now a highly respected church father, became fascinated with the sect and even converted for a short period of time. He explained the worship services of Montanists as being accompanied by revelations received “through ecstatic vision in the Spirit.”<sup>8</sup>

Irenaeus, a contemporary of Tertullian, condemned certain charismatic sects in his work “Against Heresies.” He details the deception of a man named Marcus, who trained his followers to speak in tongues on cue, and used his skills of flattery in wooing wealthy women.<sup>9</sup>

In the third century, Origen listed other examples of speaking in tongues in his day scorning them as “frenzied and totally opaque utterances the meaning of which no person with a brain is able to discover for they are without form of meaning. But to a fool or a sorcerer they offer an opportunity to put upon the utterance, any meaning that suits his fancy.”<sup>10</sup> His commentary reflects church leaders’ growing suspicions of charismatic religious practices outside the realm of emergent orthodoxy.

Over the next one hundred years, charismatic religion drifted out of mainstream Christianity and was viewed with contempt. In the early fourth century, Eusebius explained that “the Montanist[s] were driven out of the church and excommunicated.”<sup>11</sup> Others were treated with similar malice. By the late fourth century, glossolalia “was unknown both to [church fathers] John Chrysostom and Augustine except in apostolic

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<sup>7</sup>The Anchor Bible, quoted in DiMarkco Stephen Chandler, “Glossolalia: A Historical/Psychological Analysis of the Phenomenon, Speaking in Tongues” (December 22, 2011). Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1975700> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1975700>, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Watson E. Mills, *Speaking in Tongues: A Guide to Research of Glossolalia*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 78. Quoted in Chandler, “Glossolalia...”, 8.

<sup>9</sup> St Irenaeus *Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)*, III xiii. Quoted in Chandler, “Glossolalia...” 8.

<sup>10</sup> Mills, *Speaking in Tongues...*,103. Quoted in DeMarko Stephen Chandler, “Glossolalia...” 9.

<sup>11</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* V xvi 7-10, following the Kirsopp Lake translation Loeb Library edition, quoted in Chandler, “Glossolalia...”, 9.

references.”<sup>12</sup> Augustine suggested the practice of glossolalia was temporary, in that it was necessary only when “the Church itself was in one nation,” therefore requiring the apostles to speak the tongues of other nations. In Augustine’s day, “the Church itself [spoke] in the tongues of all nations,” making the ability to speak other tongues for the means of proselyting unnecessary.<sup>13</sup> In regards to receiving the gift of tongues as a sign of true discipleship, Augustine explained that if one “loves his brother, the Spirit of God dwelleth in him.”<sup>14</sup> Therefore, a more personal manifestation of the Spirit, through love, was the means of determining true discipleship, not charismatic practices. Glossolalia had been clearly labeled as obsolete or heretical by the fourth century, as fringe practice yielded to institutional pressures from the church.<sup>15</sup>

From the fourth to the seventeenth centuries, there is very little evidence of glossolalia. The few accounts which exist demonstrate that the practice was viewed as heretical. When the practice did manifest itself, it was “mostly related to the ability to speak a foreign language which had not been learned.”<sup>16</sup> An account from 1589 demonstrates institutional church attitude toward glossolalia. A Jesuit theologian, Pedro de Rivadeneyra, scorned “the crowd of deceived, evil women whom we have recently seen in many of Spain’s most illustrious cities; those who with their trances, revelations, and stigmata have excited and deceived their priests and confessors.”<sup>17</sup> Charismatic outbreaks included “inspired raptures and revelations, prophecy, glossolalia, often accompanied by a range of bodily effects such as seizures, convulsions, and fits of paralysis.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Mills, *Speaking in Tongues...*, 186, quoted in Chandler, “Glossolalia...”, 10.

<sup>13</sup> Augustine, *Lectures or tractates on the Gosepl according to St. John (The works of Aurelius Augustine, bishop of Hippo, a new translation, (T & T Clark, 1873)*,195, quoted in Chandler, “Glossolalia...”, 11.

<sup>14</sup> Augustine, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Philip Schall, ed., *The Nicene and Post- Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 7 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 1956, 497.

<sup>15</sup> Augustine of Hippo, “*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: First Series, " Augustine: Gospel of John, First Epistle of John, Soliliques, Vol. 7, ed. Phillip Schaff (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing, 1994). Eusebius of Caesarea, Ecclesiastical History of the Church, (New York, NY: Merchant Books, 2011), Volume 14, p. 3.*

<sup>16</sup> Mills, *Speaking in Tongues...*, 186.

<sup>17</sup>Andrew Keitt, "Religious Enthusiasm, the Spanish Inquisition, and the Disenchantment of the World." *Journal of the History of Ideas.* no. 2 (2004): 234.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

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As institutional pressures from the Catholic Church waned, glossolalia began to make a stronger reemergence in the seventeenth century among the Huguenots, Ranters and Quakers, all of whom recorded instances of glossolalia as an appendage to their religion.<sup>19</sup> By the early nineteenth century, a religious sect in England called the Irvingites, named after their founder Edward Irving, had placed charismatic religious practices, such as tongues, prophecies, healings and even raising the dead, at the center of their faith.<sup>20</sup> The ability to adopt unorthodox forms of religious practices outside the jurisdiction of the institutional church allowed charismatic practices to spread rapidly in the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup>

### Glossolalia in Frontier America

In the beginning decades of the nineteenth century, the face of American society was drastically changing. Revolutions in transportation, the economy and government transformed America, and as a result, many were experiencing economic and social turmoil as their life conditions were affected drastically. Those who experienced this turmoil found relief in new forms of dramatic religious expression. Religion became a necessary means of comfort and expression to these groups on the outer realm of society. The democratization of American society contributed greatly to the movement as well, as preachers arose from uneducated masses. The result was the Second Great Awakening, in which intense

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<sup>19</sup> Watson E. Mills, *Speaking in Tongues...*, 195-196.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Scannell, ed. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910. s.v. "Irvingites." [www.newadvent.org/cathen/08174a.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08174a.htm) (accessed April 30, 2013). See also: Robert Baxter, *Irvingism, in Its Rise, Progress and Present State*. London: 1836; Margaræt Oliphant, *The Life of Edward Irving, Minister of the National Scotch Church, London: Illustrated by His Journals and Correspondence*, (London: Hurst and Bracket, 1862).

<sup>21</sup> For additional work on the history of glossolalia see: Nathan Busenitz. "The Gift of Tongues: Comparing the Church Fathers with Contemporary Pentecostalism." *The Master's Seminary Journal*. no. 1 (2006): 61-78; E. Glenn Hinson, "A brief history of glossolalia." *Glossolalia: Tongue Speaking in Biblical, Historical and Psychological Perspective* (1967); E. Glenn Hinson, "The significance of Glossolalia in the history of Christianity." *Speaking in tongues: Let's talk about it*. Waco, TX: Word Books (1973); Richard Hogue, *Tongues: A Theological History of Christian Glossolalia*. Oklahoma City, OK: Tate Publishing, 2010; Harry William Lowe, *Speaking in Tongues: A Brief History of the Phenomenon Known as Glossolalia, Or Speaking in Tongues*. Pacific Press, 1965; Anthony D. Palma *Glossolalia in the Light of the New Testament and Subsequent History*. New York: Biblical Seminary in New York, 1960.

religious commitment and expression increased and the lower classes developed a sense of spiritual identity which granted them power.<sup>22</sup>

In the midst of the Second Great Awakening, these outlying groups, both physically on the frontiers and socially outcasts, developed a form of religion that was a reaction to mainstream Christianity. Lively camp meetings featured circuit riding preachers, whose dramatic speeches on salvation and damnation moved many to charismatic expressions of faith, such as confessions of faith, glossolalia and physical acrobatics when filled with the Spirit.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> John H. Wigger, "Taking Heaven by Storm: Enthusiasm and Early American Methodism, 1770-1820," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 14, no. 2 (1994), 169. See also, Richard Carwardine, "'Antinomians' and 'Arminians': Methodists and the Market Revolution," chap. 11 in *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political and Religious Expressions, 1800-1880*, ed. Melvyn Stokes and Stephen Conway (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1996); Lee Copeland, "Speaking in tongues in the Restoration churches," *Dialogue* 24: 13-33. (1991); Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), chap. 4; Gordon Wood, "Evangelical America and Early Mormonism," chap. 1 in *The Mormon history association's Tanner lectures: the first twenty years*, ed. Dean L. May and Reil L. Neilson; with Richard Lyman Bushman, Jan Shippis, and Thomas G. Alexander (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

<sup>23</sup> Charles A. Johnson, "The Frontier Camp Meeting: Contemporary and Historical Appraisals, 1805-1840," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 37, no. 1 (1950): 91-110; Roger Robins, "Vernacular American Landscape: Methodists, Camp Meetings, and Social Respectability," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*, 4, no. 2 (1994): 168-173; Clifton H. Johnson, ed., *God Struck Me Dead: Religious Conversion Experiences and Autobiographies of Ex-slaves* (Philadelphia 1969), 45; Isaac Holmes, An Account of the United States of America (1823; rep., New York 1974), 388; James P. Horton, *A Narrative of the Early Life, Remarkable Conversion, and Spiritual Labors of James P. Horton, Who Has Been a Member of the Methodist Episcopal Church Upward of Forty Years* (n.p. 1839), 4, 8, 14, 22, 30-34, 39, 44, 58, 60-62, 73, 85, 91, 134-135; Sampson Maynard, *The Experience of Sampson Maynard, Local Preacher of the Methodist E. Church (Written by Himself. To Which is Prefixed an Allegorical Address to the Christian World, or, a Thimble Full of Truth to Blow Up the World of Error* (New York 1828), 176-179, 204-205, 219; Billy Hibbard, *Memoirs of the Life and Travels of B. Hibbard, Minister of the Gospel, Containing an Account of His Experience of Religion; and of His Call to and Labours in the Ministry, for Nearly Thirty Years* (New York 1825), 6-7, 39-43, 82-83, 124-125, 153-157, 221-222, 260, 263; Maynard, Sampson. *The Experience of Sampson Maynard, Local Preacher of the Methodist E. Church (Written by Himself. To Which is Prefixed an Allegorical Address to the Christian World, or, a Thimble Full of Truth to Blow Up the World of Error* (New York 1828); Billy Hibbard, *Memoirs of the Life and Travels of B. Hibbard, Minister of the Gospel, Containing an Account of His Experience of Religion; and of His Call to and Labours in the Ministry, for Nearly Thirty Years* (New York 1825); Fanny Newell, *Memoirs of Fanny Newell* (Springfield, Mass 1833) 22-24, 30, 42-43, 55-57, 63-68, 103-105, 108-110. Abner Chase, *Recollections of the Past* (New York 1848) 43-48; Charles Giles, *Pioneer: A Narrative of the Nativity, Experience, Travels and Ministerial Labours of Rev. Charles Giles* (New York 1844), 94-97; Joseph Travis,

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Methodists provide the first case study of a specific denomination adopting charismatic religious practices. In the early nineteenth century, Methodism grew at an alarming rate.<sup>24</sup> This growth is due in part to the work of circuit riders in the frontier and its allowance of unorthodox forms of worship, as demonstrated in the camp meetings. These charismatic practices allowed for these outliers to express themselves outside the confines of mainstream society, which had rejected them due to their economic status. Therefore, Methodism had a tendency to attract the poor, women and blacks.<sup>25</sup>

By the 1820s, however, many Methodists had risen out of their poor economic circumstances and become prominent businessmen. They began to express themselves through other means, such as social status and wealth and their meetings saw a subsequent decline in dramatic religious activity. In other words, as the Methodist church as an institution and the members therein gained legitimacy and acceptance of society at large, they dropped the dramatic spiritual practices for they gained other means of expressing themselves, that is, wealth and prosperity. The charismatic practices remained in many of the women's lives and in the worship services of African-Americans, and, in the case of the latter, remains there in part today.<sup>26</sup>

### Glossolalia among the Mormons

Mormonism's adoption of charismatic religious practices follows a similar trajectory to Methodism. While Mormons were distributed across a wide social, economic and age spectrum, a great many were young, poor frontiersmen seeking to survive and even rise out of poverty resulting from the Market Revolution. Joseph Smith is a prime example of these indigent circumstances.

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*Autobiography of the Rev. Joseph Travis, A.M., a Member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, ed. Thomas O. Summers (Nashville 1856), 30; George Coles, *The Supernumerary; or, Lights and Shadow of Itinerancy*. Compiled from *Papers of Rev. Eli'ab Woolsey* (New York 1845), 123-124; Edward Stevenson, *Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Valentine Cook, A.M. With an Appendix Containing His Discourse on Baptism* (Nashville 1858), 56-58. Elizabeth Connor, *Methodist Trail Blazer, Phillip Gatch, 1751-1834. His Life in Maryland, Virginia and Ohio* (Cincinnati 1970), 158-159; Robert W. Todd, *Methodism on the Peninsula...* (Philadelphia 1886), 85-95.

<sup>24</sup> *Historical Statistics of the United States* (Washington, D.C. 1975), A172-205; and *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the Years 1773 to 1828*, vol. 1 (New York 1840); cited in: Wigger, "Taking Heaven by Storm", 169.

<sup>25</sup> Wigger, "Taking Heaven by Storm...", 168

<sup>26</sup> Wigger, "Taking Heaven by Storm...", 168.



Mormonism provided a means of religious expression that was uniquely fitted to the era. It was a new religion which served the needs of marginalized people, in that it created a democratic environment where all were able to become something of value regardless of economic or social status. This restoration, or promotion of societal value occurred through many channels such as Smith's introduction of the Priesthood ordination for all males, which allowed men to claim a spiritual title in a world in which they were otherwise without prestige. Regular men, without training, were ordained as apostles and other church leaders, thereby overcoming the diminished societal roles assigned as a product of market forces. Smith created a religion in which the regular man could flourish. The practice of glossolalia is one expression of religious freedom outside the realm of orthodoxy that allowed these marginalized people to determine their own practices and beliefs, without feeling oppressed by mainstream society. Smith had a pattern regarding new and unfamiliar spiritual practices. He was quick to accept a new practice, but as it progressed in Mormonism, he regulated it in order to maintain the balance between democracy and rigid hierarchy.

Smith's first personal encounter with glossolalia occurred during a visit from Brigham Young, shortly after the latter's baptism into the Mormon faith.<sup>27</sup> He recorded,

*About the 8th of November [1832] I received a visit from Elders Joseph Young, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball from Mendon, Munroe County, New York. They spent four or five days at Kirtland, during which we had many interesting moments. At one of our interviews, Brother Brigham Young, and John P. Greene spoke in Tongues, which was the first time I had heard this Gift among the brethren, others also spoke, and I received the Gift myself.<sup>28</sup>*

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<sup>27</sup> Mark Lyman Staker, *Hearken, O Ye People: The Historical Setting of Joseph Smith's Ohio Revelations*, (Sandy, UT: Greg Kofford Books Inc, 2010), 20-22. Staker distinguishes the glossolalia of Brigham Young on November 8, 1834, which Smith referred to as the "pure Adamic language" from the "barking" or "holy laugh" of Shaker congregations in Kirtland, which Smith witnessed prior to 1832. The Shaker practice of physically jerking when moved upon by the Spirit produced a unique, "barking" noise, which was an exhalation of physical activity, rather than believed to be an actual language. Mormon converts from the Shakers continued with this practice before it was denounced by Smith. He also set apart certain missionaries with the gift of tongues, but had not actually heard the gift manifested until November 8, 1834.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume A-1*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Office, 2008, 561.

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Many experiences with glossolalia were to follow. His initial attitude toward glossolalia, which is clearly positive in this account as he experienced the gift himself, seems to change and even appear contradictory in his later statements. For example, in 1836 he reported that the Saints had spoken in tongues at a meeting and it “was a time of rejoicing. [L]ong to be remembered! Praise the Lord.”<sup>29</sup> In 1842, he warned the Relief Society “not indulge too much in the gift of tongues, or the devil will take advantage of the innocent.”<sup>30</sup>

The reason for what appears to be a dramatic shift from quick acceptance of glossolalia to stern warning is the result of numerous factors. Remember Smith’s pattern of initiating unfamiliar practices. His religion was in its infancy and he was always developing new ideas and practices which would best fit the needs of the community, yet maintain his authority. The practice of glossolalia was no different from his development of church government or financial systems such as consecration. Smith sought to regulate the practice so it would both democratize the religion, allowing for all members to express themselves, yet complement the strict hierarchy he was constantly reshaping. Smith saw glossolalia both as a threat and a beneficial practice to Mormonism, if properly regulated. A turning point occurred in 1834 when the dangerous nature of glossolalia manifested itself in rebellion.

On August 6, 1834, the High Council of the Church met in Clay County, Missouri to discuss rebellious behaviors reported in the Hulet Branch of Jackson County, Missouri. Members of the branch had been expressing spiritual gifts, such as glossolalia and the ability to see into men’s hearts. Charles English reported:

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<sup>29</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856*, volume B-1. Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Office, 2008, 156.

<sup>30</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Office, 2008, 31.

*The Hulet branch believed that they received the word of the Lord by the gift of tongues, and would not proceed to their temporal business without receiving the word of the Lord. Sylvester Hulet would speak and Sally Crandall interpret. [They s]aid they would not receive the teachings of ordained members, even brother Joseph Smith, Jun. unless it agreed with their gifts.<sup>31</sup>*

This was glossolalia's first dramatic threat to stability in the church and the High Council reacted fiercely. Many testified against the branch and Smith issued this statement:

*[A]s for the gift of tongues, in the manner that they used it in the Hulet Branch, the Devil deceived them, and they obtained not the word of the Lord, as they supposed, but were deceived; and as for the gift of seeing, as held by the Hulet branch, it is of the devil saith the Lord God.<sup>32</sup>*

Invoking the ancient prophetic phrase, "saith the Lord God," Smith condemned the practice as manifested in the Hulet Branch, without condemning the practice completely. Smith realized the power glossolalia could have within Mormonism and did not seek to destroy the practice, but merely to regulate it.

### **The Place of Glossolalia in Mormonism**

He sought to accomplish this regulation by clarifying the doctrinal roles glossolalia should play in Mormonism. These roles fall into two categories: glossolalia as a manifestation, or proof of the Spirit's presence in a believer and as an instrument in missionary work.

The first is demonstrated experientially through the continuing practice of glossolalia by the Saints and Smith himself. The Saints would speak in tongues during moments of heightened worship, without correction by Smith, such as at the Kirtland Temple dedication or private meetings of the Priesthood such as when "[t]he brethren [met in the Kirtland Temple in March 1836] and continued exhorting, prophecyng, and speaking in tongues, until five o'clock in the morning. The Savior made his appearance to some, while angels ministered unto others, and it was a

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<sup>31</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume A-1*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Office, 2008, 535.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Smith..., *Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume A-1...*, 536.

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pentecost...”<sup>33</sup> Speaking in tongues was very prevalent in meetings of the Relief Society, suggesting a gender dimension to the practice.<sup>34</sup> Smith encouraged speaking in tongues but distinguished its use as a form of praise and instruction, yet never as a means of dictating church government or prophecy. He stated:

*No prophecy spoken in tongues should be made public, for this reason; many who pretend to have the gift of Interpretation are liable to be mistaken, and do not give the true interpretation of what is spoken therefore great care should be had as respects this thing; but if any speak in tongues a word of exhortation, or doctrine, on the principles of the Gospel, &c, &c, let it be interpreted for the edification of the church.<sup>35</sup>*

By making the distinction regarding the purpose of glossolalia, as a means of praise not government or prophecy, Smith sought to maintain the delicate balance between democracy and hierarchy in the Church.

The second role of glossolalia as outlined by Smith was its instrumentality in instructing those of a foreign tongue, which was the original use on the Day of Pentecost. He explained:

*Tongues were given for the purpose of preaching among those whose language is not understood, as on the day of Pentecost &c and it is not necessary for tongues to be taught to the church particularly, for any man that has the Holy Ghost can speak of the things of God in his own tongue, as well as to speak in another, for faith comes not by signs but by hearing the word of God.<sup>36</sup>*

This fact is further demonstrated in the ordination blessings of several seventies, who were blessed with the gift of tongues that they might teach

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<sup>33</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume B-1. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Office, 2008, 180.

<sup>34</sup> Bushman, "Mystics and Healers," chap. 1, 2 in *Mormon Sisters: women in early Utah*.

<sup>35</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume A-1. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Office, 2008, 365; "Pioneer Diary of Eliza R. Snow," 26 April 1847, in *Eliza R. Snow, An Immortal: Selected Writings of Eliza R. Snow* (Salt Lake City: Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr., Foundation, 1957) p. 322, cited in Richard L. Jensen, "Forgotten Relief Societies, 1844-67," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 16, no. 1 (1983): 106.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., Joseph Smith Papers, History, 1838-1856, volume C-1. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Office, 2008, 542.

people of “all nations, kindreds, tongues and people.”<sup>37</sup> Smith certainly did not seek to stamp the practice out completely, but instead endorse it within his carefully prepared parameters.

In conclusion, glossolalia and other dramatic religious practices emerged in the nineteenth century as a result of the extraordinary reshaping of American society in the nineteenth century. Within Mormonism, glossolalia became an instrument of power for marginalized Americans. As an instrument of power, it both enabled these people to rise above the judgment of mainstream America but also threatened the very institution they found power within. Joseph Smith used glossolalia as a means of balancing both democracy and hierarchy within his developing church. This careful process of balance is a powerful theme in Mormonism and my further research will seek to analyze additional means of church leaders’ consolidation of power and orchestrating order within the developing church.

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph Smith and Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Benjamin eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, Minute Book 1*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Office, 2008, 104, 171-172, 174, 184-185, 187-188.

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