



Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture

Grant Wacker

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In this lively history of the rise of pentecostalism in the United States, **Grant Wacker** gives an in-depth account of the religious practices of pentecostal churches as well as an engaging picture of the way these beliefs played out in daily life.

The core tenets of pentecostal belief—personal salvation, Holy Ghost baptism, divine healing, and anticipation of the Lord's imminent return—took root in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Wacker examines the various aspects of pentecostal culture, including rituals, speaking in tongues, the authority of the Bible, the central role of Jesus in everyday life, the gifts of prophecy and healing, ideas about personal appearance, women's roles, race relations, attitudes toward politics and the government. Tracking the daily lives of pentecostals, and paying close attention to the voices of individual men and women, Wacker is able to identify the reason for the movement's spectacular success: a demonstrated ability to balance idealistic and pragmatic impulses, to adapt distinct religious convictions in order to meet the expectations of modern life.

More than twenty million American adults today consider themselves pentecostal. Given the movement's major place in American religious life, the history of its early years—so artfully told here—is of central importance.

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