

PAWHistory

(Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc)

*A Brief Historical Treatise of the
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc.*

*by
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Part III

Years After Incorporation 1919-1931

Much was peaceful in the early days of the PAW. Unlike the Assemblies of God and the Churches Of God In Christ, Inc., the Pentecostal Assemblies Of The World, Inc. was thoroughly integrated, before integration became a national issue. Unfortunately in the process of time, through innocent misunderstanding, power struggles, rebellion, and many of the white brethren succumbing to the social pressures of their day (racism and white supremacy), the PAW suffered a devastating schism on October 16, 1924.

It should be noted that the PAW made great attempts and compromises to prevent this schism, that was unwanted by those that remained, but it unfortunately did occur. The racial tensions and split of 1924, shows that no matter how sincere a religious movements inception, religious groups are not immune to social pressure.

The first Presiding Prelate, The Honorable Bishop Garfield Thomas Haywood, was not only considered the chief ecclesiastical episcopate of the re-organized PAW from 1925-1931, but a respected leader in the Pentecostal movement in general. Moreover, Bishop Haywood is considered by most to be "The Father" of modern Apostolic-Pentecostalism. Even after several years after his death, his theological perspectives are still regarded as authoritative in mainline Apostolic-Pentecostal denominations.

In 1925 the Pentecostal Assemblies Of The World took a couple of steps forward to centralized leadership, adopting an Episcopal system of polity. Seven bishops were chosen from among the general assembly, and the Elder Garfield T. Haywood of Indianapolis, Indiana, was named Presiding Bishop.

The First Board Of Bishops Of The Pentecostal Assemblies Of The World, Inc.

Presiding Bishop Haywood was by far recognized by both whites and African-Americans to be the leader of the Apostolic-Pentecostal movement. Presiding Bishop G. T. Haywood was a noted author of several publication, editor of the PAW official organ the "Christian Outlook" from the years 1925-1930, theologian, composer, and pastor of the 2000 member Christ Temple Apostolic Faith Assembly, PAW, Inc. (Indianapolis, Indiana), the largest church in the Apostolic or Trinitarian Pentecostal movement at the time. Presiding Bishop Haywood would do much in his time, but met in untimely end in April 1931, naming no successor. The office of the presiding bishop, the highest office in the PAW remained vacant for one year out of respect for the late presiding prelate (Golder 140).

Reconstruction And Expansion 1931-1967

After the loss of charismatic leadership, religious bodies often go through a period of conflict, and this was no exception for the PAW. In 1932, the late Bishop Samuel J. Grimes, was named the second presiding prelate, unofficially assisted by the late Bishop A. William Lewis (Trice 30). Presiding Bishop Grimes would serve in the capacity as the executive episcopate of the PAW until his death in 1967. Bishop Samuel Grimes was a former PAW missionary to Liberia, and a noted Biblical scholar, Christian Outlook editor, and Diocesan of the Old Eastern District Council of the PAW. When I asked my pastor about Bishop Grimes, he responded that "he was the best Old Testament scholar I ever heard. Many of the churches on the east coast were established by him, which was then and now, an underdeveloped area of Apostolic evangelism.

Nevertheless, history also reveals that another event was festering at this time, and it was the power struggle between Bishop Samuel J. Grimes, and Bishop Samuel N. Hancock, of Detroit, Michigan. Bishop Samuel Hancock stated that he should have been Haywood's successor, but was prevented by the Executive Board of the PAW in the National Convention Of The General Assembly Of The PAW in 1952, and to some degree he was correct. The eastern saints battled Bishop Haywood to a degree in intense power struggle that wearied him to his grave (Golder 91, 94). Consequently, when Bishop Haywood passed, many "mover and shakers" in the east did not want another Bishop Haywood, which they thought Bishop Hancock was, but Hancock was quite distinct from Haywood. Consequently, Bishop Grimes was selected to succeed Haywood. But as the case was at the General Assembly in 1952, Bishop Hancock was most likely rejected due to him never truly believing in the Oneness of the Godhead by his own admission, teaching several known and published doctrinal deviations from accepted Apostolic-Pentecostal theology (Golder 150). Consequently, Bishop Samuel Hancock left the PAW in 1957 forming the Pentecostal Churches Of The Apostolic Faith, the second split in PAW history. Bishop Hancock's power struggle with Bishop Grimes shows one of the unfortunate results of institutionalization, mixed motivation. The interest to submitting to the "will of God" in leadership on who would possess the office of the presiding bishopric was overlooked, for the prestige and power. I wish I could say that this spirit of pride was a thing of the past, but unfortunately I cannot.

The late Bishop Grimes is noted as the first Presiding Bishop who had formal theological training from two institutions, and is noted for holding the PAW together along with the late Bishop A William Lewis, after an illegal failed merger with the Pentecostal Assemblies Of Jesus Christ, due to continued racism (Trice 29). Bishop Grimes and Bishop A. William Lewis (a white clergymen notably), rescued the stolen PAW incorporation that was hidden away and renewed them just before expiration (Golder 97). Bishop Grimes also saw the denomination

expand into the West Indies and the additional states in the US, due to his total devotion to the PAW for not holding a pastorate, and his great teaching ability. Bishop Grimes passed away in his home in New York City in 1967.

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