Blaine Killen

REL 101

**Short Essay #4**

In studying Christianity from birth, it was interesting to see different views on it and learn more into other derivatives of the religion. I learned this week that about a very interesting derivative referred to as Pentecostalism, and the extremes to which some followers interpret the religious ceremonies to be.

Pentecostalism or Classical Pentecostalism is a renewal movement within [Christianity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity) that places special emphasis on a direct personal experience of [God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_in_Christianity) through the [baptism with the Holy Spirit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism_with_the_Holy_Spirit). The term Pentecostal is derived from [Pentecost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecost), the [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language) name for the Jewish [Feast of Weeks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feast_of_Weeks). In the video shown in class, it was interesting that the group that worshiped snakes put a special emphasis on their direct personal experience through god by singing hymns to snakes.

There are three basic streams of Pentecostal churches. The majority believe that one must be saved by believing in [Jesus](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus) as Lord and Savior for the forgiveness of sins and to be made acceptable to God. Pentecostals also typically believe, like most other [evangelicals](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelicalism), that the Bible has definitive authority in matters of faith. To this first group, [speaking in tongues](http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speaking_in_tongues) is the sign of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and is not related to a person's salvation. This majority group believes that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a supernatural empowerment for ministry that only comes upon someone after they have become a Christian.

The spoken word, or tongue, from the preacher where he talks about forgetting what people think of you is a very powerful message to live by, but it seemed to also be a defense mechanism to justify what there practices were. When viewed in the eyes of the public, Christianity and worshiping at a church is not all that weird, however, what they twisted into reality as being Christianity is. The repetitive hammering of that particular phrase could be retaining religious followers by giving them an easy out to go to if they were doubting there own practices.

Another interesting thing that I noticed instantly is the view of the snake as a holy figure. In traditional Christian beliefs, the snake serves as a source of evil, as it is directly related to Adam and Eve. What interesting to think of is that if Adam and Eve would have sung to the snake, would it have not directed them to evil, and injected its poison into the already destructive fruit? In the entire video, the preacher and his followers are handling the snake in a very aggressive manner, and the snake never seems like he would be aggressive back. Its almost like the hymns and noises made the snake forget its humanistic tendencies and be infused with the nature of god, and perform in a nonviolent way. It almost seemed like the snake enjoyed the rituals.