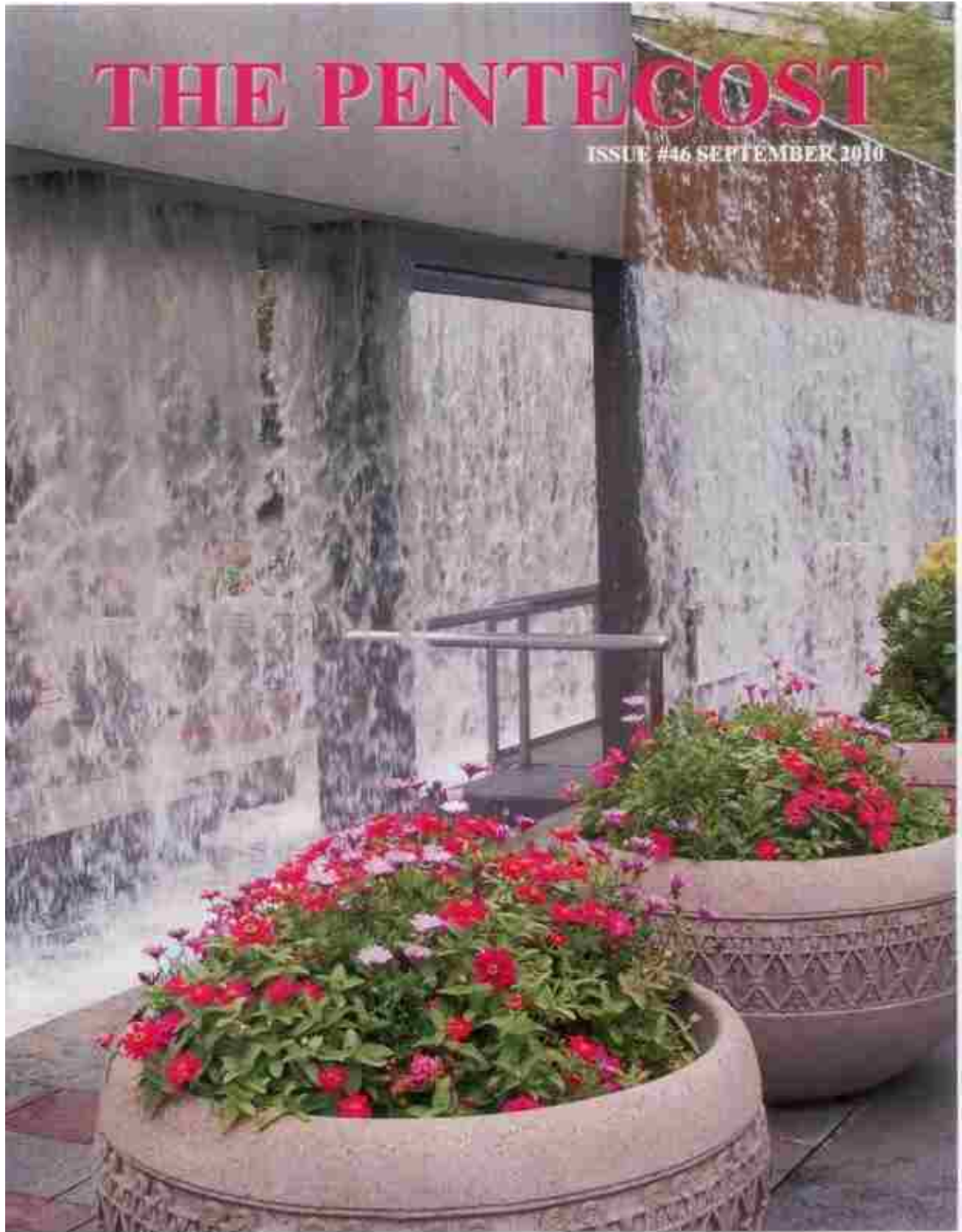


# THE PENTECOST

ISSUE #46 SEPTEMBER 2010





Welcome back to another year of The Pentecost magazine. For those who are just beginning to read our magazine, we hope that you will find it edifying and helpful to you in your walk with Jesus. We would also like to introduce Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him yet. The Pentecost starts up again every September after a two-month summer break. In this September, 2010, issue we are focusing on Jesus Christ and His redemptive work. As well, we will be discussing Pentecostalism worldwide and in the country of Estonia. Visit our new website at [zionchristianministry.com](http://zionchristianministry.com). God bless you.

**Shawn Stevens**

The nature of Jesus Christ is far too vast for human beings to grasp in its entirety. However, because of Jesus' desire to be in relationship with us, He gives us a glimpse of it through the Bible and His Holy Spirit. So, let's take a look together, shall we, at the nature and being of Jesus Christ. We'll also look at a group of people who serve Jesus Christ, called "Pentecostals."

**Ramona Stevens**

**Hey! Visit our ministry website at [zionchristianministry.com](http://zionchristianministry.com). Art, History, Music, and more. Log on today.**



**Zion**  
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY  
Shawn & Ramona Stevens

Mailing Address  
PO. Box 933  
Lynden, WA 98264 USA

Email: [info@zionchristianministry.com](mailto:info@zionchristianministry.com)  
[ZionChristianMinistry.com](http://ZionChristianMinistry.com)

IN THIS ISSUE

JESUS CHRIST..... 3-5

WHAT IS PENTECOSTALISM..... 5-6

THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IN ESTONIA AND THE LIFE AND

MINISTRY OF ALLAN AND RAEL LAUR..... 7-8



## WHAT IS PENTECOSTALISM

The Pentecostal Movement, when it broke out in the early twentieth century, was as greatly misunderstood as the early worshippers in Acts 1 and 2 were misunderstood on the Day of Pentecost. The Pentecostal Movement is misunderstood by many today, as well.

*Pentecostalism* is a worldwide movement which has spread and increased from the early 1900s to our day. Its greatest concentration of people and churches is in Africa, Latin America and Asia. I have said that its beginnings were in the early 1900s, referring to the Topeka and Azusa Revivals. However, it is impossible to trace Pentecostalism to just one place or one period of time. Pentecostal phenomena have been reported throughout the ages in various places. However, in the early 1900s, Pentecostal phenomena and experience was erupting and spreading rapidly throughout the world. Beginning in 1906, the Azusa Street Revival, in Los Angeles, became known as a major center for the erupting of Pentecostalism and for the commissioning of Pentecostal missionaries. It is generally thought of as the beginning of the movement. As well, many historians see the ministry of Charles Fox Parham and the Topeka, Kansas, outpourings of 1901 as being the beginnings of Pentecostalism in America. However, Parham remains a controversial person in Pentecostal history and many Pentecostals would prefer to trace their history to Azusa Street, rather than to him.

The first-generation leaders of the Azusa Revival came, for the most part, from Holiness and Methodist backgrounds, and Holiness teaching and preaching became, possibly, the main theological thrust of the revival and the movement.

Pentecostals believe in salvation by faith, in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, in His literal resurrection, in the inspiration of the Scriptures, in a literal heaven and a literal hell, and in participating in the ceremonies of baptism and communion. We are known for emphasizing Jesus Christ, sanctification, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, healing and spiritual gifts.

Pentecostals believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a spiritual experience in which a believer is filled with God's Spirit and endowed with heavenly power to be a witness for Christ. Most Pentecostals believe this baptism to be an experience subsequent to conversion, however, it may occur upon conversion in some instances. Being baptised in the Holy Spirit is synonymous with being filled with the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals point out that Spirit baptism/Spirit infilling is a promise in the Scriptures (see Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4) and that believers are called to it (see Ephesians 5:18). Pentecostals regard the normative evidence for the baptism in the Holy Spirit to be that of speaking in tongues.

Pentecostals believe in divine healing, most believing physical healing to be provided for in the atonement. Healing services are common in Pentecostal history and modern practice, and prayer, accompanied with the laying on of hands or anointing with oil, is often offered for the sick.

Pentecostals believe in the operation of spiritual gifts, gifts such as, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, the working of miracles, prophecy, the discerning of spirits, tongues and the interpretation of tongues. (See 1 Corinthians 12:1-11).

What are *spiritual gifts*? In 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, nine are listed. These gifts overlap each other considerably but we will discuss them as separate gifts at this time. The first of these is *the word of wisdom*. This is a supernatural wisdom which comes to the believer's mind at important times of decision or when understanding is needed. It is good judgment which becomes clear in the mind of a believer even in confusing situations. It has been called a "holy quick-wittedness."

Similar to the word of wisdom is the *word of knowledge*. This is a supernatural knowledge of specific facts that God reveals. A word of knowledge is not arrived at by natural senses but is received only from God's Spirit. It is a supernatural revelation of specific information for a specific purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Not only is a word of knowledge a spiritual gift, but so is *faith*. The Bible speaks much about faith, but in most places it does not specifically speak of it as a spiritual gift. For that reason, theologians often refer to faith in this passage as "special faith" or "charismatic faith."<sup>2</sup> This kind of faith is a special endowment of unshakable belief which fills the soul and spirit of a believer to believe God and His word and to trust Him in specific situations.<sup>3</sup>

Closely related to faith are *gifts of healings*. These are miraculous gifts given for the purpose of restoring health and wholeness to the sick and other ailing people. God's healing power can mend both body and mind. Thomas Holzkroft describes the operation of this gift in this way; "The human channel receives a package of healing remedies to be shared as gifts with others."<sup>4</sup> The believer, or "human

channel," is given; these gifts to go and minister them to those in need.<sup>5</sup>

Similar to gifts of healings, yet more general, is the *working of miracles*. Healing is a specific miracle benefiting the body and the mind. However, there are other kinds of miracles which God also wants to preform for the changing of situations. These supernatural interventions into the affairs of earth are miracles and can come about through the special operation of gifts such as these.<sup>6</sup>

Just as miraculous as the gift of the working of miracles is, so is the gift of *prophecy*. This gift is simply of one receiving a specific word from the Lord and then speaking that message to other people. The Bible is very clear; "And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy..." (Acts 2:17). This gift is needed in many situations for God to give specific information or specific direction to His Church.<sup>8</sup>

Just as the gift of prophecy is needful for the church, so is the gift of the *discerning of spirits*. This gift is needful because God's Spirit is not the only spirit that is active in the visible Church. Human spirits, and even demonic spirits, can operate among believers and often go undetected. The gift of the discerning of spirits is divine revelation given to believers to identify God's Spirit from foreign spirits. No one likes to acknowledge that, at times, foreign spirits operate in the visible Church and, therefore, this gift is controversial to many.<sup>7</sup>

Even more controversial than the gift of the discerning of spirits is the gift of *tongues*. The literal definition of this gift is "varieties of languages."<sup>9</sup> These are languages given to man which he has never learned. They are divinely given. Pentecostals generally distinguish between the tongues that were given to the disciples on the day of Pentecost, accompanying the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the gift of tongues which were used prophetically in the Early Church. This same distinguishing of different kinds of tongues is made of tongues today. However, any difference in kinds of tongues is one of function and not of kind. It will suffice for our study here to define tongues as divinely given utterances in languages given to a person, which that person has never learned.<sup>10</sup>

A gift closely related to the gift of tongues is the gift of the *interpretation of tongues*. When a message from God is spoken through a person, this message sometimes is prophetically delivered in tongues. When this occurs, it is needful for someone to interpret the message so that it can be understood by other people. The gift of the interpretation of tongues is precisely this. It is revelation into the meanings of divine tongues.<sup>11</sup>

Pentecostals believe in divine revelation. We believe that God speaks to His children and even to non-believers. God speaks primarily through His Word, the Bible, which

He illuminates for our understanding. Secondly, God speaks through spiritual gifts which can carry meaning to individuals or groups.

While Pentecostalism had its most markable beginnings in the early 1900s as a spiritual revival rising out of the Azusa Street Mission, Los Angeles, and other centers of outpouring, the movement split into several large divisions. *Second Work Holiness Pentecostals* were the first group to emerge and are represented by the Azusa and Topeka leadership. This early form of Pentecostalism held to all of the tenets mentioned earlier and taught that the Holy Spirit's restorative work was three-fold; conversion, then sanctification, then baptism in the Spirit. Each of these workings were regarded as separate graces, experienced in this order and complete in their experience and operation.

*Finished Work Pentecostalism* rose up following the visit of William Durham to Azusa. Durham taught that Christ's work was finished on Calvary and that sanctification occurred at conversion. Though Durham was expelled from Azusa, his teaching became foundational for the Assemblies of God, the largest Pentecostal organization today, and its sister organizations, *The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World*.

The third Pentecostal group to form was *Oneness Pentecostalism*. This group initially came out of Finished Work Pentecostal churches and began with a dispute over baptismal formula. Oneness leaders believe that baptismal candidates should be baptised in Jesus' name only, rather than saying "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Matthew 28:19). Oneness Pentecostals also came to reject the doctrine of the Trinity in favor of a modalistic interpretation of the Godhead.

Second Work Holiness Pentecostals and Finished Work Pentecostals began referring to themselves as *Classical Pentecostals* to distinguish themselves from *Charismatics*, who also believe in spiritual gifts.

Second Work Holiness Pentecostalism and Finished Work Pentecostalism, although misunderstood by many, was born out of revival and, in many ways, represent a restoration of biblical Christianity in the Earth. May the spiritual influence of these movements continue and thrive in our day.

## Shawn Stevens

ENDNOTES:  
1. Thomas Matteniff, *The Holy Spirit* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1979), 148.

2. Ibid., 148.

3. Ibid., 150.

4. Ibid., 150.

5. Ibid., 151.

6. Ibid., 151.

7. Ibid., 151.

8. Ibid., 151.

9. Ibid., 151.

10. Ibid., 151.

11. Ibid., 151.

12. Ibid., 151.

13. Ibid., 151.

14. Ibid., 151.

15. Ibid., 151.

16. Ibid., 151.

17. Ibid., 151.

18. Ibid., 151.

19. Ibid., 151.

20. Ibid., 151.

21. Ibid., 151.

22. Ibid., 151.

23. Ibid., 151.

24. Ibid., 151.

25. Ibid., 151.

26. Ibid., 151.

27. Ibid., 151.

28. Ibid., 151.

29. Ibid., 151.

30. Ibid., 151.

31. Ibid., 151.

32. Ibid., 151.

33. Ibid., 151.

Scripture taken from the New King James  
Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson  
Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

## REFERENCES:

Encyclopedia of Pentecost and Charismatic Christianity, Francis M. Williams, Ed., Religion &

Society, A Bookline Reference Work, New York: Bookline/Taylor & Francis Group, 1988.

Stoddard, J., Thomas, The Holy Spirit, Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1979.

Apprentices from the New King James Version, Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used

by permission. All rights reserved.



## THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IN ESTONIA AND THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF ALLAN AND RAEI LAUR

Estonia is a small Baltic country of around 1,300,000 people bordered by the Baltic Sea, Latvia and Russia. Its people have a long history stretching back far into the Middle Ages, to before the days when they were ruled by the Danes and then the Teutonic Knights. Estonia had been an independent country before World War II but during the war, in 1940, was annexed to the Soviet Union. For a brief four years, from 1941 to 1944, it was occupied by the Germans but after the war it reverted back to Stalin's Russian control. In March of 1990, when communism was falling in other places in the Soviet world, Estonia declared its independence from the United Soviet Socialist Republic (U.S.S.R.).

The Pentecostal movement in the country of Estonia began very early in Pentecostal history. Historians differ somewhat on dates. One source dates the establishment of the Pentecostal Church there to be 1906, the same year of the Azusa Street (Los Angeles) Pentecostal Revival in America. The Azusa paper, the Apostolic Faith, reports of Pentecostal tongues being experienced by Estonian peasant girls in Estonia in 1907. Prior to the Second World War, the Pentecostal Church was the fastest growing movement in Estonia. However, the movement suffered fierce persecution when the country was occupied under the Russians. Pentecostalism was prohibited and churches had their properties confiscated and many of their pastors were killed or deported, in many cases to Siberia. Few Pentecostal pastors escaped this deportation.

Pentecostal work did continue during communist national rule but when Estonia became independent from the Soviet Union, the Pentecostal Church became more open. In 1991, the Estonian Pentecostal Church was officially founded, at that time being called the Estonian Christian Church. One of the foremost leaders of the Estonian Pentecostal Church at this time was Allan Laur.

Allan Laur was born on September 21, 1945, in Sweden to Estonian parents. He moved to Canada and became trained as a dentist. Dentistry provided him with a very comfortable life. However, he sensed God's call on his life to ministry. At first, he did some work as a lay preacher in Toronto while continuing with dentistry. All in all, he did thirteen years of pastoral work in Toronto. However, he soon sensed, and followed, the call to Estonia and left his profession of dentistry altogether. He, his wife Rael, and their three children, Daniel, Marina and Krister, crossed the seas to a very

different life in Estonia.

The Laurs became busy in pastoral and evangelistic ministry. The Lord granted them great success and soon their church had baptised 500 people. True revival broke out as the Laurs, and other Pentecostal workers, held evangelistic tent meetings throughout Tallin and other parts of Estonia.

Amid all of the success, the Laur's had some painful crisis to face. Daniel, the oldest son, was not adjusting to life in Estonia. He sunk into a deep depression and was wasting away. He wanted to leave Estonia. He would shut himself in his room and not come out for long periods of time. This created agony for the Laurs and one day, friends, a couple from Canada, came to visit the family. They saw what was happening with Daniel and offered to take him back to live with them in Canada. Allan and Rael consented to this and saw their son off. The pain of separation was felt greatly and many nights Allan and Rael cried themselves to sleep. However, they determined, come what may, they would fulfil the call on their lives.

As mentioned already, the Laurs were given great success. When they first came to Estonia it was still a part of the Soviet Union. Laur's church was growing and needed a larger building to house it. So the decision was made to do the unthinkable, request from the communist government permission to use their Communist Party Headquarters for holding services. The headquarters building had a large auditorium which would serve well for the church. These were the days when communism was about to fall in Estonia. The Party agreed, and that first Sunday of meeting, 1300 people came out. The Press reported; "Now the atheist cathedral is a cathedral for the Pentecostals."

Many souls came to know the Lord during the great revivals which were occurring. One woman, a Baptist believer who worked with deaf people, decided to bring her group of about thirty deaf persons to Allan's church. At the end of the service, the entire group responded to the call for salvation. Their work expanded to the point where one hundred deaf persons attended.

Allan tells of one man, named Uri, who was around thirty-five years of age and an alcoholic who had been drinking for about twenty-five years. Uri wanted to come to the evangelistic tent meeting nearby but was still afraid. So he decided to take his fishing rod and walk past the tent, as if he was on his way to go fishing. He hoped that someone would invite him in when he walked by. No one did and he went back

home. However, he could not sleep and, inwardly, desired to know God. The next night he went to the tent again, and this time two women greeted him and began talking to him about his soul. He broke down in tears and, before he knew it, he was praying with the minister, committing his life to Jesus. Something happened to Uri. That day a life and a passion was planted in him. He now had a zeal for God and he kept saying that he wanted to become an evangelist. He enrolled in Allan's ministry school with this goal in mind. Though now a believer, over two decades of drinking in his old life had really taken a toll on Uri's mind. In school, he found that he could not retain the material he was studying. He was advised to take a forty-day fast. He launched out on such a fast and, before long, something began to happen. There was a power at work in him and he began to excel in school. One day, he went to visit his non-Christian mother. She had been told that Uri had become a religious fanatic. Uri shared with her, and she had a wonderful conversion experience. She was filled with joy and ecstatic over her new life in the Lord. Uri also went to visit his ailing sister. She had back problems which left her with much pain. Uri prayed for her and the next day she phoned him to say that she was healed.

In one tent meeting a wheelchair-bound girl, five or six years of age, came out. She had been wheelchair-bound due to a farming accident in which her legs were crushed. In the meeting she was healed! The next night the tent meeting was thronged by villagers and a great number came and committed their lives to the Lord.

One woman, named Helgi, the daughter of a one-time, high-office-holding Methodist, but who, at the time of meeting Allan was not living for the Lord, came to one of the meetings which Allan was holding and was wonderfully converted. After her conversion, she desired to go into a women's prison to minister. She gained permission to do so and began reaching out to the prisoners. These were hardened women, many who had committed homicide. God used Helgi in such a way that the prison officials asked her if she was going to continue to come back. They said there was such a peace in the prison when Helgi would come to it and the peace would even linger for a time after she had gone. Helgi did continue coming and the authorities built a chapel in the prison for her and the women to use. It is reported that two-thirds of the inmates came to Christ.

Helgi's ministry to woman inmates wasn't the only prison work that the Pentecostal Church did in Tallin. Allan's chaplains also went into the prison in Tallin and began ministering. One inmate with a skin

disease was healed. Large numbers of inmates began coming to the Lord and, eventually, the chaplains baptised one hundred converts in a two-day period. In spite of such victory, the chaplains received opposition from a surprising source. Church ministry in the city was regulated by a Church Council. This Council voted to ban Allan's chaplains from the prison. Allan heard of this after his chaplains were turned away. Initially, Allan wanted to talk to these Council people who had banned his workers. He, instead, prayed about it. In a while, he received a phone call from the prison warden. The warden was so upset about the chaplains being forbidden that he set up a meeting with the prime minister. The outcome of that meeting was that, not only were the chaplains allowed back into the jail but, also, the Pentecostal Church was removed from under the authority of the Church Council and placed under the authority of the prime minister and the arm of government named the Interior Ministry. The chaplains were allowed back in and even given government salaries.

In 2005, Allan Laur died of cancer and, in 2008, his wife, Rael, did also at the young age of fifty-four. Precious to the Lord are the deaths of His saints. The lives of Allan and Rael are full of lasting fruit and the Pentecostal Church goes on in Estonia.

## Shawn Stevens

### REFERENCES

Aim, Herb. "Allan Laur: A Life Of Joy." Tallin, Estonia: Raport 7, 2008.  
Christian Life Assembly. Allan Laur: March 2, 1995. Cassette Tape.  
Christian Life Assembly. "Allan Laur: Estonia." Cassette Tape.  
"BANK Tallinn Raport." <http://bank.ee/ee>