

From Contempt to Encounter: Pentecostal Political Theology and Democratic Life

By Creighton Coleman
April 2023

A dissertation submitted to the
Department of Religious Studies
University of Virginia
In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
Ph.D. in Religious Studies

Committee Members:

Lawrie Balfour

Nichole Flores

Paul Jones

Charles Mathewes (Advisor)

Oludamini Ogunnaike

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Part One: Contempt.....	4
Chapter 1: Introduction and Review of Literature.....	5
Chapter 2: Nigerian Pentecostalism and the Spirit of Contempt	66
Chapter 3: White Pentecostalism and The Segregated Spirit	114
Conclusion to Part One	155
Part Two: Encounter.....	161
Introduction to Part Two	162
Chapter 4: A Theology of Encounter	167
Chapter 5: Using Democracy I - Theology, Politics, and Political Equality	223
Chapter 6: Using Democracy II - Disagreement, Deliberation, and Exclusion.....	263
Conclusion	302
Bibliography	312

Acknowledgements

Throughout my time at the University of Virginia, I have had the privilege of working with some of the most supportive faculty imaginable. My entire committee was gracious and patient with me through the dissertation process. Those relationships, though, began much earlier and the kindness I experienced from my professors throughout my time at UVA gave me the confidence I needed to lean into the project I believed in and really wanted to write. Thank you to Nichole Flores, Paul Jones, and Oludamini Ogunnaike for your hospitable classrooms and engaging conversations. Thank you to Lawrie Balfour for joining my committee later in the game and offering invaluable conversations and feedback.

I could not have asked for a better advisor than Charles Mathewes. While always offering feedback on drafts and pushing me to clarify my arguments when they needed clarifying, Chuck was most insistent that I find my own voice and make the sorts of arguments I wanted to make. I never felt the sense that I needed to become more like my advisor or replicate his thinking. Oddly, this freedom made me want to be the type of conversation partner Chuck was to me. Thank you for supporting me every step of the way. Hugs.

I did not grow up with dreams of writing a dissertation. Though, my parents prepared me to finish this project. I was formed by a narrative that difficult things are worth doing; that there is a type of meaning in pouring yourself into something you actually might not be able to finish. I have watched my father do this my whole life and was privileged to have him in my corner as I undertook this task, the outcome of which was far from guaranteed. Among other things, I inherited from my father an open disregard for the doubts of others, but this disregard is only workable when you know those closest to you respect and believe in you. Thank you.

My mother taught me to trust myself and to follow my intuitions. Her voice was often with me as small ideas developed into the ideas in this document. As mothers often do, she also reminded me that I am human and have limitations. This is not to say that she limited what I could do, but that she reminded me that I both need and deserve care. Thank you for always being a phone call away. Thank you for pushing me to find joy while I worked.

My two sisters are a constant source of support. Sarah's ability to reinvent herself models a resilience that I am still trying to learn. Sarah's strength gives me something to which I can aspire. I am grateful for her love and support. Lauren finished a Ph.D. before me and in many ways made my path easier. Lauren often anticipated how I would be feeling at different phases and rallied support for me ahead of time. Few experience the privilege of a sister who is also a colleague. I love you both.

Many friends and colleagues contributed to this project along the way. Thank you to Lucila Crena, Michelle Bostic, Kyle Nicholas, Chris Choi, and Weston Combs who read drafts and listened to me struggle through ideas early in the process. Friends were an important source of emotional support, even when I just needed a distraction or unassuming conversation. Thank you to Grant Brazill, Mandi Adams-Brazill, Cameron Combs, Jordan Combs, Taylor Johnson, Peter Catchings, and Hunter Finch for investing in me and making yourselves available.

Part One: Contempt

Chapter 1: Introduction and Review of Literature

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful
and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.
Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created.
And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.*

§1 – Introduction

At an event leading up to the January 6th insurrection, Rev. Kevin Jessip declared a “battle cry” in “the spiritual realm,” which he interpreted as “mobilization of God’s men made holy by the blood of Jesus Christ and empowered by the gift of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This battle cry is a Christian call to all Christian men ... as we prepare for a strategic gathering of men in this hour to dispel the Kingdom of Darkness.”¹ For many at the insurrection, the “Stop the Steal” rally was the culmination of a spiritual battle that had been raging since before the 45th president declared his candidacy in 2015.² At the same event, Lance Wallnau, a pastor associated with the New Apostolic Reformation, spoke about the “spiritual warfare presidency” and how people were going to “come out of the shadows” to fight for Trump. He repeated election lies and called for a “Christian populist uprising” to “see America restored” with another “great awakening.”³ Paula White, a spiritual advisor to the 45th president, made similar declarations on

¹ As quoted by Andrew L. Seidel, “Section V: Events, People, and Networks Leading Up to January 6th,” in Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, *Christian Nationalism and the January 6th 2021 Insurrection*, February, 2022, p. 17. Available at: https://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Christian_Nationalism_and_the_Jan6_Insurrection-2-9-22.pdf.

² For examples of a Pentecostal Spiritual reading of Donald Trump’s candidacy, see: Lance Wallnau, *God’s Chaos Candidate: Donald J. Trump and the American Unravelling* (Keller, TX: Killer Sheep Media, 2016); and, Lance Wallnau, *God’s Chaos Code: The Shocking Blueprint that Reveals 5 Keys to the Destiny of Nations* (Keller, TX: Killer Sheep Media, 2020).

³ Andrew L. Seidel, “Section V: Events, People, and Networks,” p. 18.

the day of January 6th, calling on God to “overturn” “every adversary against democracy” and for an “outpouring of your spirit like never before.”⁴

The spiritual perceptions of the election and the subsequent attack on the US capital were not limited to those who organized the events. Participants also voiced their belief that the Holy Spirit had inspired and empowered their actions. Joshua Matthew Black, an insurrectionist who reached the floor of the US Senate, narrated his experience as an encounter with the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit just fell on me and I just started weeping ... It was awesome. The presence of God is like the best drug on earth. ... It was awesome ... If I had it to do over again though I would have ... prayed about the evil spirits that were in there. I’d have cast them out. But I didn’t even think of that ... So I got down on my knees, started praying, I started lifting my hands, I was like, “Praise the name of Jesus. Thank you, Lord for the blood of Jesus” ... I’d accomplished my goal. I pled the blood of Jesus on the Senate floor. I praised the name of Jesus on the Senate floor. That was my goal. I think that was God’s goal ... I think the Lord wanted me to be there.⁵

For Black, the goal of the insurrection was a spiritual one where he would plead “the blood of Jesus on the Senate floor.” His only regret being that he did not devote adequate prayer to the “evil spirits” in the Senate. This account of events or the designations of good and evil was not unique to Black. Lindsey French, another insurrectionist, described her decision to travel to Washington D.C. as the result of a “burning bush” sign from God. French saw herself as “fighting good versus evil, dark versus light.”⁶ Within these descriptions there is an anticipation of God’s activity in the world along with a strong sense that God had empowered one group’s actions against another. Clear demarcations of good and evil made action based on those perceptions of God’s activity all the

⁴ As quoted by Andrew L. Seidel, “Section VI: Attack on the Capital: Evidence of the Role of White Christian Nationalism,” in Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, *Christian Nationalism and the January 6th 2021 Insurrection*, February, 2022, p. 25. Available at: https://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Christian_Nationalism_and_the_Jan6_Insurrection-2-9-22.pdf.

⁵ As quoted by Seidel, “Section VI: Attack on the Capital: Evidence of the Role of White Christian Nationalism,” 37.

⁶ Quoted in Elizabeth Dias and Ruth Graham, “How White Evangelical Christians Fused With Trump Extremism,” *New York Times* (January 19, 2021), <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/us/how-white-evangelical-christians-fused-with-trump-extremism.html>.

more simple to pursue. Especially when those demarcations mapped cleanly onto existing cultural and political fault lines playing out in an election with a clear end date and with clear winners and losers.

Many have considered the events of the insurrection through the lens of White Christian Nationalism, and this lens certainly reveals a great deal.⁷ However, this lens can miss the extent to which the insurrection was a distinctly Pentecostal event, and a relatively ordinary one at that.⁸ This is not to name the storming of the US capital as mundane or to make a demographic claim concerning who was present. Rather, that there were for many theological conditions motivating action that are quite common among Pentecostals.⁹ Further, that the theological politics on display there are neither unique to the group who stormed the capital nor to the United States. Damon Berry, writing in a U.S. context, names the groups working from these theological

⁷ See: Anthea Butler, *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2021); Philip S. Gorski and Samuel L. Perry, *The Flag + the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022); Katherine Stewart, *The Power Worshipers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).

⁸ Different definitions of “Pentecostalism” serve different purposes and can illuminate different things, though no definition is exclusively *correct* (some might be more correct than others). Here, I am not interested in those definitions that slice up Pentecostals and Charismatics based on institutional or doctrinal lines. I follow Amos Yong and others in taking an expansive definition of “Pentecostalism” to mean those Christian groups prioritizing the work of the Holy Spirit in miracles (often speaking in tongues, healing, and prophecy) and ecstatic worship. My discussion of “Pentecostalism” is also includes what I refer to as “pentecostalized Christianity,” which is intended to refer to those groups, often in historically established denominations, that are influenced by Pentecostal practices (Catholic Charismatics, African Independent Churches, etc.). For the sake of this project, one need not imagine Pentecostalism as a category with rigid boundaries, but as a way of being Christian that different groups can embody in varying ways. For discussions on defining Pentecostalism along with Yong’s precedent, see: Allan Anderson, “Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions,” in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, eds. Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis Van Der Laan (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 13-29; Robert W. Hefner, “The Unexpected Modern—Gender, Piety, and Politics in the Global Pentecostal Surge,” in *Global Pentecostalism in the 21st Century*, ed. Robert Hefner (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2013), 2; Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), xviii.

⁹ Of course, many have identified other unique factors contributing to the storming of the US Capital, such as the varying experiences of pandemic lockdown and the explosion of new media sources. My point is not to discredit other explanatory factors nor to make a singular causal claim, but to point to an existing political theology, which current accounts have not yet fully understood.

politics as “prophecy voters.”¹⁰ Rather than older iterations of conservative Christian politics that were motivated by “values” or “nostalgia,” these voters are motivated by prophecies communicated through a network of apostles and prophets. Other countries have seen a similar impact brought by Pentecostal groups.¹¹ Charismatic religious authority and experiences of the Holy Spirit increasingly motivate political action and structure dispositions towards the world.¹² The events at the January 6th insurrection are certainly unique and our understanding of them is unfolding, but they also contain political theological dynamics that increasingly shape democratic life.

While not affiliating with “classical” Pentecostal denominations, much of the Christian world is becoming pentecostalized with charismatic liturgical practices, emphasis on interiority, and anticipation of miracles. Occurring in a single century, this shift in the make-up of global Christianity is so seismic in magnitude that it ought to be understood alongside other such fundamental changes as the Latinization of the Western church or Christian reconsideration of antisemitism following the *Shoah*. In fact, estimates mark Pentecostals at above 600 million of the world’s Christians.¹³ More recent studies identify 644 million of the world’s Christians (26%) as belonging to “Spirit-Empowered” versions of Christian faith, and these numbers are only expected to grow.¹⁴ In addition to their internal growth, these groups will continue to have a

¹⁰ Damon Berry, “Voting in the Kingdom: Prophecy Voters, the New Apostolic Reformation, and Christian Support for Trump,” *Nova Religio* vol. 23 no. 4 (2020), 69-93.

¹¹ See, for example: Ebenezer Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic: Religion and the Struggle for State Power in Nigeria* (London: Zed Books, 2018).

¹² Throughout this project, “charismatic” will most immediately refer to *charismata* in the Christian theological sense, unless otherwise noted. There is much to be learned from Weberian traditions of thought around charisma and charismatic authority, but they are not the central focus of this project.

¹³ This number is disputed in both directions. Allan Anderson sees this estimate as potentially inflated (*To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4), while sociologist Peter Berger sees the estimate as potentially undershooting (*The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age* (Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2014), 24).

¹⁴ Todd M. Johnson and Gina M. Zulo, *Introducing Spirit-Empowered Christianity: The Global Pentecostal & Charismatic Movements in the 21 Century* (Tulsa, OK: Oral Roberts University Press, 2020), Introduction.

“pentecostalizing” effect on many Catholics and mainline denominations, altering practices to match contemporary charismatic forms. As Christian populations continue to grow in places like central and west Africa—where pentecostalized forms of religious expression are more common—and simultaneously decline in the North Atlantic world, the center of gravity for the Christian world is becoming firmly planted in the global south.¹⁵ All people interested in those with whom they share a public should be interested in how such a growing movement comes to understand itself politically. The future is Pentecostal, but is the world ready?

§2 – The Pitfalls and Promise of Pentecostal Politics: Contempt and Encounter

Hent de Vries identifies religion as constituting “both an integrative and potentially disintegrating or even violent aspect of modern societies” because of the “novel configuration of post-secular identities, whose volatile dynamics contain as much promise as potential for political havoc.”¹⁶ The above example of the January 6th insurrection demonstrates one way Pentecostalism can draw on a theological contempt for others to actualize Pentecostalism’s “potential for political havoc.” Pentecostalism as a self-conscious religious movement does not know a reality outside of modernity, which is to say Pentecostals have always constructed and received difference within those modern conditions.¹⁷ For some, this meant that “liberals” or “modernists” haunted drives toward holiness, while “lukewarm mainline” Christianity was

¹⁵ On the particular attractiveness of Pentecostal Christianity to much of Africa, see: Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). On the global growth and influence of Pentecostalism, see: Allan Heaton Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory, eds., *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). For a collection of essays treating Pentecostalism’s relationship to modernity, see: Robert W. Hefner ed., *Global Pentecostalism in the 21st Century*.

¹⁶ Hent de Vries, “Introduction: Before, Around, and Beyond the Theologico-Political,” in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, eds. Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 6.

¹⁷ This is not to say Pentecostals are the only movement shaped by modernity. Notably, Jesuits were confronted by unique challenges in their missionary work, as they began to reckon with the persistence of difference in new ways.

juxtaposed to the hot fires of Pentecostal revival. For others, this meant that there was an ever-present figure of “the lost” pushing Pentecostals toward the mission field. This is not to reduce Pentecostal experiences of the Spirit to a social phenomenon in which Pentecostals merely respond to their surroundings, but to suggest that Pentecostal encounters with the Spirit always came within a distinctly modern social context and are formed within the pressures of technological advancement, individualism, uprootedness/mobility, and increased connectivity.

These conditions have facilitated incredible compassion ministries and community building on behalf of many Pentecostals, but just as widespread among Pentecostals has been a contemptuous construction of difference. Certainly, modernity and the increased ease of mobility brings a greater circulation of people and an experience of more diversity. This project concerns how Pentecostals produce or interpret that diversity in theological ways that draw on contempt. This is not to suggest that difference exists external to Pentecostal experience, but to say that Pentecostals both construct and receive constructions of difference that they then “pentecostalize” with theological contempt. But to what extent, if any, is contempt a necessary outgrowth of Pentecostalism? To use de Vries’s words, what of Pentecostalism’s promise?

§2.1 – The Nature of Pentecostal Contempt

This divide between potential havoc and promise drives my inquiry into the political theology of Pentecostalism. This dissertation, argues that although Pentecostal spirituality can lend itself to a contemptuous approach to difference (Part 1), it can also energize an anticipatory hope for encountering God through others (Part 2).¹⁸ While Part 2 takes a constructive approach

¹⁸ Luke Bretherton makes a similar argument about Pentecostal political theology. I see my argument as sharing many of Bretherton’s intuitions and expanding on his critique of “antagonistic” approaches to difference by offering a broader diagnosis of what theologically fuels contempt among Pentecostals. I affirm Bretherton’s framing of the question as the relationship between the Spirit and the world, though I construct my argument around encounters

to identifying, what I argue is a productive and faithful Pentecostal politics of encounter, Part 1 takes a more diagnostic approach that offers analytic clarity to the typically contemptuous nature of contemporary Pentecostal politics. Ultimately, I defend the thesis: For Pentecostals, contempt is a pervasive, dangerous, and unnecessary response to difference.

Pervasive, dangerous, and unnecessary are three important and independent steps in my argument. In naming contempt as pervasive, I claim that Pentecostals often produce difference in a contemptuous way. I land on the language of “difference” to characterize the dynamic against which Pentecostals show contempt for two reasons. First, this project is transnational in nature, seeking to make an argument about Pentecostalism generally. The types of constructed categories of difference Pentecostals encounter vary from setting to setting and there are manifold categories even within each setting. Richard Miller describes the dynamic well: “Difference is relative to the person or persons to *whom* the other is positioned as near or far, commonplace or exotic, familiar or strange, and so forth. That is to say, alterity is itself contingent on specific circumstances and conditions.”¹⁹ “Difference” is general enough to capture this Pentecostal experience of perceived strangeness in various settings. Second, the language of “difference” signals not so much an individual category, but the experience of or perception of something considered “other.” Pentecostals themselves do not construct most of the categories or forms of difference I analyze throughout this dissertation. However, this dissertation engages at the Pentecostal experience of those categories, even when the experience of diversity as a form of deviation is itself a construction.

with difference to open the scope of analysis to encounters that are not always understood as that between church and world. See: Luke Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), ch. 4.

¹⁹ Richard B. Miller, *Friends and Other Strangers: Studies in Religion, Ethics, and Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 3.

I make no attempt to demonstrate contempt as universal among Pentecostals, but instead seek to theorize contempt as a theological phenomenon. As such, I take up two distinct case studies to demonstrate the theological scaffolding that props up Pentecostal contempt in different settings. In naming Pentecostal contempt as dangerous, I claim that this way of relating to difference poses both an internal problem for Pentecostal communities interested in following the Spirit of Christ, and a problem for the stability of diverse societies in which they live. In naming Pentecostal contempt as unnecessary, I argue that Pentecostalism as a movement has the space for responses beyond contempt. I invest more in this third claim by questioning the necessity of very real examples of contempt and in later chapters articulating a viable Pentecostal alternative to contempt that remains recognizably and faithfully Pentecostal.

This is a project in Pentecostal political theology and ethics.²⁰ As such, the theological and the political are not cleanly separable, so political questions are always theological questions and vice versa. Gatekeepers in various disciplines are bound to find this approach disappointing, but working outside any rigid disciplinary boundaries allows me to ask questions that those disciplines might miss. I draw on political theory, anthropology, social theory, theology, and philosophy to both articulate and answer questions drawn out of experiences in Pentecostal communities. Admittedly, this project begins from and is informed by my own experience in Pentecostal communities where I was consistently struck by Pentecostal obsession with those who were not in our midst. Put differently, my experience in Pentecostal communities led me to ask, as I do throughout this project, why is it that other people are such a problem for

²⁰ I see similarities between my approach and those of Daniela Augustine and Nimi Wariboko. See: Daniela C. Augustine, *The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019); Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014); and Nimi Wariboko, *Ethics and Society in Nigeria: Identity, History, Political Theory* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2019).

Pentecostals?²¹ “Other people” takes different forms at different times, but how Pentecostals come to relate to them is the central political question of this project.

This project is Pentecostal in the sense that the one writing it is formed by a desire and expectation that the Spirit of God speaks and moves in the world.²² This is not to say that anyone can ever fully grasp what the Spirit is saying or how the Spirit is moving, but that the Spirit both confronts and guides individuals and communities in sometimes complicated ways.²³ As such, this project is interested in those conversations that reflect on the Spirit of Christ and draws from those conversations to think about what it means to wait for the Spirit “during the world.”²⁴ Furthermore, the Pentecostalism represented in this project is largely not interested in tired doctrinal disputes around “initial physical evidences” or “Pentecostal distinctives.” Instead, I prioritize Pentecost and the outpouring of the Spirit there in my understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. This prioritization comes with an inclination to ask in every moment what the Spirit is doing while accepting that a final answer to such a question will always be just beyond our grasp.

As a study in “Pentecostal” politics, this project is necessarily theological. How Pentecostals understand and discern the Spirit is the very substance of Pentecostal political life. To those trained in systematic or historical theology, Chapter Four will feel the most

²¹ Note that this is distinct from Lori Beaman’s concern with identifying difference as a problem to be solved. Here, rather than seeking to manage societies living in conditions of substantial pluralism, I look at one typical response to difference and ask why difference seems to be a problem for a particular group of people. Lori Beaman, *Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 40-45.

²² The primary concern here is not how the Spirit is present and active in the church, but how the church might relate to the Spirit beyond the church. Though, anxious readers can rest assured that the question of the Spirit’s relationship to the church will be discussed in Chapter 4.

²³ While still hoping for and anticipating the Spirit’s miraculous intervention in history, I also, like Kathryn Tanner, see the Spirit’s activity and presence in the long complicated outworking of human history. See: Kathryn Tanner, “Workings of the Spirit: Simplicity or Complexity?” in *The Work of the Spirit: Theology and Pentecostalism*, Michael Welker ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 87-108.

²⁴ “During the world,” is taken from Charles Mathewes, *A Theology of Public Life* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 98.

“theological,” though even there I do not make any claim to solving or exhausting any systematic category of academic Christian theology. Rather, I use traditional theological categories insofar as they help me think about what it means to live as a Pentecostal within plural environments. Both Christian scriptures and tradition provide language and an ongoing conversation in which I participate throughout the project. This project further deploys methods from the social sciences, though not uncritically. The social sciences offer one way to place myself and my received circumstances within a larger context, with the hope of opening findings to theological reflection and making theological reflection responsible to reality. The social sciences are not neutral, and I have no assumption that they could be neutral; but, they are a limited and useful tool that I will draw on toward the ends of this project.

The first part of this project brings together two categories for reflection: Pentecostalism and contempt. Each has received its share of attention in scholarly literature, but they have not been brought together. Both contempt and Pentecostalism, as I engage them in this project, occur within the context of modernity and therefore the newer ways in which difference is always present and seemingly demanding a response.

§2.2 – Pentecostalism, Modernity, and Public Life

By naming Pentecostalism as a movement birthed within modernity, I mean to identify the conditions of modernity as formational for Pentecostalism. One such condition is a heightened awareness of proximate forms of difference and a sense of personal contingency. Mass mobility and communication accelerate the experience of pluralism, which the sociologist Peter Berger describes in two senses. Mass mobility all but guarantees (1) pluralism as a social phenomenon, where the circulation of people to new places in conjunction with mass communication creates a (2) pluralism of the mind where individuals and groups are increasingly

aware of other options, especially with regards to religion.²⁵ At other points in time, much of one's life was fated. Which is to say that a person's identity and religion were all but determined by the geographic region into which they were born. Once mass exposure to difference occurs, the knowledge of different ways of living begins to "gnaw at their previously taken-for-granted worldview."²⁶ Berger may well be over stating. The Christian tradition shows much awareness of difference, be it Muslims, Jews, or all groups classified as "heathen." Pre-modern societies often encountered difference and lived with knowledge of other ways of life. What modernity brings, though, is an accelerated experience of that difference and Pentecostalism has always existed within that reality. Early Pentecostals imagined both a whole world of people needing to be saved and their ability to physically access that whole world by the power of the Spirit, the steam engine, relatively safe global travel, and global lines of communication.

Religious difference is certainly one large type of difference, but it would be a mistake to read my argument as applying strictly to issues of religious pluralism. Religion, as a constructed category, develops alongside categories of race, as Theodore Vial traces genealogically.²⁷ However, class difference, sexual, gender, race, and nationality (among others) are all relevant types of difference with which Pentecostals must reckon. On the one hand, these types of difference are not based on universal divisions that Pentecostals then must learn to navigate. On the other hand, though, Pentecostals do inherit understandings of difference and then navigate

²⁵ Berger, *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age* (Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2014), 28-9. Berger mentions Saudi Arabia and North Korea as two examples that have successfully prevented the expansion of pluralism as a social reality. Preventing pluralism, though, is costly. In the case of Saudi Arabia requiring massive levels of oil money to keep populations content and in the case of North Korea totalitarian repression. With these costs in mind, most societies determine that allowing some sort of pluralism is preferable to the costs of preventing it (Ibid., 48). Charles Taylor describes the explosion of religious options as the "nova effect" in his account of Western secularism, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 299-313. Hans Joas describes this sense of contingency as the inevitable future for Christianity, see: *Faith as an Option: Possible Futures for Christianity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014).

²⁶ Berger, *The Many Altars of Modernity*, 29.

²⁷ Theodore Vial, *Modern Religion, Modern Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 9-14.

that difference in a Pentecostal fashion. Often, the preexisting, though constructed in particular social settings, understandings of difference have contempt built into them that Pentecostals then draw upon and infuse with theological meaning. At other times, Pentecostals generate their own forms of contempt where a preexisting social script for contempt is not available. I will detail two particular ways Pentecostal contempt manifests in Chapters Two and Three, but the point is that contempt is one prevalent way Pentecostals have thought about difference, but, as I argue in Part Two, such a response is not a necessary one.

From its earliest inception at Azusa Street, Pentecostals have negotiated perceived forms of difference. The Azusa Street revival was noteworthy for the intermixing of races, leading some to claim that the racial lines had been “washed away in the blood.” Despite this, problems of White supremacy quickly divided Pentecostal groups leading to the formation of different Pentecostal ecclesial groups that exist to this day. As a modern missionary movement, though, Pentecostals also began with a strong awareness of a world which, in their view, was waiting to be evangelized. This missionary work cannot be separated from the early apocalypticism and dispensationalism of the Pentecostal movement, as the work of missions was for the sake of the final evangelization of the earth that would usher in the second coming of Christ. But, nonetheless, the focus on missions forced a confrontation with difference that has birthed a field of Pentecostal theology seeking to reckon with that difference as it manifests for Christian missions.

The presence of difference creates a sense of contingency for individuals and groups. Pentecostalism, especially in its missionary forms, was very much steeped in an awareness of those who had *not* been baptized in the Holy Spirit as much as an awareness of those who had. This reality of pluralism, whether it be in a merely epistemic form or in more direct interactions,

forces the question of how one will receive those who are different. Within liberal democratic settings, the questions are perhaps more directly: with whom will Christians choose to cooperate and not cooperate? To whom will Christians give respect even while opposing them?

Cooperation here concerns a question of social solidarity and what goods Christians are willing to share with whom; whether or not Christians can imagine themselves as sharing a life and working alongside others towards common goals. Even more bluntly, cooperation concerns whether Christians will “play by the rules” established in a society. This tension, like the others, is not a uniquely Christian problem, but, as with the other tensions named, Christians require a uniquely Christian answer to the tension. For Pentecostals, this answer will require particular attention to the role of the Holy Spirit.

§2.3 – An Age of Contempt

While certainly not unique to today’s setting, difference is often felt palpably in terms of polarization. Large swaths of the population are so ideologically distant from one another that they are unable to find areas of agreement. This inability to find a “common ground” reaches beyond public policy and into larger areas of culture. Whether it be college education, the places people choose to live, the places people buy groceries, or the online communities in which people participate, there are fewer and fewer places of contact for ideologically distinct groups. One might include this story of separation within a larger narrative about the breakdown of civil society. In this tale, communities used to have places where people gathered no matter their group affiliation. Bowling leagues or membership at a Moose Lodge provided the context for bonds of social trust across lines of ideological difference. Now people bowl alone and there are

fewer and fewer places providing context for the formation of social trust.²⁸ Whether this story of social breakdown captures the ways people have always been sorted and separated, though, is another question.

Some may certainly object that humans are now more connected than ever. The inventions of the steam engine and the telegraph created the conditions for travel and communication over long distances in a short amount of time.²⁹ The philosopher John Dewey worried about what this meant for local community long before profiteering conservatives declared the end of an age.³⁰ The level of human connection made possible by the telegraph would pale in comparison to the forms of human connection made possible by the invention of the internet. Platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter all claim the mantle of “connecting” people as their primary objective, and they have done just that for millions all over the globe.

Certainly, many have found meaningful community on platforms such as Facebook. Still, it is worth asking how civil society has fared in the hands of for-profit corporations seeking to remake the world under the guidance of a philosophically empty notion of “connection” and a responsibility to shareholders. Some, such as Sherry Turkle, have worried about what an increasing reliance on online forms of connection mean for other modes of human interaction.³¹

Others have pointed out the ways social media “rabbit holes” further polarize and segregate

²⁸ Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Touchstone Books, 2001).

²⁹ On the relationship of the telegraph to the internet, see: Tom Standage, *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century's On-line Pioneers* (New York, Bloomsbury, 2014).

³⁰ John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems: An Essay in Political Inquiry*, ed. Melvin Rogers (Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 2016), 169-70. Gordon Allport named a similar concern in his study on the formation of prejudice. See: Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* 25th Anniversary Edition (New York: Basic Books, 1979), xv.

³¹ Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other* (New York: Basic Books, 2012).

online communities into “ideological bubbles” with littler exposure to different views.³² As algorithms continue to change, however, it has become apparent that civil society and social trust have only continued to diminish through the age of connectivity.³³ This is not to suggest that there exists some sacred center to which all groups ought to return. Rather it is to point to a larger phenomenon of a breakdown in social trust that is driving social relations further defined by contempt.

Contempt is a strange emotion, certainly not in its consequences, but in the way it sustains itself. Placing people, groups, and ideas outside the realm of those things or people deserving respect or consideration, contempt justifies itself by excluding those whose presence might, with any consequence, challenge the assumptions behind contempt. This emotion has a long history in Christian teaching and ways of relating to “out groups.” Most notably, centuries of Christian contempt toward Jews resulted in the *Shoah* and a subsequent reconsideration of that very tradition of contempt toward Jews.³⁴ Others have identified a similar persistent contempt in Christian treatment of queer people.³⁵ What’s more, as Macalaster Bell argues, contempt does not have a single corresponding feeling and “readily combines with a wide variety of affects and can be experienced as a strong aversion similar to disgust, cool disregard, or amused dismissiveness.”³⁶ While the target group and corresponding feeling might change, what remains

³² Derek O’Callaghan, Derek Greene, Maura Conway, Joe Carthy, and Pa’draig Cunningham, “Down the (White) Rabbit Hole: The Extreme Right and Online Recommender Systems,” *Social Science Computer Review*, vol. 33.4 (2015), 459-478. Lu Tang, *et al.* ““Down the Rabbit Hole” of Vaccine Misinformation on YouTube: Network Exposure Study,” *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, vol. 23.1 (January 2021).

³³ This is not to comment on social media’s value “on the whole,” as these platforms have facilitated the formation of important subcultures and created some forms of exposure to new ideas. See: Latoya A. Lee, “Black Twitter: A Response to Bias in Mainstream Media,” *Social Sciences* 6.26 (2017), doi:10.3390/socsci6010026.

³⁴ For one account of this teaching see: Jules Isaac, *The Teaching of Contempt: Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964).

³⁵ See: David P. Gushee, “Ending the Teaching of Contempt,” in *Changing Our Minds* 3rd ed. (Canton, MI: Read the Spirit Books, 2017), 125-144.

³⁶ Macalaster Bell, *Hard Feelings: The Moral Psychology of Contempt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 27.

consistent is the, often unspoken, ways Christians lean on contempt as a way to understand and relate to those considered “outside” of the church.³⁷

In distinguishing between contempt and condemnation, Cathleen Kaveny describes and points to the dangers of contempt in the following way:

[...] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines contempt as “the action of contemning or despising; the holding or treating as of little account, or as vile and worthless; the mental attitude in which a thing is so considered.” It comes from the Latin *contemnere*, which is defined in very similar fashion: “to consider a person or thing as unimportant or of small value, to value little, esteem lightly . . .” The closely related *temneere* comes from the Greek word τέμνειν, which means “to cut or to cut off,” “to prune,” or even “to wound or maim.” [...] Citizens rightly call each other to account for violations of our most fundamental commitments as a people. Contempt, however, is a different matter entirely. To treat one’s political interlocutors as vile or worthless is to risk undermining their equal status as participants in our political community. It is to treat them as unworthy of citizenship, as people who must be “pruned” from our common political endeavor.³⁸

Kaveny’s account is concerned with how religious and prophetic language contributes to or detracts from democratic deliberation. As such, contempt, on her account, is a strictly negative category with “condemnation” serving as its more positive cousin. Here, contempt results from a social relationship so soured that one begins to take another as “vile or worthless.” For Kaveny, such a response is always inappropriate and risks retribution in order to remove the contemptible from a political community.

It can be helpful to triangulate contempt with other political emotions. Many will see similarities between contempt and resentment, but whereas contempt places one as beyond consideration, resentment “is partially constitutive of the stance of holding people responsible for their wrongdoing.”³⁹ As such, resentment takes others as worthy of accountability and seeks after

³⁷ Contempt is often deployed as a way for Christians to interface with difference within the Christian tradition as well. Anti-Catholic bigotry among Protestants and Pentecostals is one example of this phenomenon.

³⁸ Cathleen Kaveny, *Prophecy Without Contempt: Religious Discourse in the Public Square* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), x.

³⁹ Macalester Bell, *Hard Feelings: The Moral Psychology of Contempt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 10.

a moral reckoning; perhaps, then, resentment will be found more in response to contempt than in contempt itself. Martha Nussbaum sees fear as the root of other anti-democratic emotions.⁴⁰

While fear can spur or even help to sustain contempt, it does not capture the sense of moral pride and dismissal of another that contempt entails. Similarly, disgust and hate can certainly be an expression of contempt, though not necessarily so, but they do not capture the larger categorical dismissal found in contempt. Pity can amount to a type of contempt when it is built on a comparatively low view of another, though pity in the form of moral concern for another's position does not necessarily amount to contempt.

Moral philosophers have commented on contempt, but by and large they have not undertaken in depth reflection on its dynamics. Aristotle sees rightly oriented contempt as a virtue, though he does not consider its value or danger to political life.⁴¹ For Kant, contempt is always a violation of the moral law because it fails to respect the inherent dignity of every person and can result in the types of punishment he hopes to exclude.⁴² Nietzsche does not go as far as to consider the moral quality of contempt because the strong man would not have so much concern for another as to hold them in contempt.⁴³ Mary Wollstonecraft accuses Edmund Burke of contempt of his opponents, while herself drawing on contempt as a means to navigate

⁴⁰ Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Monarchy of Fear: A Philosopher Looks at Our Political Crisis* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018).

⁴¹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1985), esp. IV.3 1124b5 (p. 101), X.1 1172a23 (p. 266), and X.9 1179b26 (p. 292). Cited by Michelle Mason, "Contempt as a Moral Attitude," *Ethics* 113 (January 2003), 238-9 n. 8.

⁴² Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor, with an introduction by Roger J. Sullivan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), AP463. Cited by Michelle Mason, "Contempt as a Moral Attitude," *Ethics* 113 (January 2003), 238-9 n. 8.

⁴³ Michelle Mason, "Contempt as a Moral Attitude," 238 n. 8. See: Friederich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1967), par. 10.

contentious political relations.⁴⁴ These varied considerations of contempt’s moral quality simultaneously gesture toward contempt’s ambiguity.

Political philosophers have largely condemned contempt because its effects are seen as a threat to political stability. Machiavelli saw it as a grave threat, insisting that “a ruler must avoid contempt as if it were a reef.”⁴⁵ Hobbes particularly emphasized the destabilizing potential of contempt, “because all signs of hatred and contempt provoke most of all to brawling and fighting.”⁴⁶ This concern for the destabilizing effects of contempt made Hobbes go as far as “to declare it a law of nature that contempt should never be expressed.”⁴⁷

More recently, several have developed more fine-grained accounts of contempt, demonstrating the circumstances in which it could be a laudatory response to superiority.⁴⁸ One such account of “properly focused contempt” takes contempt as “not [...] merely judging or believing that the relevant other ranks low as a person but, rather, involves regarding the other as one who thus ranks low.”⁴⁹ Therefore, contempt is not the belief that a person is inherently low, but that a person “ranks low” based on the interpersonal idea of what that person could be. This low regard for another does not have a necessary behavioral outcome, though, as Michelle Mason points out, it can result in withdrawal from those held in contempt. Such a withdrawal

⁴⁴ Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Men*. Ross Carroll, “Wollstonecraft and the Political Value of Contempt,” *European Journal of Political Theory* vol. 18.1 (2019), 26-46.

⁴⁵ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Russell Prince (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 64. As cited in, Bell, *Hard Feelings*, 11.

⁴⁶ Hobbes, *De Cive*, in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol. 2, ed. William Molesworth (London: John Bohn, 1839), chap. 3, sec. 12. As cited in Bell, *Hard Feelings*, 11.

⁴⁷ Bell, *Hard Feelings*, 11.

⁴⁸ See: Macalester Bell, *Hard Feelings: The Moral Psychology of Contempt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). For a Christian response to Bell, see: Ryan West, “Contempt and the Cultivation of Character: Two Models,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 43.3 (2015), 493-519. Martha Nussbaum gives a short reflection on contempt as it relates to anger in political emotions: Martha C. Nussbaum, *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 50-51.

⁴⁹ Michelle Mason, “Contempt as a Moral Attitude,” 241.

could mean that one avoids social interactions or even simple displays of respect, such as a handshake.⁵⁰

§3 – On Pentecostal Contempt

Contempt never exists in a vacuum of clean moral concepts. As post-secular theorists have continued to insist, political action, including its contemptuous forms, is always undergirded by a political-theological scaffolding that makes such action possible. There may well be something to morally justified contempt or contempt of vice. For instance, I do not find a Black community's contempt for White supremacists morally misguided in the least. With that said, my concern is for a more narrow type of contempt that, on my view, falls outside of any justifiable attitude of contempt. What I call *Pentecostal Contempt*, is an attitude of contempt in the same way that moral philosophers speak of it, though, with three magnifying theological components at work. *Pentecostal Contempt* is a contempt for others based on 1) a *Closed Pneumatology* 2) *Ethical Exceptionalism*, and 3) a *Threatened Posture*. I will expand on each area below.

What is so Pentecostal about this contempt, though? I name this as Pentecostal contempt, rather than say Presbyterian or Anglican contempt, not because Presbyterians or Anglicans are incapable of the type of contempt I outline here. Rather, I start my analysis from within a broad Pentecostal movement and find distinct dynamics at play within that movement. One should expect to see these dynamics at work in traditions that do not identify as Pentecostal because of the larger Pentecostalization of Christianity I describe above. Further, one might also see these

⁵⁰ Mason, "Contempt as a Moral Attitude," 241-2. Mason further distinguishes contempt from resentment by naming contempt as "person focused" and concerned not with a particular wrong doing, but focusing on what the contemner determines to be a falling short of the ideal for that person or group (Mason, "Contempt as a Moral Attitude," 246-50).

dynamics at play in Christian traditions prior to the advent of contemporary Pentecostalism. My use of “Pentecostal” to modify “contempt” is reflective of the ways those dynamics have exploded in contemporary Pentecostalism and influenced other forms of contemporary Christianity. This modifier should signal the starting point for my analysis, but it should not signal hard boundaries or limited application.

Before expanding on each component below, it is important to describe how I deploy this terminology in this project. Existing literature lacks clear and concise language for the theological dynamics of Pentecostal contempt. Because there does not exist an idiom to talk about these dynamics within Pentecostalism, they often go unnamed or buried within obfuscating discourses in continental philosophy or systematic theology. So, if for no other reason, I develop these terms to create a more direct and precise way to talk about Pentecostal contempt as a theological phenomenon. With this in mind, it is important not to overdetermine the content of these terms, as each manifestation of Pentecostalism will have unique social and cultural characters that shape Pentecostalism’s response to difference. Who the other is and how the other is understood will be shaped by local categories and cosmologies. The language of Pentecostal contempt, if useful for identifying dynamics in Pentecostalism, needs to be narrow and flexible enough to name dynamics in multiple settings that bear relevant similarities while also allowing for significant differences. The goal is not to create an abstract category that I then lay atop a particular setting, but to generate language for what I have observed in various Pentecostal settings. As such, I describe here the contours of dynamics that I then contextualize in case studies (chs. 2 and 3).

§3.1 – *Closed Pneumatology*

Pentecostals have a high view of the Spirit’s work in the world. Emphasizing the narrative of Luke/Acts as a theological key, Pentecostals see biblical miracles as normative for Christians today.⁵¹ Therefore, Pentecostals anticipate miracles on a regular basis. Even when Pentecostals are not dealing in miracles, the lens of the Spirit is still a means for understanding the world. So, while someone might not expect to see miracles daily, they will likely narrate their life with an active presence of the Spirit. Speaking of communing with the Spirit, feeling the Spirit, seeing the Spirit, or listening to the Spirit, Pentecostals make room for the Spirit as a regular part of their lives.

This emphasis on the Spirit does not necessitate what I call a *Closed Pneumatology*. However, a pneumatology becomes closed when this close relationship with the Spirit is taken as exclusive.⁵² Which is to say, a closed pneumatology assumes that the Spirit relates closely to an individual or particular community and does not relate to other communities. Put differently, a Pentecostal holding to a closed pneumatology sees other communities—sometimes other *Christian* communities—as sites of the Spirit’s absence. The theological claim, then, is that the Spirit has an attachment to particular communities, to the exclusion of a relationship with other communities. This is not to say that the borders of a community are impermeable, but to say that

⁵¹ For a seminal biblical argument making the case for the priority of Luke/Acts, see: Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984).

⁵² Of course, what I refer to as *Closed Pneumatologies* are not unique to Pentecostals. Christians have long articulated *Closed Pneumatologies* that themselves manifest in contempt. One early Christian example of a closed pneumatology resulting in anti-Jewish contempt is Didymus the Blind’s *On the Holy Spirit*. Here, Didymus makes the case that the Spirit is the source of sanctification for Christians, effectively limiting the presence and activity of the Spirit to Christians. The result is that Didymus adopts a contemptuous posture toward Jews, “who crucified the Lord and Savior and accordingly enraged the Holy Spirit” making Jews, therefore, “recipients of what they did to the Prophets and to their Savior.” Didymus the Blind, “On the Holy Spirit,” in *Works on the Spirit*, ed. John Behr, trans. Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2011), 210.

full scale religious conversion is the means by which one enters into relationship with or participates in the Spirit.

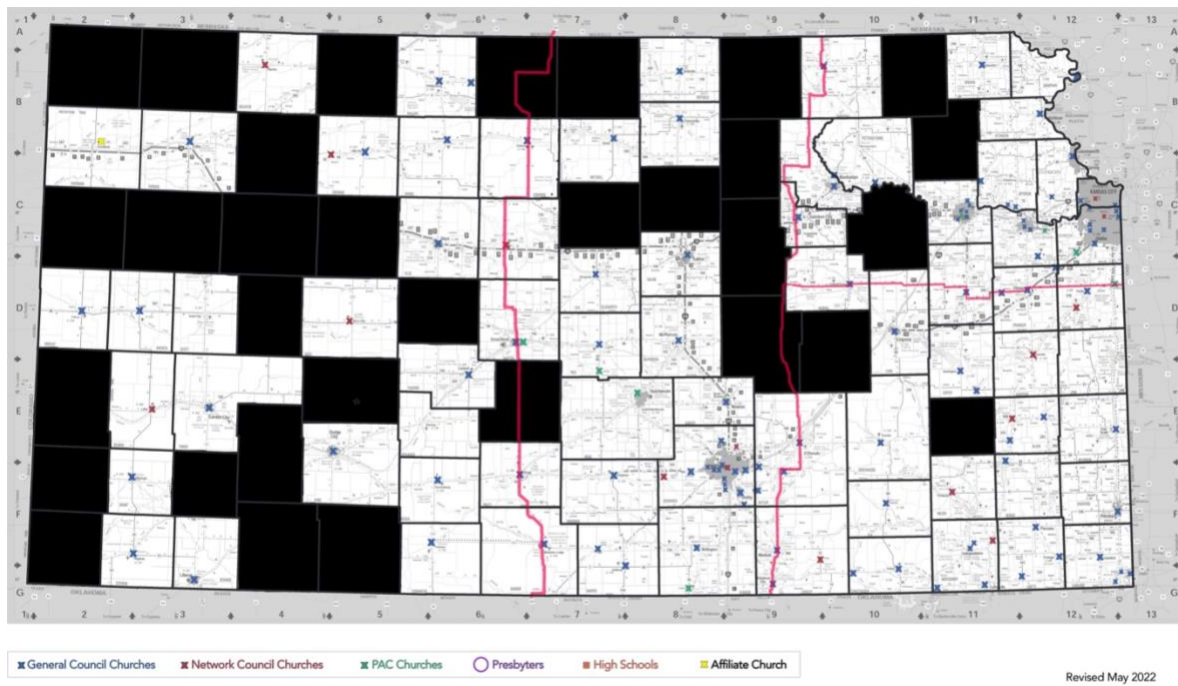


Figure 1: Assemblies of God Kansas Ministry Network, “Dark Counties and Churches,” <https://www.agkansas.com/agkmaps>. Accessed: Feb. 20, 2023.⁵³

Consider the example of a closed pneumatology in Figure 1. This image is included on the Assemblies of God Kansas’s website and has been distributed to ministers in an effort to pray for the expansion of the AG in Kansas. Those counties blacked out in the image represent counties without a “spirit empowered witness,” which is to say that those counties do not have an Assemblies of God church. That counties without an AG church are deemed “dark,” despite having several other churches that are likely quite similar to the AG theologically, represents an understanding of the Spirit’s presence as exclusively connected to the presence of particular Pentecostals. Based on the map alone, the Holy Spirit does not seem to be present in these “dark counties” as the Spirit’s activity is closed to those lighter counties.

⁵³ Thank you to Cameron Combs for directing me to this image and its context.

I will engage with a more credible defense of a position like this one in Chapter 4, but for now, it is helpful to flag my own skepticism toward this position. Closed pneumatologies have a too restricted view of God’s sovereignty and an inability to offer a theological account for much of the world. In so isolating the work of God to such small communities, God becomes one power among many who is in a competition for souls. This creates a further inability to see that “all good things are from God,” because God cannot be understood as the source of those things originating outside of the community. Consider for instance that it is common among Pentecostals to consider Catholics “unsaved.” In so doing, the beauty and goodness of art and liturgy created in Roman Catholic traditions has to be either explained away as *actually* other than beautiful and good or a counterfeit with a source other than God. This problem only worsens when Pentecostals attempt to understand groups with deeper differences (queer people, Muslims, movie goers, etc.).

Some will hear in my criticism of closed pneumatology an insistence that the Spirit is a universal presence—and they would be right on this count—so much so, that the uniqueness of the church or God’s covenant with Israel is washed away—a charge I deny. Here the charge is that the particularity of the Gospel seems unimportant if God does not still bear a special relationship with the church. My use of closed pneumatology does not deny that the Spirit has unique relationship with Israel and the church. Rather, my insistence is that in God’s abundance, unique relationships with Israel and the church do not then imply that the Spirit is absent from or inactive outside of Israel and the church.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ One should hear sympathies with Willie Jennings’s position that the Christian imagination has understood itself as above others, including Israel, and should rather understand itself as joining alongside Israel and God’s work in the world. See: Willie Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

§3.2 – *Ethical Exceptionalism*

The second component of what I call Pentecostal contempt prioritizes a high view of an individual or community’s ethical worth. Call this *Ethical Exceptionalism*.⁵⁵ Within this view, there is a high priority placed on the defining characteristic of the church—sometimes narrowly defined as a particular type of Pentecostal—as distinctively holy. The terms of this holiness are negotiated differently in different contexts, but ethical exceptionalism creates a comparative universalism, in which particular standards of holiness are universalized and a group’s understanding of their own holiness always has a comparative element. Within this view, passages of the New Testament, such as the salt and light passage in Matthew 5:13-16, are taken as both a directive and a statement of reality, in which the church is ethically distinct from the world.

Ethical exceptionalism has a mutually constitutive relationship with closed pneumatologies. The belief that the Spirit is exclusively related to a particular community, at times, requires an explanation or evidence. This can come in two forms. First, Pentecostals can “prove” the presence of the Spirit within their community by emphasizing the work of the Spirit there, which includes the moral superiority of that group. A second way Pentecostals can “prove” the exclusive presence of the Spirit is by demonstrating the depravity of those outside of their communities. So, Pentecostal perceptions of others, whether grounded in evidence or not, are shaped by the twofold need to justify themselves as recipients of the Spirit and therefore growing in holiness and the need to demonstrate moral superiority to those perceived as beyond the work

⁵⁵ My use of “ethical” rather than “moral” or “holy” here should not be read in any strict sense. Ethical exceptionalism contains within it assumptions that a group is both more moral and more holy than those outside the group. By naming ethical exceptionalism, I do not intend to deny that Christians have a distinct ethical calling. Rather, I am naming the often implicit assumption that particular Christian groups will necessarily be more ethical or necessarily have better ethical perceptions than other groups.

of the Spirit. A strong sense of ethical exceptionalism “proves” the truth of a closed pneumatology, while a strong sense of a closed pneumatology demands a Pentecostal self-understanding rooted in ethical exceptionalism.

In her study of Nigerian Pentecostalism, Ruth Marshall provides a helpful account of these dynamics. Marshall relies on a Foucauldian understanding of subjectivation, in which the realities of subjectivity provide the context for Pentecostal action. Here, subjectivity “is not a form of knowledge, a power, an essence, or a function, but rather a relationship—between the self and the world, between the self and the self—whose content is historical, “rare,” and fragile.”⁵⁶ Within this context, the subject is always “worked on” by both sources internal and external to the subject.

Subjectivation implies that the individual is always worked upon by a historically specific series of relations of power and knowledge that determine the possible field of his or her actions, prompting or imposing certain conducts and the recognition of a certain truth about the self and about the world. At the same time, this process implies the active engagement of the subject, such that the subject recognizes him- or herself as not only the agent, but also the moral subject of his or her own action.⁵⁷

Moral action, then, becomes a performative endeavor in that the self is constantly shaping the self. Pentecostals are active agents in shaping themselves to be who they understand themselves to be. This makes up the performative side of what I mean by ethical exceptionalism, though it would be inappropriate to collapse ethical exceptionalism into a *mere* work of the self. Rather, the performance of holiness is always for Pentecostals both generated and received. Ethical exceptionalism has with it a particular view of God where that God then acts on the individual in a process of sanctification. I expand on this difference between my understanding of ethical

⁵⁶ Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 181.

⁵⁷ Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 181.

exceptionalism and Marshall's analysis in Chapter Two with one important difference being that ethical exceptionalism better allows for legitimate theological critique.

Marshall and others have characterized Pentecostalism as a "rupture" oriented movement, which is to say there is a high priority placed on conversion and a turn from the past. Nimi Wariboko names rupture or the constant possibility of new beginnings as the "*Pentecostal Principle*."⁵⁸ His account of rupture has at its heart an openness to newness and new birth. However, within other contexts rupture with the past requires an identification of the past as that from which the Pentecostal has turned. There is a necessary identification of darkness against which the Pentecostal can either identify themselves as light or perform their own role in the light through their opposition to a perceived darkness. Chapters Two and Three will give more flesh to ethical exceptionalism, but for now let it suffice to say constructions of evil against which Pentecostals can perform their salvation are an essential component of Pentecostal contempt.

§3.3 – *A Threatened Posture*

A closed pneumatology can inspire and compound notions of a group's ethical exceptionalism, which can then create a posture of moral outrage or disgust toward those outside of the socially closed system. Call this a *Threatened Posture*. The object of concern and the particular content of this posture are dependent on the context in which Pentecostals find themselves. The central element for a threatened posture, though, is that a group or individual carries an existential fear into its understandings of other groups. That Pentecostal contempt entails a threatened posture makes it distinct from what Bell calls "passive contempt" in which

⁵⁸ Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2012), 14.

there is a lack of awareness or consideration of those held in contempt.⁵⁹ The threatened posture cultivated by Pentecostal contempt resembles more what Bell calls “active contempt,” which is “characterized by hostility and active non-identification rather than indifference.”⁶⁰ Bell further points out that passive and active contempt “both present their targets as comparatively low, but active contempt also presents its target as threatening.”⁶¹ So, it is under these particular conditions of contempt that other political emotions, such as fear, prejudice, or hate, are activated.

In some cases, hyperactive notions of the demonic can be the tool by which a threatened posture understands difference. But, the threat need not be an encroaching demonic force. Pentecostals, like other Christians, at times carry fears of the future of their community. This can be indexed to the long-term stability of Pentecostal institutions or the overall destiny of a nation. Perhaps another group will evangelize more quickly and win converts from Pentecostal communities. Perhaps a way of thinking will “water down” the true and authentic expressions of faith that many Pentecostals understand themselves to be preserving. Perhaps another power will come to control Pentecostals’ collective fate. The point is that the crushing responsibility of bearing the exclusive weight of God’s activity in the world leaves communities feeling insecure and constantly threatened by difference.

When brought together with a closed pneumatology and ethical exceptionalism, threatened postures create the conditions for a battle between good and evil where God is on the side of the good (*Ethically Exceptional*) rather than the particular manifestation of evil that is posing a threat. The Spirit is neither present nor active with those inspiring a threatened posture

⁵⁹ Bell, *Hard Feelings*, 49.

⁶⁰ Bell, *Hard Feelings*, 50.

⁶¹ Bell, *Hard Feelings*, 50-1.

—except in perhaps a subversive way, confounding the enemy or what not. The outcome of this “battle” need not result in violence, though it can and often does, as both missionary activity and prayer are narrated through militaristic and violent terms. A threatened posture as I describe it is the result of a closed pneumatology and ethical exceptionalism, leaving Pentecostals first and foremost looking for reasons to fear others rather than encounter the Spirit of God.

§4 – Methodology

Theology often has a hard time thinking about social patterns beyond the individual believer. For instance, Miroslav Volf, in *Exclusion and Embrace*, makes a methodological decision to focus on social agents rather than social arrangements. His decision is not a naïve one, as he recognizes that “Social arrangements condition social agents; and social agents fashion social arrangements.”⁶² However, for Volf, the role of the theologian is by and large in “fostering the kind of social agents capable of envisioning and creating just, truthful, and peaceful societies, and on shaping a cultural climate in which such agents will thrive.”⁶³ For Volf, the theologian should instead cooperate with Christians in other specialties better suited to consider social arrangements. This insight is helpful, but it does not justify the subsequent move to focus on social agents rather than arrangements. Throughout this project, I assume, like Volf, a co-constitutive relationship between social arrangements and social agents. Unlike Volf, though, I take up both social arrangements and agents to be objects of theological reflection and consider the ill-suitedness of theologians to think about social arrangements as a shortcoming of theological methodology. This shortcoming is especially acute in those cases where theology

⁶² Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 22.

⁶³ Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace*, 21.

unconsciously reproduces the assumptions and effects of a given social arrangement.

Alternatively, I take a methodological approach that leans on the insights of theological reflection, philosophy, political theory, and social scientific thought more broadly. In doing so, I assume that social arrangements not only form social agents, but render certain theological questions and conclusions salient. Theological reflection, then, can critique existing social arrangements and inspire different ways of living, while offering theological coherence to those new forms of life.

Pentecostalism is always shaped by the context in which it is situated, and I take seriously that understanding any instantiation of Pentecostalism requires an understanding of that context. Much of the existing language in the social sciences and Christian theology is ill-suited for the tasks of diagnosing and reimagining Pentecostal politics. The new terms I deploy here are not intended to divorce this project from existing conversations, but to illuminate and reconsider what I take to be one substantial way Pentecostal politics of contempt sustains itself theologically. Pentecostal contempt is something of an umbrella term resting on the three pillars of closed pneumatologies, ethical exceptionalism, and a threatened posture. I do not seek to overdetermine the relationship between each of the pillars, though I do see ethical exceptionalism and threatened postures as following from closed pneumatologies.

In my use of these terms I do not make any claim to having drawn these terms out of an objective observation of the evidence. Rather, these terms are developed first through personal experience in Pentecostal communities and second, in conversation with a larger academy of Pentecostal theologians. This is not to say, though, that my development of Pentecostal contempt starts from the abstract and moves to the particular. Quite the opposite. I unashamedly start from my own experiences and intuitions that develop from those experiences before creating language

to name and locate particular dynamics in Pentecostal political life. Chapters two and three then take these terms and illustrate their explanatory capacity through two historical examples. Here, the categories I have created are accountable to the historical evidence without claiming to be a universal explanation of Pentecostal political life.

§4.1 – *Is there Room for the Social Sciences?*

My identification of Pentecostal contempt relies on both theological reflection and social scientific thought. The relationship between these two, typically distinct, modes of inquiry has been historically fraught. I accept much of John Milbank’s critique of sociology of religion, though without assuming his radical conclusion that “sociology of religion ought to come to an end.”⁶⁴ Moreover, I see no reason, given the nature of Milbank’s critique, that chastened versions of social scientific thought cannot be of value for theological reflection. Perhaps Milbank was responding to stronger versions of methodological atheism at the time he wrote *Theology and Social Theory*, but much has changed since 1990.⁶⁵ As an alternative to Milbank’s more combative relationship with the social sciences, I find more affinity with Sarah Coakley’s approach to incorporating social scientific thought into theological reflection. For Coakley, “sociology can continue to unearth ‘in the field’ both ecclesiastical embarrassments *and* hidden treasure for theology.”⁶⁶ Theology and doctrine can often become detached from the lived reality of the faith. Social scientific thought, then, is one way for theologians to investigate “what is going on doctrinally *in context*.”⁶⁷

⁶⁴ John Milbank, *Theology & Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 143.

⁶⁵ Which is, coincidentally, the year I was born.

⁶⁶ Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay ‘On the Trinity’*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 76.

⁶⁷ Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self*, 81.

Throughout Part One, I demonstrate a two-pronged approach to the incorporation of social scientific thought and theological reflection. The first prong of this approach insists that insofar as social scientific methods or theoretical lenses exclude the theological, they also distort the context and phenomena of Pentecostalism. For example, Jon Bialecki, who represents one of the positions attempting to “take religion seriously,” justifies the inclusion of God as a social actor in anthropological studies, but at the cost of reducing God to a social creation.⁶⁸ While getting correct the risks of reduction and distortion posed by methodological atheism, Bialecki only creates a different ontological structure that is neither recognizable nor legible to the people Bialecki hopes to study. Bialecki does exceptional fieldwork, but the limitations of this methodology become more clear in the theorization of his findings. Take, for instance, his study of a Vineyard group in *A Diagram for Fire*; here, Bialecki’s reliance on Deleuze to explain a charismatic Vineyard group contorts both the claims and practices of that group so as to render them illegible to the Vineyard.⁶⁹ This is not merely to say that Bialecki’s methodology is abstract and obfuscating, though it is arguably at least in part those things, but to argue methodologies that cannot take seriously God as an actor in the world will always find themselves stumbling to account for and understand Pentecostal behavior.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Jon Bialecki, “Does God Exist in Methodological Atheism? On Tanya Lurhmann’s *When God Talks Back* and Bruno Latour,” *Anthropology of Consciousness*, vol. 25.1 (2014), 32-52. For one example of an anthropological study integrating theological concepts with theories of Foucauldian subjectivation, see: China Sherz, “Enduring the Awkward Embrace: Ontology and Ethical Work in a Ugandan Convent,” *American Anthropologist*, vol. 120.1 (2017), 102-112.

⁶⁹ John Bialecki, *A Diagram for Fire: Miracles and Variation in an American Charismatic Movement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017), ch. 3.

⁷⁰ Contrast this to the approach taken by T.M. Luhrmann where Luhrmann adopts the stance of a participant observer who is not able to make ultimate judgements on reality. As such, Luhrmann’s methodology leaves open the possibility for divine activity and comments on the observable practices American Evangelicals use to train their minds to hear God. See: T.M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship With God* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), xxiv. I will further explore these methodological questions in Chapter Two.

The second prong of this approach holds that theological reflection without awareness of that context offered by the social sciences will end up tilting at windmills and stuck in insular cycles of abstraction. One reason for this is that theological reflection often becomes a slave to the categories of systematic theology and as a result loses sight of what ends theological inquiry is serving. Further, the at times insular conversations of theologians happen without consideration of the social forces that are shaping those conversations. Social theory and the social sciences, without displacing theological thought, offer a way to place theological reflection in a given setting and allow theologians to better engage the times in which they exist.

§4.2 – Discerning Spirit(s) and Social Scientific Thought

My understanding of the social sciences holds a close relationship to the concept of “discernment” and the “discernment of Spirit(s)” that I utilize throughout this project. These are concepts developed in several Christian theological traditions and my use of these terms demands some sense of clarity. Unless otherwise noted, “discernment” and “discernment of Spirit(s)” should be assumed most immediately within a Pentecostal theological context.⁷¹ I do not develop a theory of discerning Spirit(s) in this project, but my understanding of discernment does shape the methodological approach I take throughout the project. Discernment has a long history within Christian theology and spiritual writings.⁷² Some approaches to discernment prioritize the interior or spiritual feelings experienced by an individual or group. Without abandoning the interior or the experience of spiritual feeling, my understanding of discernment

⁷¹ Pentecostal understandings of the discernment of Spirit(s) have many affinities with those developed in Ignatian traditions.

⁷² For historical accounts of Christian discernment of spirits, see: Wendy Love Anderson, *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the Late Middle Ages* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011); and Elizabeth Hense, *Early Christian Discernment of Spirits* (Zürich: Lit Verlag GmbH & Co., 2016).

also incorporates a discernment of the exterior of things. Exteriority can refer to concrete manifestations of things, but also custom and cultural norms. In discerning Spirit(s) one prays and listens to the Spirit, while simultaneously examining the world around them. When, in this project, I employ the social sciences or social theory, I do so with the assumption that such methods are for the purpose of seeing and following the Spirit of Christ. In my use, the social sciences are always limited tools meant to serve Pentecostal ends.

Among Pentecostals, Amos Yong has developed, perhaps, the most complete system of discernment. I take much from Yong's approach without following it completely. Yong's initial development of discerning Spirit(s) was in response to those perceived challenges posed by theologies of religions. Hoping to move "beyond the impasse" created by beginning with evangelical questions of soteriology, Yong proposes a method of starting with the Spirit as a means of facilitating interreligious dialogue and encounter.⁷³ This methodological decision takes dialogues beginning with Christ – and therefore questions of soteriology – as doomed to failure because of the seemingly insurmountable nature of those soteriological questions. Because evangelical theology connects salvation so closely with the proclamation of Christ, there is no space for Christians to see similarities across religious divides when those religions do not also exclusively proclaim the lordship of Jesus. The alternative of starting with the Spirit opens conversation by creating avenues for Christians to acknowledge the presence of God, through the Spirit of Christ, without having to acknowledge any salvific effect of that presence.

Undergirding this methodological decision is a more fundamental position on the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the world. Christopher Stephenson, a Pentecostal theologian

⁷³ Yong's theology of religions is most completely articulated in: Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018 [original publication 2000]) and rearticulated for a wider audience in: Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003).

and foremost interpreter of Yong's thought, sees Yong's theology of world religions as "Building on the premises that the Holy Spirit is God's way of being present to and active within the world," a premise which Yong thoroughly develops under the banners of "foundational pneumatology" and "the pneumatological imagination."⁷⁴ Foundational pneumatology names the ontological reality in which both Spirit and Word are present in the creation. Appropriating an Augustinian understanding of the Spirit as the bond of love between the Father and the Son, Yong takes the Spirit as "the relationships among the many things in the world and between God and the world."⁷⁵ As such, relationships constitute "part of the real identities of things" where "things in the world exist as such because they are products of creative activities of Spirit and Word and because their relationships to other things constitute them as such."⁷⁶

As the Spirit creatively constitutes the relational form of reality, then, life in the Spirit bridges the gap between human persons and reality external to the human mind. This is the pneumatological imagination. There is an inherent rationality to reality, where "the Spirit illuminates the rationality of the world and makes it intelligible to human minds."⁷⁷ This is not to name the Spirit as the logos, but to say that the Spirit illuminates the logos. While Yong's ontology is a realist one that maintains a sense of shared rationality through the Spirit, he also maintains an important role for epistemic fallibilism and the necessity of communal interpretation. Humans are members of multiple communities and different interpretive communities intersect at different points, though ultimately the larger human community acts as

⁷⁴ Christopher A. Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 93.

⁷⁵ Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology*, 88. While fundamental throughout his corpus, Yong most fully develops his understanding of a foundational pneumatology in: Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002).

⁷⁶ Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology*, 88.

⁷⁷ Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology*, 89.

a community seeking to interpret the shared Spirit.⁷⁸ Such a move is intended to both preserve the true differences inherent in a perspectival epistemology without collapsing into an absolute relativism.

With this ontological structure of reality in mind, the process of discerning Spirit(s) is always ongoing and seeks to discern the presence, activity, and absence of the Spirit. The three categories of presence, activity, and absence are important for the process of discernment in that they offer differing modalities by which the Spirit relates to the world. Discernment is done in the Pentecostal-charismatic life of the Spirit, but always in the concrete. That reality exists outside of the mind and that spirit is always shaping reality and the conditions in which humans exist, demands continued discernment in the form of concrete investigation. Yong details specific recommendations for this discernment in the context of other religions that I will not detail here. Suffice it to say that the process of discernment is one that always begins from concrete reality as a means to discern the Spirit(s). As Yong says, “The inner is revealed in the outer.”⁷⁹ In observing the material manifestations of a thing, one can begin to discern if the spirit of that thing promotes the loving relationality and authentic representation of the Trinitarian Spirit or perhaps “destroy[s] rather than promote[s] social relationships and human authenticity” suggesting “divine absence, or, the demonic.”⁸⁰

Yong’s understanding of discernment is complex and relies on the pragmatic semiotics of Charles Pierce. He is engaging several larger metaphysical questions to which I cannot do justice here. With this in mind, it might be helpful to hold Yong’s account of discernment throughout

⁷⁸ Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 303-4.

⁷⁹ Amos Yong, “Spiritual Discernment: A Biblical-Theological Reconsideration,” in *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Russell P. Spittler*, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 100.

⁸⁰ Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology*, 93.

this project without gripping it too tightly. I find much of Yong’s language around discernment helpful for thinking about how the Spirit of God relates to the world, but his fuller account of that relationship can be too inwardly focused and overdetermined and is not necessary for this account of Pentecostal contempt. Further, identifying the activity of the Spirit at the level of the ontological can fail to account for the Spirit’s relationship to human activity in the areas of the cultural. What Yong gives, though, is one way to begin thinking about inquiries into the shape of the social and physical world as simultaneously inquires into the presence, activity, and absence of the Holy Spirit.

Néstor Medina, who voices sympathies with Yong’s project, offers a different account of the Spirit’s activity in the world that prioritizes the work of the cultural. For Medina, “not only is the divine self-disclosure mediated and conditioned through the cultural but the human response to the divine invitation is also culturally mediated and conditioned.”⁸¹ As such, there does not exist a transcendent category of philosophical or theological analysis free from the cultural. Discerning God’s presence in the world requires attention to cultural setting and will, in many ways, require the tools of cultural analysis. This cultural analysis, though, will ways be pneumatologically inflected as it is the Spirit who “animates the cultural mediation of divine disclosure as well as the human response to the divine.”⁸² So, just as the Christ event is mediated through culture, so is the Spirit’s communication of that event and the Spirit’s “mediating role when she brings humans together with the rest of creation, places people in a relationship with one another, and establishes and sustains the relationship between the divine and humanity.” As such, the process of discerning the Spirit will bring to the traditional methods of theological

⁸¹ Néstor Medina, *Christianity, Empire, and the Spirit: (Re)configuring Faith and the Cultural* (Leiden, ND: Brill, 2018), 314.

⁸² Medina, *Christianity, Empire, and the Spirit*, 336.

reflection a necessary element of cultural analysis and social scientific thought to understand the cultural setting in which theological analysis is done.

§5 – Review of Literature

Given the importance of Pentecostalism and contempt, one would expect the humanities and social sciences to have an interest in understanding what it will mean to live with Pentecostal groups. Anthropological studies often seek to describe Pentecostals and fit their practices into schemes acceptable to academic discourses but foreign to Pentecostals, and thus struggle to speak to Pentecostals regarding what it means to live well with or as Spirit-filled believers.⁸³ Most received forms of political theory do not engage religious rationalities, typically working with separationist paradigms, and when they engage religious traditions they prioritize forms such as Catholicism, Islam, or Judaism. Christian theology, where one might expect to see more awareness of the shifting ground, has only begun to acknowledge the presence of Pentecostalism as a subject or object worthy of theological reflection. Pentecostal theologians have offered the most in-depth analysis of the movement, but that work is often too sanguine about Pentecostalism's capacity as a force for good and is so wrapped up in proselytizing that it largely leaves questions of politics unasked. By and large, no one in these disciplines has seriously begun to grapple with the political realities of our projected Pentecostal future.

⁸³ My critique of current approaches to Pentecostalism shares intuitions with Susan Harding's notion of the "repugnant cultural other." See: Susan Harding, "Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other," *Social Research* 58 no. 2 (Summer 1991), 373-393. Harding develops this argument in her later work, *The Book of Jerry Falwell: Fundamentalist Language and Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). There may well be a kind of contempt held among anthropologists toward Pentecostals insofar as Pentecostals are taken as worthy objects of study but unworthy conversation partners. This elitist contempt of others, though, is of a different sort than the Pentecostal contempt I identify in this project.

§5.1 – Social Scientific Literature on Pentecostalism

More than most other disciplines, the social sciences have given Pentecostalism considerable attention. Studies done by anthropologists and sociologists suffer from limited scopes of analysis and heavy-handed methodologies that risk distorting Pentecostalism. One type of study identifies a single country of analysis and intentionally makes no claims on Pentecostalism beyond the borders they identify. There are good reasons for this approach. Social scientists (or any researchers) experience limitations in data collection that make single country studies attractive from the research side. Further, Pentecostalism is a global movement with highly particular manifestations; studies that cautiously tend to the particularities of Pentecostalism within a given manifestation rightly begin from an anxiety about universalizing claims. The anthropologist Joel Robbins notes the danger of expecting continuity within Pentecostalism. He, and others, argue that Pentecostalism is simultaneously opposed to its local culture and dependent on that culture by accepting received cultural ontologies.⁸⁴ While Robbins is correct that there are significant discontinuities between Pentecostal groups, there is also significant continuity. With an eye toward this continuity, I take up a transnational approach to Pentecostalism, identifying historical cases and tending to the differing particularities and continuities between both. This effort does not make a universal claim about all manifestations of Pentecostalism, but demonstrates continuities in a global movement.

Others have taken a transnational approach to understanding Pentecostalism. However, these studies are either theologically unengaged, too sanguine about Pentecostal political engagement, or too sheepish about making normative claims. Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori's *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* is widely

⁸⁴ Joel Robbins, "On the Paradoxes of Global Pentecostalism and the Perils of Continuity Thinking" *Religion* 33 (2003), 222-3.

cited as evidence that Pentecostals are not an *entirely* otherworldly sect.⁸⁵ Miller and Yamamori are unique in their global sampling of “progressive Pentecostals” who they take to contribute to a certain progressive disposition toward the world through care for the poor or facilitating certain forms of economic “development.” Their exercise in cherry-picking can be helpful, but it lacks any in depth consideration of what makes “progressive Pentecostalism” theologically distinct. While earlier than Miller and Yamamori’s *Global Pentecostalism*, Richard Shaull and Waldo Cesar’s *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches* is often cited as evidence of the growth and public engagement of Pentecostalism in the global south.⁸⁶ This study is unique in that the book is split between Waldo Cesar, a Brazilian sociologist, who gives a sociological analysis of Pentecostalism and Richard Shaull, an American theologian, who interprets that study theologically. Despite this theological engagement, though, Shaull is more measuring the orthodoxy of Pentecostalism than he is contributing the Pentecostal thought or rendering a normative religious critique of Pentecostal politics.

Striking, though, within social scientific literature on Pentecostalism is the way Pentecostal thought is rarely included as a conversation partner. Pentecostals are objects of study, but are not taken as reliable interpreters or generators of thought. Certainly, there are those Pentecostals engaging in social scientific thought, but typically it is the social scientist observing the Pentecostal phenomenon and then theorizing that phenomenon at a distance from Pentecostals. Rather than a separation, I take there to be a mutually beneficial relationship between normative theological reflection and social scientific thought. Devaka Premawardhana is one example of an anthropologist demonstrating the value of normative Pentecostal thought to

⁸⁵ Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

⁸⁶ Richard Shaull and Waldo Cesar, *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches: Promises, Limitations, Challenges* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000)

better illuminate and give texture to his fieldwork among Pentecostals in Mozambique.⁸⁷ As such, I draw on this body of literature and utilize multiple methods throughout this project towards ultimately normative ends.

§5.2 – *Christian Theology (Public and Political)*

If the social sciences tend not to be theologically literate nor methodologically capable of making a normative religious critique, one might expect Christian theology to fill in the gap and offer adequate consideration of Pentecostal political theology. Such has not been the case. Western theology has historically paid little attention to the Holy Spirit and more recent turns to the Spirit have found a way to do so that leaves Pentecostals out of the conversation.⁸⁸ When Christian theologians do consider Pentecostalism, it is under the categories offered by systematic theology and they do not consider public or political behavior. Those fields of Christian theology that more directly consider public life and political theology have been even more oblivious to the realities of our Pentecostal future. While I find many of these projects helpful and will draw on them throughout this project, the failure to consider the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian life renders these accounts of Christian public life both implausible and unhelpful for Pentecostals.

One place Christians have answered this question is under the banner of “public theology.” Here, confrontations with difference are understood as problems of the public where Christians encounter more severe forms of difference once they leave their immediate ecclesial communities. While a contested category, the considerations undertaken as “public theology” get

⁸⁷ Devaka Premawardhana, *Faith in Flux: Pentecostalism and Mobility in Rural Mozambique* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

⁸⁸ For one helpful example of a recent text helpfully considering the role of the Holy Spirit, though without attention to Pentecostalism, see: Eugene F. Rogers, *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005).

to the very heart of the tensions I outline above. One approach to the public, influential among Pentecostals, has been referred to as “ecclesial Christian ethics.”⁸⁹ Ecclesial approaches developed from a suspicion of “this worldly” approaches to Christian ethics, prioritizing Christian practices instead. This mode of Christian thought can be traced back to James McClendon, John Howard Yoder, and Stanley Hauerwas.⁹⁰ Often ecclesial ethics, whether explicitly or by assumption, begins from a critique of those modes of Christian ethics typically associated with Reinhold Niebuhr by pointing to an overly accommodating relationship to “liberalism” and a lack of overtly theological reflection outside of a concept of human sin.

The ecclesial approach does many things well, but as an approach to public life it is not particularly helpful with the challenges I have outlined. In an engagement with Hauerwas, Charles Mathewes argues that, while not necessarily creating a sect, Hauerwas’s sometimes combative approach and reliance on Christian identity and practices risks collapsing Christianity into a form of identity politics.⁹¹ Christianity then becomes one identity option among many, rather than a transformative or prophetic approach to politics. Along with a risky use of identity (the risk is idolatry), ecclesial approaches often assume a too pure or untouched church from which to assume Christian identity and practice. To assume that the church floats through history untouched and unaffected is a naiveté that risks both missing many of the ways the church is influenced for the worse in its practices while simultaneously baptizing those influences.

⁸⁹ For a helpful genealogy of each these approaches and an irenic contribution to the conversation, see: D. Stephen Long, *Augustinian and Ecclesial Christian Ethics: On Loving Enemies* (New York: Lexington Books, 2018).

⁹⁰ John Howard Yoder’s sex abuses are well documented and there is good reason to hold his theological reflection suspect, as it became a tool to justify his abuse. See: Rachel Waltner Goossen, “‘Defanging the Beast’: Mennonite Responses to John Howard Yoder’s Sexual Abuse,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 89, no 1 (January 2015): 7-80; Isaac Samuel Villegas, “The Ecclesial Ethics of John Howard Yoder’s Abuse,” *Modern Theology* (May 11, 2020): <https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12623>.

⁹¹ Charles Mathewes, “Appreciating Hauerwas: One Hand Clapping,” *Anglican Theological Review* 82 no. 2 (Spring 2000), 343-360.

Differing from ecclesial approaches, Augustinian approaches to public life also share some influence among Pentecostals. D. Stephen Long, who identifies with ecclesial approaches, highlights Eric Gregory and Charles Mathewes, each of whom construct an Augustinian vision for public life and politics that is overtly theological, as avoiding the accommodationism that Hauerwas and others critiqued. Both Gregory and Mathewes are not concerned with how religion can contribute to liberal democracy or how to best continue a nation state project, but are interested in the ways politics can serve overtly Christian ends.⁹² While Gregory is more influenced by liberal perfectionism and Mathewes by civic republicanism, both see a theological end for Christian engagement in politics.

I share affinities with Augustinian approaches to politics, and I accept much of Mathewes's table setting. After diagnosing much of the literature in "public theology" as "accommodationist," Mathewes sets out to craft a "theology of public life." This, for Mathewes, differs in that the final grammar for a theology of public life is always theological, in that Christian life is not translated into a public vernacular, but public engagement is made legible within a Christian theological frame. The question of Christian engagement in public life is always a question of life "during the world," which puts the broader perspective of public life in an eschatological frame. Mathewes's eschatological approach to public life takes seriously the incarnation and ascension of Christ as leaving Jesus's followers in a longing anticipation for the eschaton, when the world will begin again. However, Mathewes's account misses a primary part of God's story during the world, namely Pentecost, which is especially ironic given the central place of Pentecost for authorizing Christian engagement with others. In fact, Mathewes details

⁹² Eric Gregory, *Politics & the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Charles Mathewes, *A Theology of Public Life* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Christian life during the world with only six references to the Holy Spirit, replicating a trend in much of Western theology.⁹³ For theologies of public life, an underdeveloped account of how God relates to the world during the world risks an underdeveloped account of what it means to follow Christ during the world. Mathewes is not unique in this lack of attention given to the Holy Spirit as both Augustinians and ecclesial thinkers share this near silence. Ecclesial approaches for all of their attention to Christian identity and distinctiveness provide little reflection on the Holy Spirit's relationship to the church and the world. Hauerwas considers the distinctiveness of Christian language and practice for forming Christians within a narrative-based setting, but does not much consider what it means to walk with the Spirit.

Ecclesial and Augustinian approaches both take publics seriously, though in different ways. However, both are by and large done from White perspectives without significant reflection on the impact of whiteness on their ethical thought. This is not to discount either approach wholesale, rather it is to signal both the importance of understanding the many ways publics shape Christian thought and the relevance of other areas of Christian thought not often considered in the realm of public theology. While White Christian ethicists have historically maintained a silence on issues of race—very much an issue of public life—Black Christians and others deemed “contextual” have long considered what it means to live in conditions of White supremacy and colonialism.

Throughout this project I take up many of the same concerns about publics and engaging those publics, though I do so with explicit reflection on the Holy Spirit and conscious attention to

⁹³ For Mathewes's six references to the Holy Spirit, see: *A Theology of Public Life*, 32, 63, 136, 309, 320, and 321. On the historical omission of the Holy Spirit from Western theology, see: Robert Jenson, “You Wonder Where the Spirit Went,” *PRO ECCLESIA* 2, no. 3 (1993): 296–304; Eugene F. Rogers, *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005), chs. 1 and 2. For a contrary account of the Holy Spirit in Western theology, see: Travis E. Ables, *Incarnational Realism: Trinity and the Spirit in Augustine and Barth* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013).

the ways whiteness has and is forming the project. My reflection, both diagnostically and constructively, on the role of the Holy Spirit is obvious. But, the project's relationship to whiteness needs more explicit attention. I am a White man with connections to White Pentecostal communities. One trait of whiteness is the manner in which it goes unmarked, making claims to universality rather than identifying itself as a particularity. I am not immediately opposed to universal language, especially with regards to theological discourse, but naming the position from which I speak is essential for entering larger conversations responsibly.

Chapter Three of this project names whiteness as one cultural matrix within which Pentecostalism has flourished. Perhaps whiteness as an identity does have an essential relationship to anti-blackness, but there also exist habits and ways of speaking that have historically developed under conditions of anti-black exclusion but are not themselves necessarily dependent on anti-blackness. For instance, this project deploys language and categories from fields of academic theology. Within the Christian tradition, especially in its North Atlantic veins, these languages have been developed to justify racial hierarchies and colonial exploitation. The extent to which those hierarchies and justifications of colonial violence remain is being articulated by scholars. Further, Pentecostal theology, especially in its trinitarian forms, was deployed as a tool by White Pentecostals to separate themselves from Black Pentecostals. In both of these examples though, a language is deployed for the sake of constructing hierarchies and excluding. In this project, I draw on the discourses of academic theology in order to open up those discourses with a more capacious relationship to other ways of speaking and thinking. Retaining the language of theology, for now, is most effective for this project because it best speaks to salient Pentecostal concerns. Certainly other discourses can offer analytical clarity on the Pentecostal movement, but those discourses also assume a

relatively self-referential body of academic readers. I choose a different discourse for explicit reasons of audience that I articulate in Chapter Four.

§5.3 – *Pentecostalism According to Pentecostals*

Given the future importance of Pentecostalism and its relevance to the question at hand, I prioritize Pentecostal thinkers throughout this project. This is not to say that I do so to the exclusion of other sources, but that one task of this project is to make a set of literature visible to audiences where it has not yet been seen. One reason for this is institutional. Certain academic standards prioritize engagement with particular publishers and thinkers from particular institutions, for various reasons, some better than others. While holding to these standards, in some ways, I also include Pentecostal thinkers who neither work nor publish in places noticed by the academy. One benefit of this strategic decision is that I take Pentecostalism, understood in a loose sense, as the uniting feature for my engagement and therefore include many conservative and evangelical thinkers in the project. While I often engage critically, there is a genuine opportunity to speak between communities that are increasingly distant from one another.

Even while narrowing my sources to Pentecostal theologians and therefore broadening the types of sources I include, I still prioritize those who might be considered “elites” among Pentecostals. For Pentecostals there is a large chasm between the theological work done at an academic level and the theology considered by Pentecostal churches and their parishioners.⁹⁴ The chasm is not so much that parishioners do not read good Pentecostal theology, in fact it is much larger. Pentecostal pastors are often trained at schools of ministry, small institutions recognized

⁹⁴ For one challenge to Pentecostal theologians regarding this gap, see: Walter Hollenweger, “The Pentecostal Elites and the Pentecostal Poor: A Missed Dialogue?” in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*, ed. Karla Poewe (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 200-214.

only by the ministerial credentialing body, and Bible colleges, which do not teach the work of Pentecostal theologians.⁹⁵ The dynamic between elite and non-elite expressions of Christian faith is not new, and my decision to prioritize “elite” Pentecostals is an investment in the creation and maintenance of a theological discourse from which future Pentecostals might draw. I occupy what is a second generation of Pentecostal theologians, which is to say that the first generation of academically trained Pentecostal theologians are now in senior positions. As such, I have the privilege of engaging with a Pentecostal literature base rather than creating Pentecostal literature from scratch. Doing so with knowledge of the gap between a Pentecostal academy and Pentecostal churches is an act of hope, where I participate in creating something available to future generations. Perhaps even offering a way for Pentecostals who pursue theological training, in seminary or otherwise, to imagine remaining Pentecostal, so they will not have to keep leaving seminary as Episcopalians.

Pentecostals are not the only group to consider the Holy Spirit in depth, but Pentecostal attention to the Holy Spirit is both interesting and under-considered in academic conversation. Rather than a decision handed down by doctors of the church, the priority given to the Holy Spirit is born out of religious experience that is later given theological reflection.⁹⁶ Only in the last generation have Pentecostals entered the theological academy and offered a Pentecostal perspective on Christian theology.⁹⁷ As demographics continue to shift and Pentecostalized

⁹⁵ This is in some ways an overstatement with noteworthy exceptions. There are significant Pentecostal academic institutions where Pentecostal theologians are taught and read; see for instance, Lee University and the Pentecostal Theological Seminary in Cleveland, TN. My point here is that, while these institutions do exist, they 1) are not the primary credentialing mechanisms for Pentecostal pastors and 2) often have other paths for potential pastors (“Church Ministry” or “Leadership” degrees) that allow them to avoid theological training.

⁹⁶ For one Pentecostal defense of this methodological priority given to experiences of the Holy Spirit, see: Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012), ch. 1.

⁹⁷ I will engage this literature most directly in ch. 4. See: Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of Christian Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998); Daniel Castelo, *Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2017); Chris E.W. Green, *Toward a*

Christianity continues to grow, there is good warrant for considering how reflection on the Holy Spirit is developing distinctly within Pentecostalism. Pentecostal scholarship in theology, politics, and social ethics is relatively new, and there is a history of Pentecostal scholarship that creates the questions as I encounter them.⁹⁸ The earliest forms of Pentecostal scholarship, which still dominate the field were in the areas of Pentecostal history and Biblical studies.

Histories of Pentecostalism make up a significant section of Pentecostal scholarship, especially in the context of Pentecostal growth in North America. Many studies begin from the Azusa Street Revival in the Los Angeles and track the subsequent spread of Pentecostalism.⁹⁹ Pivotal for that history, though, are the stories of both William J. Seymour, the Black leader of the Azusa Street Mission, and Charles Fox Parham, the White segregationist creator of “distinctive” Pentecostal doctrines of initial physical evidence and teacher of Seymour.¹⁰⁰ Race and the eventual segregation of Pentecostal ministries between the Black Church of God in

Pentecostal Theology of the Lord's Supper: Foretasting the Kingdom (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2012); Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006); Frank D. Macchia, *Jesus the Spirit Baptizer: Christology in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2018); Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecostal to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012).

⁹⁸ For a more detailed review of Pentecostal scholarship that includes dissertations written on Pentecostalism, see: Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), ch. 1. For a wide ranging review of Pentecostal scholarship and history in international context, see: Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997).

⁹⁹ For perhaps the most authoritative historical account of the Azusa Street Mission, see: Cecil M. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2017). For an account of Pentecostal life in a US context, see: Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003). For a relevant historical overview of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement, see: Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997).

¹⁰⁰ There is significant primary literature available for both Seymour and Parham. For an authoritative history that names Parham as the “father” of Pentecostalism, see: James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988). Naming Parham as the “father” of Pentecostalism is rightly disputed by Hollenweger (*Pentecostalism*, 1997) who takes Seymour as the more significant founder of the movement. For a biography arguing for Seymour’s foundational relevance to Pentecostalism, see: Gastón Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

Christ and White Assemblies of God are essential parts of Pentecostal history, and can play a more or less significant role in a historian's account of Pentecostalism.¹⁰¹

Early forms of Pentecostal theology typically focused on “Bible doctrines” and had more of a fundamentalist bent. Steven Land's seminal *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, originally published in 1993, is one of the earliest Pentecostal theologies that moves beyond fundamentalist Bible doctrines, and seeks to articulate a spirituality unique to Pentecostalism that does not capitulate to Evangelical norms. In this study, Land looks into early Pentecostal sources and finds a spirituality that integrates belief, action, and the affections.¹⁰² These affections, rather than creating an insular or otherworldly group, facilitate a passion for the Kingdom of God that motivates work for that Kingdom. While not working in the mainline churches or the mainstream political channels, Pentecostals actively worked for the sake of the poor and disinherited in society. Land gives a helpful emphasis on the eschatological anticipation of early Pentecostals as a way to preserve the countercultural edge of Pentecostal movements.¹⁰³ This already-not-yet dynamic is one that needs integrated with Pentecostal spirituality as Pentecostals anticipate the inbreaking of the Kingdom.

Land's project was an early innovation in Pentecostal theology, but it does not begin to reckon with modern realities of difference or the problems that I name as Pentecostal contempt. For instance, while Land gives space to identifying problems of White supremacy in early

¹⁰¹ Hollenweger's *Pentecostalism* is more bullish on the black roots of Pentecostalism in the US and gives considerable attention to the role race played in the growth of the movement. Other studies have focused on non-White Pentecostal experiences in a way that clearly communicates the significance of race while deprioritizing the role of White Pentecostals. See: Estralda Y. Alexander, *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011); Gastón Espinosa, *Latino Pentecostals in America Faith and Politics in Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Daniel Ramírez, *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

¹⁰² Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: Centre for Pentecostal Theology Press, 2010). [Originally published in in 1993].

¹⁰³ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 179-80.

Pentecostal movements, his account is reductionist and deflects from dealing with sin as a Pentecostal problem. For Land, racism is only a failure to be distinct from the world. Moreover, Land's treatment of missions and the work of evangelization assumes a one directional relationship to difference where Christians have the gospel to offer the world, but there is little imagination for what non-Christians might have to offer. Put differently, the work of the Holy Spirit is primarily imagined as empowering the Christian for missions, which can here be reduced to preaching a gospel message through the world.

Simon Chan, a Cambridge-trained Pentecostal teaching in Singapore, gives a perhaps stronger articulation of the church/world split. Chan's work is largely animated by questions of ecclesiology and draws heavily on Roman Catholic and Orthodox sources to engage those questions. Chan explicitly understands the church as an ontological body, a body he is reluctant to separate from the present institutional church.¹⁰⁴ Ontologizing the church is not in and of itself a problem, but Chan's particular ontology relies on an anemic to non-existent theology of the world in favor of a top heavy (think steroid-era baseball) ecclesiology. Chan starts from what is a right concern, that evangelical and Pentecostal ecclesiologies and liturgies are not informed by Christian theology and merely mimic popular culture.¹⁰⁵ This problem of liturgical form is the result, for Chan, of an overly pragmatic approach to ecclesiology in which the church is understood as an instrumental reality, brought into the world for the purpose of saving the world.

¹⁰⁴ At one point Chan calls distinctions between the "invisible" and "visible" church docetic because the visible church is only taken sociologically and without correlation to the invisible church. Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 36.

Protestantism has no sense of the continuation of the gospel into ecclesiology and pneumatology. When it comes to understanding the church, sociology takes over. As for the Spirit, he is seen as essentially One who helps the church to carry out some extrinsic task, even if it is conceived as a divine task, such as evangelism. If the Spirit is linked to the church in any way, it is to the invisible church, such as in the Spirit's bringing spiritual rebirth to individuals. The visible church is largely defined sociologically, while the "real" church cannot be identified with anything visible. Such an ecclesiology could only be described as docetic.

¹⁰⁵ Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 153. Here, Chan refers to the "rock-concert" style of liturgy as a problem.

The church does not exist for the sake of the world, but the world for the sake of the church.¹⁰⁶

Which is to say that the world does not find its identity in the world, but the world is to find its identity in the church.¹⁰⁷ I will engage with Chan's theological claims more closely in Chapter Four, but for now it will suffice to point out differences between Chan's approach and my own.

Ultimately, Chan's ecclesiology replicates and even hardens the oppositional posture toward the world common in much of Pentecostalism. I find his theology to be the most sophisticated articulation of what I name as a closed pneumatology. In one of the few places mentioning the church's relationship to the world, other than commenting on the church's priority to the world, Chan himself describes the relationship as one of opposition: "Holiness also has a negative dimension: separation from all that is unholy. The holiness of the community of the Spirit makes the church stand out in sharp contrast to the world and its ways which elicits the world's opposition."¹⁰⁸

In contrast to these exclusive understandings of the Spirit, recent Pentecostal literature has taken something of a "cosmopolitan" turn where Pentecostal theologians have begun to reckon with the presence of difference in the form of cultural expression and other religions.¹⁰⁹ These theologies come under many names (comparative theology, global theology, theology of religions, theology of mission, etc.), but they are typically motivated by an encounter with

¹⁰⁶ Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 54-5.

¹⁰⁷ Chan cites Eph. 1:4 and Rev. 13:8 as Scriptural support for his claim to the church's priority over the world: "Scripture itself testifies to the logical priority of the church over creation by referring to the church as chosen in Christ before the creation of the world (Eph 1:4), or to Christ who was slain before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8)." I will critically engage this claim further below, but here it will suffice to say that Chan does not clearly distinguish neither the kingdom from the church nor an eschatological notion of the church from a penultimate one. This failure to do so creates deep ambiguities in his engagement with Orthodox sources puts off considering any theological end of that which is outside the institutional church.

¹⁰⁸ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay in the Development of Doctrine* (Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2011), 87.

¹⁰⁹ I use "cosmopolitan," here, not to denote a tradition of literature from which Pentecostals are drawing, but to mark a more basic sense articulated by Kwame Anthony Appiah that "People are different [...] and there is much to learn from our differences." *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), xv.

difference, whether it be non-Christian difference or intra Christian difference. Multiple dynamics created the conditions for these encounters – missionary encounter, ecumenical dialogues, mass mobility, telecommunications – but my only purpose here is to note that numerous Pentecostal thinkers have identified the task of reckoning with difference as essential. Thinkers differ in their approaches and conclusions, but it is the identification of difference or “the world” as something to be encountered and witnessed to rather than opposed and overcome.

One way Pentecostals have sought to approach perceived difference is through the articulation of “global theologies.” In the background of these theologies lies an awareness of the particularity of the North Atlantic theological academy and the global nature of Pentecostal faith. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, who has written a number of explicitly “global” theologies, names a two-fold motivation for his approach. On the one hand, the presence of other religions poses a theological challenge with which Christians must reckon. In the context of Christology, he sees “the ‘turn to other religions’ [as] the scariest but at the same time potentially the most fruitful with regard to the continuing mission of the Christian church. No doubt, it will add to the fragmentation and divisions of both Christian churches and Christian theologies; yet the challenge is to be faced.”¹¹⁰ On the other hand, the presence of Christian “contextual theologies” or “global perspectives” “add to the mosaic of christological traditions and so speak to varying needs and desires but also have the potential to correct one-sided classical Western views.”¹¹¹ As such, theology ought to take on a global orientation if it is to respond to the presence of other religions and Christian perspectives outside of the west.

¹¹⁰ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christology: A Global Introduction* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 228.

¹¹¹ Kärkkäinen, *Christology*, 228.

Kärkkäinen takes up several methodologies, but his work is at the level of ecumenical dialogue,¹¹² comparative theology,¹¹³ or theology of religions.¹¹⁴ Each of these approaches serves a purpose and begins from a genuine interest in reflecting on encounters with difference, though they come with limitations. For instance, comparative theology and ecumenical dialogue are more narrow things that academic theologians do, and for good reason. But, they are relatively exclusive activities that only incorporate a few interested thinkers who report back to the rest of the non-participating world. Certainly, there are skills to be learned in reading a theologian's reflections on comparison or dialogue, though I would wager that most people's encounters with difference do not happen at the level of parsing theological differences.¹¹⁵ Rather, most people encounter difference while trying to share a workplace or grocery store aisle and these sites of encounter deserve theological reflection as well.

Drawing on a similar starting point, Amos Yong avoids the language of "global theology" in favor of a "world theology," because "the forces of globalization will tempt 'global theology' toward homogeneity" while a "world theology" will enable "us to emphasize the particularities of local discourses and perspectives."¹¹⁶ Yong identifies the "late-modern" situation as creating unique challenges for Christian theology; "These include the challenges raised by modern science, by our increasing awareness of the diversity of religions, and by our present transitional

¹¹² See, generally: Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002); *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007); and Kärkkäinen's five part, *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World*.

¹¹³ See: Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Doing the Work of Comparative Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2020).

¹¹⁴ See: Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christian Theology of Religions: An Introduction* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003).

¹¹⁵ For an account of the types of "inter-religious" encounters I see most people experiencing, see: Lori Beaman, *Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

¹¹⁶ Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2005), 18.

situation between modernity and its aftermath (postmodernity, postcolonialism, postpatriarchalism, post-Christendom, etc.). The questions are legion.” Yong sees modern science and different religions as potential sites for the activity and presence of the Holy Spirit. And it is the universal presence of the Holy Spirit that drives Yong’s consideration of difference, and has the potential to reshape Christian approaches to difference; he says “If in fact Christians would embrace the Holy Spirit’s prevenient presence and activity in the world in a serious way, I am persuaded that this would lead to a transformation of Christian theology and mission.”¹¹⁷ This theological restructuring around the universality of the Spirit has many potential snares, but I see the benefits as outweighing the risks of potential missteps and therefore follow his lead in structuring Christian theologies of public life around the intuition that God is the source of all good and perfect gifts and “the Spirit is poured out on all flesh” (Joel 2:28). Yong names “theological imperialism” as one potential misstep in such a universal approach to the presence of the Holy Spirit. This misstep would reinterpret or erase local traditions for the sake of embedding Christianity within a local culture.¹¹⁸

Differing from global theologies, theologies of religions seek to theologially account for difference, specifically non-Christian religions. By expanding the scope beyond Christianity, this approach encounters an added challenge of navigating both accommodation and imperialism. On

¹¹⁷ Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 200), 10.

¹¹⁸ For Yong’s concerns with “theological imperialism,” see *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, ch. 2. Yong identifies Pentecostal missiologies that rely on “indigenization” as a potentially good way to avoid the imperializing force of Christian missions. He writes:

Precisely because the good news belongs to all in their own language, culture, and context, pentecostal missiology has developed principles of indigenization whereby the message of the gospel and the work of the Spirit are accommodated, acculturated, and assimilated into local contexts. The ruling assumption is that the gospel belongs to all peoples and that therefore reception of this gospel is better facilitated on their own indigenous terms. (Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 145-6).

I do not have as much faith in indigenization to avoid theological imperialism, and therefore I prioritize bearing witness rather than effective evangelism. One danger comes with the incorporation of non-Christian myths or cosmologies into Christian categories. For example, Christian missionaries wrongly reinterpreted the Yoruba Oriṣa, Èṣù, as Satan leading to the demonization of Èṣù devotees and practitioners.

the one hand, there is a fear that taking seriously claims made from outside of the Christian tradition will lead to dangerous synthesis and accommodation. On the other hand, there is a fear that interpreting non-Christian religions with Christian categories and concepts does violence to other traditions and smacks of theological imperialism.

What global theologies and theologies of religions have in common is that they consciously name the presence of difference in their theologizing, while seeking to reckon with the presence of that difference. Both begin from an assumption that there is something valuable to be gained from difference. Theologies of religion go further in that they offer a theological account of difference that global theologies typically do not offer. Beyond inclusion or encounter, however, these theologies do not consider what it means to live in the midst of difference. Put differently, global theology nor theology of religion engage questions of social ethics or political theology.

Those Pentecostal cosmopolitans who engage social ethics and political theology typically begin from a similar recognition regarding the presence of difference. Nimi Wariboko is perhaps one of the most influential and creative social ethicists working from a Pentecostal perspective today. Wariboko was born in Nigeria and made his way to his current post at Boston University after serving as a pastor in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (Nigeria's largest Pentecostal church), an MBA from Columbia University, jobs on Wall Street in the US and in Lagos's financial district, and a PhD from Princeton Theological Seminary. This wide range of experiences gives Wariboko incredible breadth to speak on questions of economics, theology, philosophy, and social ethics.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ For an appreciative anthology of Wariboko's thought, see: Toyin Falola ed., *The Philosophy of Nimi Wariboko: Social Ethics, Economy, and Religion* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2021).

Wariboko's social ethics draws on Pentecostal theology and continental philosophy in order to give an account of *Ijaw* (the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria, located by and large in the southwest of the country) ethical concepts.¹²⁰ As a product of his background, Wariboko's social ethics are complex and multidimensional, drawing in continental philosophy, economic theory, and Christian theology. Social ethics spans a wide range of books, but is represented well in Wariboko's 2012 monograph, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit*.¹²¹ In it, he builds on Tillich's Protestant principle, which is a drive for reformation of Catholic substance, though largely a negative or critical project.

In contrast, Wariboko articulates a Pentecostal principle which builds on the reforming energy of the Protestant principle, but with an eye toward creative potentials. The spirit of Pentecostalism is human capacity to begin again, to create anew, and therefore assumes an oppositional stance toward social structures claiming any sense of ultimacy. This Pentecostal principle has within it a prophetic spirit, which is "an *orientation* to social existence" that seeks to create "possibilities for all citizens to participate in the *polis* and to realize their potentialities and in doing so enable the community to realize its potentialities for the common good and for human flourishing."¹²² Each generation must take up the Pentecostal principle and carry out the creative task of beginning. Wariboko's ethical methodology is plural in nature, as the creativity driven by the Pentecostal spirit is not drawn from a singular notion of nature, but must be articulated by each generation. As such, politics is about bringing forth possibilities and life in a way that does not foreclose on the new.

¹²⁰ This connection was made by Wariboko at a conference hosted by Toyin Falola and the University of Texas at Austin in honor of Nimi Wariboko's philosophy on November 21, 2020. Wariboko points to his 2010 monograph *Ethics and Time* as an interpretive key to his other works. See: Nimi Wariboko, *Ethics and Time: Ethos of Temporal Orientation in Politics and Religion of the Niger Delta* (Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2010).

¹²¹ Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012).

¹²² Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 70.

Daniela Augustine further develops a pneumatology of social transformation with particular emphasis on encounters with the other. D. Augustine draws on fieldwork done in Eastern Slavonia where a demographically insignificant Pentecostal population served as a reconciling body during and after the breakup of the former Yugoslavia.¹²³ Drawing on the work of Emanuel Levinas, D. Augustine sees the face of the other as site through which the Holy Spirit does the work of redeeming the world. D. Augustine is concerned with what she calls the “iconoclasm” of violence against the face of the other, and takes life in the Spirit as always christoforming and for the other.

At times D. Augustine can sound like a pneumatological exclusivist, placing the activity of the Holy Spirit solely within the church. The emphasis on hagiography as a means to direct Christians toward saintly lives in concrete communities can also resonate with an exclusivist assumption. However, D. Augustine’s pneumatology is more complicated than Land’s assumed exclusivism or Chan’s strict exclusivism. D. Augustine’s creative engagement with Eastern Orthodoxy leads to a theology of icons or of humanity as the image of God on earth. As such, all of creation is a universal community bearing an inherent sociality within its telos. The church, rather than the exclusive site of the Spirit’s activity, is the foretaste of the redemption that the whole of creation awaits.¹²⁴

D. Augustine’s approach to the other is both inclusive and sacramentally informed, though it takes the church as an ontologically distinct site of redemption. The examples she chooses in Eastern Europe give hope for the potential of churches to play a as a site of redemption and reconciliation. However, the examples also highlight the need to recognize the

¹²³ Daniela C. Augustine, *The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), 1-4.

¹²⁴ Augustine, *The Spirit and the Common Good*, 34.

Spirit's activity beyond one's ecclesial community. Consider that Pentecostal influence in Eastern Serbia was largely because they were not part of the largest Christian groups there, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox. Recognizing the Spirit's movement outside of existing communities with existing historical contexts was necessary to correct and provide a site of reconciliation. Such a recognition would stretch existing Roman Catholic or Orthodox ecclesiologies, while recognizing the effective potential for the Spirit to reconcile and correct from outside an existing tradition.

Much like the work in social ethics, Pentecostal political theology – as a self-conscious project – is relatively new. Yong's corpus is wide ranging, and he enters into conversation on politics most directly in his 2010 monograph, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology*.¹²⁵ Here, Yong's central thesis is that Pentecostals can take “the many tongues of Pentecost” as a political reality. Just as on the day of Pentecost where many spoke in the tongues of the many present, diversity and pluralism are an expression of the Holy Spirit's activity. After giving a history and typology of Pentecostal political engagement, Yong engages with several Christian traditions of political reflection as potential conversation partners for Pentecostals beginning to think about politics. This work does something important by entering Pentecostalism into conversation with Catholic Social Teaching and Radical Orthodoxy. Despite these creative engagements, however, Yong's affirmation of pluralism under “the many tongues of Pentecost” does not consider the tensions for those in plural environments such as moral disagreement.

In an interesting departure from his earlier theology of religions, Yong does not draw from pragmatist philosophy to construct a vision for politics. Rather, Yong's main purpose is to

¹²⁵ Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010).

demonstrate the many potential forms Pentecostal political thought can take. Moreover, while it is helpful to think about the Spirit as moving through many different political forms, there does not seem to be an equal consideration of what forms are better or worse than others. What are Pentecostals to make of fascism or Christian nationalism? Is there reason beyond not excluding democracy as a potential site of the Spirit's activity to prefer or preserve democratic governance?

Locating answers to these normative questions will prove essential in working out Pentecostalism's promise and potential for political havoc. This project seeks to do just that, while keeping in view concerns salient to Pentecostals. One cannot hope to write in a way that reaches all Pentecostals, as the movement manifests differently in different contexts. But, by speaking realistically about Pentecostals and to other Pentecostals, this project contributes one perspective to a larger conversation about how Pentecostalism will come to inhabit the modernity that has always been its home.

§6 – Breakdown of Chapters

This project is comprised of six chapters total and is divided into two parts. Part One takes a critical and diagnostic approach to Pentecostal contempt. While this chapter offers an introduction and review of literature, Chapters Two and Three are made up of case studies demonstrating differing ways contempt can manifest in Pentecostal communities. These case studies are not intended to serve a comparative function, though comparisons may be made where helpful. What the case studies are intended to do, though, is demonstrate the particularity of each manifestation of Pentecostalism and the ways Pentecostal contempt draws on existing local customs and social dynamics. To accurately see the theological at work, one must also have the existing social arrangements in sight as well as the mutually constituting relationship between the theological and the political.

Chapter Two is the first of the two case studies and it makes a strategic choice of geographic focus, here Nigeria. There is a risk in studying the Pentecostalism, especially at the level concerned with Pentecostal relationships to existing social arrangements, that reduces Pentecostalism to those social arrangements and loses sight of Pentecostalism as a phenomenon with many unique manifestations. To avoid reducing Pentecostalism to a US context and to learn from the experiences in conversation with Nigerian Pentecostals, Chapter Two turns to a particular example of Pentecostal contempt in Nigeria with Pentecostal receptions to the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture in 1977. Pentecostals by and large continue to receive this event as inviting demons and idols into Nigeria. This reception and the corresponding theological ideas inspire social arrangements premised on separation, demonstrating one way theological ideas can inform social arrangements.

Social arrangements, though, have a way of shaping theological ideas by rendering certain theological questions salient; the two are always working on one another. Chapter Three moves to a US context and demonstrates the presence of Pentecostal contempt in White Pentecostal perceptions of cities and Black people during the 1950's and 60's. This chapter draws heavily on social theory in order to show the other side of the relationship between theology and politics that social arrangements form theological thinking. Racial segregation came to inform Pentecostal perceptions of God and others. Morality and the activity of the Holy Spirit were mapped onto a vision of suburban progress and urban decay.

Part Two transitions from a diagnostic posture to a more normative one, arguing for Pentecostal encounter as an alternative to Pentecostal contempt. While united in its argument, Part Two makes two types of cases that are meant to inform one another. The first type of case comes in Chapter Four with an explicitly theological argument that targets academic discourses

in Pentecostal theology. The theological incentives for Pentecostal contempt are well articulated and there exists an accessible grammar of contempt to pull from when encountering difference. This chapter seeks to recast Pentecostal life beyond contempt, taking encounter as the locus for imagining Christian mission. Ultimately, the sovereignty of God is such that Pentecostals should anticipate the activity and presence of the Holy Spirit in unanticipated places. In so doing, this chapter articulates theological incentives for encountering difference that can render new practices legible for Pentecostals seeking to walk with the Spirit.

Chapters Five and Six make a transition internal to Part Two by shifting from the more explicitly theological tone of Chapter Four into a more explicitly political tone, considering habits of democracy as useful for facilitating Pentecostal encounter. Chapter Five argues that holding relations of political equality is one habit that has the potential to overcome contempt and render different theologies salient. Social scientists have studied at length the particular conditions of contact between groups that is likely to facilitate a change of perceptions or an overcoming of contempt. Conditions of political equality are likely to facilitate those types of interactions between humans. I am, though, conscious of egalitarian chauvinism and the capacity for egalitarians to cultivate a sense of contempt towards other ways of life. With this in mind, I argue for a particular manner in which Pentecostals might hold to political equality without naming it the only or natural way for humans to relate.

The more hopeful disposition in Chapter Five will certainly raise questions as democratic life can seem, at times, to raise more contempt between groups. Chapter Six takes up one such challenge, that of persistent moral disagreement. Conditions of contempt that exclude others from consideration have the effect of distorting moral and spiritual discernment by driving Pentecostals into a dynamic of group polarization. Assuming relations of political equality,

particularly by adopting burdens of reciprocity and rejoinder can enhance moral and spiritual discernment by overcoming the negative effects of group polarization. As such, these habits of democratic life are beneficial on Pentecostal terms. While beneficial, though, these habits certainly have limits, especially in the context of moral disagreements that question the basic equality and worth of others. Here I recognize the necessity of protecting communities committed to encounter when others would seek to close off those encounters or bring a correct “order” to the community. The necessities of protection and defense are reminders of the limits of political life and the realities that others will oppose us as we must at times oppose others. Those oppositional relations, though, are never static and always await the resurrecting power of the Holy Spirit in a Pentecostal hope that God might show a foretaste of the eschaton and raise to life dead relations even during the world.

For now, though, we continue in Part One and must come to see Pentecostal contempt in action if Part Two can offer a plausible alternative. Chapter Two isolates the case of Nigerian Pentecostalism in order to further understand the theological and political dynamics at work in Pentecostal contempt.

Chapter 2: Nigerian Pentecostalism and the Spirit of Contempt

*We have never seen the kind of power that God is about to display in the Church!
The enemies of God will be brought under His footstool;
and until this is done, Christ will not come.*
- David Oyedepo

§1 – Introduction

I opened Chapter One with a picture of the Pentecostal dynamics in the January 6th insurrection in the US and I will return to a US context in Chapter Three. I now turn to case studies in Chapters Two and Three whose primary purpose is to demonstrate the presence of Pentecostal contempt. As such, this chapter speaks to the “prevalent” and “dangerous” portions of the thesis statement by demonstrating the pervasiveness of Pentecostal contempt among Nigerian Pentecostals along with its dangerous effects for society and the Pentecostal pursuit of faithfulness. Demonstrating Pentecostal contempt in multiple settings also shows that each instantiation of Pentecostal contempt is specific to a given setting, therefore each case study will attend to the ways a given setting changes and sustains Pentecostal contempt. The two chapters are not intended to be comparative, but they both reveal a contempt of difference that is fueled by mischaracterization and stereotype that then demands a politics of separation from difference.

Discussing one example of Pentecostal contempt in a Nigerian context allows me to take more seriously the global nature of Pentecostalism as well as engage the insightful literature on Nigerian Pentecostal politics. This move to Nigeria, though, also serves a strategic purpose in my larger argument. Were my argument to focus on one cultural setting, then it could be charged that I had demonstrated contempt as a feature of dynamics within that setting, say a dynamic of whiteness. I certainly do find contempt to be a dynamic of whiteness, but remember that this project is seeking to demonstrate contempt as a dynamic prevalent in *Pentecostalism*. Shifting

the conversation to Nigeria allows me to demonstrate one other, and certainly localized, way that Pentecostals draw on a unique form of contempt to navigate difference.¹ This is not to suggest that Nigeria is somehow a non-racial context. Christianity was introduced to Nigeria by White missionaries who imported notions of African inferiority and hierarchies of existence. The racial dynamics of Nigeria, though, are different enough from the US so as to better prioritize contempt as a *Pentecostal* phenomenon.

In addition to the strategic inclusion of a case study from a non-US setting, there are other important reasons to consider Nigeria. Nigeria is not only the most populous country and largest economy on the African continent, but also has a large, global, and influential diaspora. There are Nigerian Pentecostal churches in most countries and that presence has influenced Christian practices, such as spiritual warfare, worldwide. Nigerian churches have proven incredibly successful worldwide; Sunday Adelaja's Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations was the largest megachurch in Ukraine and claimed to be the largest evangelical church in all of Europe before the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine.²

Moreover, Pentecostalism is a highly influential movement in Nigeria with Pentecostals occupying high level government positions and prominent roles in society. Pentecostalism has further affected non-Pentecostal Christian denominations, Islamic religious practice, electoral politics, popular media, and the shape of day-to-day interactions. This influence is so strong, that Nigerian sociologist Ebenezer Obadare goes as far as to deem Nigeria a "Pentecostal Republic."³

¹ This is not meant to imply that whiteness is nowhere a dynamic in the Nigerian setting. While whiteness may well be active, it is not in the manner of White Pentecostalism that I demonstrate in the next chapter and therefore this chapter allows me to focus on a different sort of Pentecostalism not defined by whiteness in the same way.

² Ayoyemi Mojoyinola, "How I Built Largest Evangelical Church In Europe – Pastor Sunday Adelaja," *The City Pulse*, July 5, 2016. <https://thecitypulsenews.com/how-i-built-largest-evangelical-church-in-europe-pastor-sunday-adelaja/>. Accessed: March 31, 2023.

³ Ebenezer Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic: Religion and the Struggle for State Power in Nigeria* (London: Zed Books, 2018).

At both the elite and non-elite levels, day to day realities of life in a multi-ethnic multi-religious state force the types of interactions with difference that I am analyzing in this project.

Nigeria is located in West Africa and is home to several large and diverse people groups.⁴ The three largest being the Hausa-Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the southwest, and the Igbo in the southeast. Nigeria gained independence from the British in 1960 and its current government, known as the Fourth Republic, was founded in 1999.⁵ The land mass that is now designated as Nigeria has seen several different empires, from the Oyo empire to the Sokoto Caliphate. In 1851 the British took advantage of a struggle for kingship among the Yoruba and placed the “Southern Nigeria Protectorate” under British control. Through military conquest against the Sokoto Caliphate, the British took control of the “Northern Nigeria Protectorate.” The British would later unite both the Northern and Southern Nigeria Protectorates, but significant divisions between the two would remain. Christian missionaries had been free to create schools and churches in the south, expanding Christianity and English literacy. As part of the strategy of indirect rule, though, Christian missionaries were restricted in the predominantly Muslim north. This, in part, explains the persisting divide between the largely Muslim north and Christian south.

The history of Pentecostalism in Nigeria dates back to those early Christian missionaries who had free rein to establish missionary schools and missionize throughout the south of the country. These missionary churches maintained colonial leadership and would import notions of

⁴ For a broad history of Nigeria, see: Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton, *A History of Nigeria* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁵ For accounts of contemporary Nigerian politics especially as it pertains to the precarious role of the state throughout Nigeria, see: John Campbell, *Nigeria and the Nation-State: Rethinking Diplomacy with the Postcolonial World* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020); A. Carl LeVan, *Contemporary Nigerian Politics: Competition in a Time of Transition and Terror* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019). For the role of religion in the formation of Nigeria and contemporary Nigerian politics, see: Olufemi Vaughan, *Religion and the Making of Nigeria* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016); Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic*.

salvation and progress as a turning away from a “dark” African past.⁶ Missionaries understood existing African religious practices as “pagan” and therefore something to be converted from and destroyed. The earliest churches to break away from colonial control were those African-initiated Churches (AIC’s), which included, among other groups, the Aladura churches that are often understood as a precursor to the Pentecostal explosion in Nigeria.⁷ In breaking away from colonial leadership, the AIC’s integrated African practices while maintaining a total rejection of traditional religions, which were understood as old African spirits. Pentecostal groups would come onto the scene later and offer a message prioritizing rejection of those forms of Christianity which had come before—missionary churches for their lukewarmness and AIC’s for their too close association with African religions—while maintaining a message of rupture from Africa’s past.⁸ This emphasis on rupture and personal narratives of rupture creates a deep contempt of the past and that which is associated with pre-Christian Africa.

As a country of over 200 million people, a general approach to Nigerian Pentecostalism is too broad to really see the texture of Pentecostal contempt at work. As such, this chapter narrows the scope of analysis to Pentecostal receptions of a particular event: the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in 1977. While nearly fifty years old, this event sparked a strong Pentecostal response which is still active in the Pentecostal imaginary as a turning point for Nigeria’s destiny. This notion of “destiny” is one that has deep roots in Nigerian society and Pentecostals have come to understand it in zero-sum terms that draw on

⁶ On the development of modern racism in medieval and modern European thought, see: Oludamini Ogunnaike, “From Heathen to Sub-Human: A Genealogy of the Influence of the Decline of Religion on the Rise of Modern Racism,” *Open Theology* 2 (2016), 785-803.

⁷ J.D.Y. Peel argues that the Aladura churches effectively integrated Yoruba religious cosmologies into the modernizing project of colonial Christianity. See: J.D.Y. Peel, *Aladura: A Religious Movement Among the Yoruba* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); and Vaughan, *Religion and the Making of Nigeria*, 70.

⁸ J.D.Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2016), 93, 101.

contempt of “traditional religions” to interpret FESTAC ‘77 as a threat to Nigeria’s destiny.⁹ This understanding of invisible powers in relation to destiny, then, drives a politics of rupture and separation from traditional religions. Rupture and separation as ways of relating to traditional religions leave Pentecostals unfamiliar with that from which they seek to separate, drawing on mischaracterizations and stereotypes when considering the substance of traditional religions.

While there are many different types of studies of Nigerian Pentecostalism on which I draw throughout the chapter, Section Two positions my approach methodologically against these existing approaches. While a Pentecostal myself, I am not an insider to Nigerian Pentecostalism. Throughout this chapter I seek to analyze the ways Pentecostal contempt, as a theological phenomenon, manifests in Nigerian Pentecostalism. This is distinct from existing political approaches and Foucauldian approaches analyzing Pentecostal praxis as techniques of the self. My aim here is to theorize the epistemological world in which Nigerian Pentecostals are acting, because that world and the ontological assumptions within it frame how contempt manifests. The key difference in my approach is the inclusion of the theological and non-human actors in my understanding of Nigerian Pentecostalism.

Section Three introduces FESTAC ‘77 as a celebration of African culture and an attempt to define Nigeria’s national culture. By and large FESTAC ‘77 was a cause for international celebration, but that reception was not shared by several religious groups including Pentecostals.

⁹ My use of “traditional religions” is not without complications. Both Christianity and Islam are traditional religions in Africa, given their long histories on the continent. Further, the language of African traditional religions has a homogenizing effect bringing together many diverse traditions developed by diverse peoples. However, as a study in Pentecostal receptions of these groups, the language of African traditional religions is at times helpful because Pentecostals typically do not distinguish between these groups and part of the contemptuous reception of these groups is the ways Pentecostals homogenize them into singular categories like witchcraft or traditional religions. In some ways a level of homogenization is inevitable; both “*oriṣa* religions” and “Yoruba religions” homogenize diverse groups. As such, I will use “traditional religions” to refer to those non-Abrahamic religious groups received by Pentecostals as “traditional religions” and where possible use more specific nomenclature, such as *oriṣa* traditions, when I am speaking of more specific traditions.

Pentecostals protested an attempt to define a national culture as reviving old African gods, importing idols, and inviting demons into Nigeria. Secondary scholarly literature assumes an ongoing Pentecostal reception of FESTAC '77, but no studies have detailed the contours of that reception. The idols and demons of FESTAC '77 are understood as a problem in and of themselves, but they pose a much larger problem in the context of Nigeria's destiny. Invisible things have a direct bearing on the material world, and how Nigerian Pentecostals come to see these invisible things relies on a form of unstable knowledge and authority.¹⁰ As unstable, this knowledge seeks to recreate its own authority by demonstrating its knowledge through suspicion and rupture. In doing so, Pentecostals draw on salient forms of contempt, here contempt of traditional religions, and fashion them into spiritual knowledge. My argument is not that Pentecostals should have some predetermined interaction or understanding of traditional religions, be that one of tolerance or otherwise. Rather, I point out that the conditions of Pentecostal contempt shielded by opaqueness of their knowledge, draw on stereotype and mischaracterization of that which is being rejected. The section closes by reflecting on two ways Pentecostals approach theological difference, showing that rejection need not draw on contempt. The chapter concludes by considering the larger social problems and dangers a politics built on contempt and separation might pose for Nigerian Pentecostals.

In addition to secondary literature, this chapter draws on primary sources in the form of publications and interviews. The interviews were conducted over Zoom in February of 2023.¹¹

All interview subjects are anonymized to protect their identity in compliance with the project's

¹⁰ I take the language of "invisibility" from Nimi Wariboko. "Invisible" should not denote merely that something cannot be seen, but that knowledge is based on things that cannot be demonstrated to others. For Wariboko, "invisible" things typically fall into the realm of the spiritual that then impacts the material world. Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 40-53.

¹¹ Thank you to Nimi Wariboko and Abimbola Adelakun for assistance in networking among Nigerian Pentecostal pastors.

IRB requirements (IRB-SBS 5468). My use of interviews should not be confused with ethnographic projects drawing on larger pools of interviews. Rather, interviews are for me an opportunity to hear first-hand experiences and offer texture to how scholars understand Pentecostal receptions of FESTAC '77. With this in mind, I now turn to Section Two where I position my study in relation to existing studies of Nigerian Pentecostalism.

§2 – Theology, Politics, and Nigerian Pentecostalism

Many recent studies of Nigerian Pentecostalism have prioritized the political effects of Pentecostalism and Foucault's techniques of the self to understand the politics of Pentecostalism. One such study rightly identifies the "Manichean" outlook on the universe where Pentecostals clearly divide the world and its inhabitants into good and evil.¹² This is a fine description of a particular political theology's outcome, but the methodological exclusion of the theological overlooks the assumptions that make such a view possible and attractive. This section triangulates the methodological approach I take to Nigerian Pentecostalism by naming the limits of existing approaches. Doing so does not reject those existing approaches, but it helps to identify the advantages of considering the more explicitly theological in Nigerian Pentecostal politics.

One of the finest critical analyses of the relationship between Pentecostal power and state politics in Nigeria is found in the work of the sociologist Ebenezer Obadare. Obadare's work has prioritized the political effects of Nigerian Pentecostal power, especially as they pertain to

¹² Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 61.

the struggle for state power and the formation of pastoral authority in Nigeria.¹³ In his *Pentecostal Republic*, Obadare makes the bold claim that “the Nigerian democratic process since 1999 is ultimately inexplicable without recourse to the emergent power of Pentecostalism, whether as manifested in the rising political influence of Pentecostal pastors, or in the commensurate popular tendency to view socio-political problems in spiritual terms.”¹⁴ With this in mind, though, Obadare states “Because my focus is explicitly political, I pay scant attention to Pentecostalism as a theological project...”¹⁵ That Obadare focuses on the political to the exclusion of the theological is not necessarily a shortcoming of his methodology. He stays true to this methodology throughout the study and his approach to Pentecostalism is not reductive as he is unwilling to “deny the obvious appeal of Pentecostalism as a mass religion, one that, if only in theory, opens radically new agential vistas.”¹⁶ However, this sort of methodology, as all methodologies do, renders a particular type of study able to describe certain things with precise critique and cutting clarity while leaving other things beyond the scope of the study.

While Obadare’s project intentionally brackets the theological, other approaches seek to take the claims of religion more seriously. Two exemplary studies of this type are that of Abimbola Adedokun, applying performance theory, and that of Ruth Marshall, applying Foucauldian theories of subjectivation. These studies take the religious elements of Pentecostalism more seriously, but their methodological approaches do not adequately account for the function of the theological beyond the self. This limitation is obvious for Obadare’s study, but will require some space to demonstrate in reference to Adedokun and Marshall’s work.

¹³ On Nigerian Pentecostalism and state power, see: Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic*. On Nigerian Pentecostal pastoral authority, see: Ebenezer Obadare, *Pastoral Power, Clerical State: Pentecostalism, Gender, and Sexuality in Nigeria* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2022).

¹⁴ Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic*, 1.

¹⁵ Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic*, 5.

¹⁶ Obadare, *Pentecostal Republic*, 5.

Adelakun focuses on Pentecostalism as a performance of power analyzing “how the techniques and aesthetic effects of colorful Pentecostal practices inform practice, resonate with their subjective experiences, persuade, and elicit the behaviors that turn into political actions.”¹⁷ This performance-based paradigm is not a reductive one that sees Pentecostal practice as “theatre merely created to be witnessed by an audience.”¹⁸ Adelakun even notes that the practices she seeks to analyze can “generate the spiritual forces that trouble, corrupt, disrupt, affirm, and ultimately restructure society’s ethos.”¹⁹ With this in mind, though, Adelakun’s approach does not bring into view the theological assumptions structuring that world in which spiritual forces are generated. Further, the emphasis on performance prioritizes the agency of humans in Pentecostal action.

Similarly to Adelakun’s focus on performance, Ruth Marshall’s seminal study of Nigerian Pentecostalism considers Pentecostal political action through the lens of Foucauldian subjectivation.²⁰ Marshall seeks to move past deterministic and reductive accounts of African religion and successfully adopts a frame that accurately considers religious practices in relation to the self. Marshall sees Pentecostalism as locating “the site of this truth-telling and discernment between true and false in the subject’s capacity for perception and the exercise of the ‘spirit of discernment,’ a faculty in which both revelation and judgment are merged.”²¹ So, the practice of Pentecostalism is work of the self on the self to form the type of subject who can make these

¹⁷ Abimbola A. Adelakun, *Performing Power in Nigeria: Identity, Politics, and Pentecostalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 11.

¹⁸ Adelakun, *Performing Power in Nigeria*, 11.

¹⁹ Adelakun, *Performing Power in Nigeria*, 12.

²⁰ Foucault describes “subjectivation” or “subjectification” as an context of ethical transformation whereby the “emphasis is on the forms of relation with the self, on the methods and techniques by which he works them out, on the exercise by which he makes of himself an object to be known, and on the practices that enable him to transform his own mode of being.” Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: Volume Two* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 10-11.

²¹ Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 189.

types of revelatory judgements about the nature of reality and the other. Marshall describes this as a process much larger than the self, though always involving the self and existing power relations. She writes:

Subjectivity, as noted earlier, is not a form of knowledge, a power, an essence, or a function, but rather a relationship—between the self and the world, between the self and the self—whose content is historical, “rare,” and fragile. Subjectivation implies that the individual is always worked upon by a historically specific series of relations of power and knowledge that determine the possible field of his or her actions, prompting or imposing certain conducts and the recognition of a certain truth about the self and about the world. At the same time, this process implies the active engagement of the subject, such that the subject recognizes him- or herself as not only the agent, but also the moral subject of his or her own action.²²

The world, traditions of thought, power relations, and material conditions all act upon the subject creating the conditions through which the subject then acts upon herself. The self is not a closed entity that works unaffected by others or material conditions. Marshall’s approach does bring to light the work the self is doing in religious practices and in that sense takes religion seriously, but some of the ontological assumptions in the Foucauldian frame push much of the theological, especially in the form of non-human agents, from view.

Much of Marshall’s analysis in *Political Spiritualities* is guided by a commitment to African agency where the colonial introduction of “this novel epistemological and political possibility” does not “imply its identical reproduction.”²³ Nonetheless, while shaking off the deterministic paths of liberal history and Marxist theory, Marshall’s approach still relies on a liberal notion of the self that limits the study of Pentecostalism. Amira Mittermaier makes this limitation clear pointing out that reliance on theories of self-cultivation challenges liberal universalism while “simultaneously [following] a semi-liberal logic.”²⁴ The self-utilizing

²² Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 131.

²³ Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 24; 22.

²⁴ Amira Mittermaier, “Dreams for Elsewhere: Muslim subjectivities beyond the trop of self-cultivation,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18, 252. Mittermaier’s critique of self-cultivation theories is in conversation

subjection, or piety, or Pentecostal religiosity as a technique of the self still prioritizes the activity of the self, rather than subjectivities that involve receiving or being acted upon. In her study of dream stories from an Egyptian Sufi community, Mittermaier states that, “Far from being the outcome of practices of self-cultivation (alone), dreams and visions remind believers of the very condition of being with and continuously being acted upon. The dream-vision is ethical precisely because it is about alterity and not self-cultivation.”²⁵ For Mittermaier, the “hegemonic paradigm of self-cultivation” not only obscures subjectivities formed by being acted upon, but *erases* the intertwined form of ethics and religiosity that come with it.²⁶

In her study of the ethical formation of Catholic nuns in Uganda, China Scherz saw recognizing the potential for God to act as necessary for comprehending the sisters’ own understanding of their ethical transformation:

For the sisters, experiences of and relationships with God certainly figure as the ethical substance, mode of subjection, or telos to be achieved through one’s own ethical work. But in addition to these, God also figures as an agent capable of intervening to perform this work of transformation.²⁷

Scherz does not recommend ridding anthropology of Foucauldian theories of the self, but does demonstrate the necessity of expanding the ontological scope for understanding people’s ethical lives. What she calls “ontological agnosticism” allows for an anthropologist to hear and include how a subject understands non-human actors in their own ethical life.²⁸

with Saba Mahmood’s *Politics of Piety*, where Mittermaier both praises and names the limitations of Mahmood’s approach. While Mahmood does show the limits of liberal universalism, she still relies on a semi-liberal notion of the acting self in her understanding of piety. See, Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

²⁵ Mittermaier, “Dreams from Elsewhere,” 253.

²⁶ Of course, these critiques are reminiscent of those made by John Milbank who sees no justification for a “secular” position from which to observe the social. Such a starting point assumes an unjustified foundation of “secular reason,” which for Milbank is a historically contingent creation, and thus a particular understanding of “religion” as that which takes place in the interior and private. See: John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 76, esp. ch. 5 “Policing the Sublime.”

²⁷ China Scherz, “Enduring the Awkward Embrace: Ontology and Ethical Work in a Ugandan Convent,” *American Anthropologist* vol. 120 no. 1 (March 2018), 110.

²⁸ Scherz, “Enduring the Awkward Embrace,” 110.

For anthropologists, the problem of ontology concerns how to speak about non-human agents without taking a theological position.²⁹ This problem arises within the anthropology of ethics through a realization that people often do not understand themselves as acting on themselves, but rather as being acted upon or transformed by other agents. Recognizing other's self-understanding as passive or receptive coupled with the observer's lack of evidence to dismiss that self-understanding pushes anthropologists to describe all agents present in the world that their objects of study are inhabiting. Ontological agnosticism creates possibilities for considering the theological and hearing the epistemological world of Nigerian Pentecostals without taking a stance on the ultimate metaphysical validity of that world. For the purposes of this chapter, which is more immediately descriptive, ontological agnosticism is a helpful approach for considering how Pentecostal contempt manifests within more local cosmological frameworks. Ontological agnosticism, though, will not serve the more normative ends of Part Two, which does not claim to reconcile all ontological claims, but offers a normative proposal targeting similar Pentecostal concerns, which I will outline in Chapter Four.

With the limitations of these approaches to Nigerian Pentecostalism in mind, the study I undertake here concerns the ontological assumptions of Nigerian Pentecostals and how those assumptions draw on and shape Pentecostal contempt. As such, this chapter does not theorize the source of contempt toward traditional religions, but seeks to demonstrate how that contempt is deployed within a theological frame. Seeking to describe the ontological assumptions of Nigerian Pentecostals does not necessarily accept or reject those assumptions, but rather seeks to understand how they function as Pentecostals interact with difference. My normative proposal in

²⁹ In addition to Scherz and Mittermeier see also: James Laidlaw, *The Subject of Virtue: An Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Joel Robbins, *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in Papua New Guinea Society* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004).

Part Two will not seek to upend this ontological world, but instead offer a proposal from a particular location that shares some overlap with Pentecostals in other locations. But, that is the task of Part Two. For now, I turn to Section Three and the Pentecostal reception of FESTAC ‘77.

§3 – Pentecostal Receptions of FESTAC ‘77

From January 15 through February 12, 1977, the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) met in Lagos, Nigeria. Following the first festival in Senegal in 1966, FESTAC brought thousands of Africans from the continent and the diaspora to Lagos to celebrate African culture. Asonzeh Ukah points out that Yakubu Gowon, the Nigerian head of state who made the commitment to host FESTAC, saw the “events [as] an opportunity for black peoples in Africa and in the Diaspora to identify with their roots and their artistic and cultural heritage and traditional religions.”³⁰ The events of FESTAC fit within a larger “cultural revival” in which governments sought to “promote African cultural heritage.”³¹ The festival would showcase “traditional music, drama, art, and oral literature” that “received national and international attention.”³² Mathews Ojo characterizes the events as “an attempt to show the beauty and richness of African culture, [where] many traditional religious rites were observed.”³³ Organizers of the events imagined these rites as in line with other cultural presentations rather than an explicitly religious practice.

The military head of state at the time, Olusegun Obasanjo highlighted the importance of celebrating African culture after a long period of colonial rule:

³⁰ Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm for Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 2008), 119.

³¹ Mathews A. Ojo, *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements In Modern Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2006), 74.

³² Ukah, *A New Paradigm for Pentecostal Power*, 119.

³³ Ojo, *The End-Time Army*, 74.

We celebrated FESTAC to show the world that black and African peoples have culture and know where we want to go [...] Some people even say we have no history, and yet human existence began here in Africa. We are the ones who globalised the world, from Africa; and they say we have no history. So, it is important for us to remind the world that we all emanated from Africa.³⁴

In addition to cultural events and performances, academics traveled to Lagos to participate in colloquium on the future of African unity and culture.³⁵ Such an act was not a mere African talent show but was seen as a final move past colonialism and a return to that which colonizers had sought to erase. Andrew Apter goes as far as to say that “FESTAC performed a cultural exorcism, casting out the colonial ghosts and demons that continued to afflict African hearts and minds.”³⁶

The Nigerian government invested as much as 500 million dollars in the venture, erecting a new national theatre and an entire festival village that would house the 17,000 visitors traveling to Lagos.³⁷ According to first-hand accounts, FESTAC was something of a national celebration with schools and universities closing throughout Lagos.³⁸ The newly established FESTAC Village modeled something similar to an Olympic village and provided accommodations to visitors as well as busses that would transport visitors between the various festival sites. One Nigerian Pentecostal who was a teenager in 1977 compared the size of FESTAC Village to building a new city the geographical size of Washington DC.³⁹ As security concerns were not as heightened as they are in the present day, all were welcome and able to attend the events moving

³⁴ Olusegun Obasanjo quoted in “Obasanjo opens up on role in FESTAC ‘77,” *National Daily Newspaper*, Nov. 7, 2017. <https://nationaldailyng.com/obasanjo-opens-up-on-role-in-festac-77/>. Accessed June 10, 2022.

³⁵ Alex Poinsett, “FESTAC ‘77: Second World Black and African Festival of Art and Culture draws 17,000 participants to Lagos,” *Ebony Magazine* vol. 32.7 (May 1977), 33-46.

³⁶ Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 5.

³⁷ R, Johnathan C. “FESTAC: Upbeat Finale,” *Washington Post* (14 Feb, 1977), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1977/02/14/festac-upbeat-finale/e97a144d-bd6a-4e03-ba18-e0be4217d057/>. Accessed June 10, 2022.

³⁸ Interview conducted February 7, 2023.

³⁹ Interview conducted February 7, 2023.

in and out of FESTAC Village. The incredible amount of money invested by then oil-rich Nigeria was a gesture towards Nigerian ambitions “for itself as a leader in the struggle for black and African advancement across the globe.”⁴⁰

The prioritization of “traditional” African culture was an intentional way of identifying Nigeria’s national culture with a pan-African movement. In this sense, FESTAC did seek to characterize Nigeria’s identity and destiny. Obasanjo’s emphasis on the cultural display at FESTAC is no mistake. Apter argues that the events at FESTAC were a form of national cultural production meant to bring together the multi-ethnic Nigerian population “by producing a Nigerian national culture that could be exhibited in museums and choreographed onstage.”⁴¹ Nigeria, as a national political identity, is a colonial creation that groups together many ethnically, linguistically, and religiously diverse groups. As such, those groups’ traditions are not typically shared and do not map onto a united Nigerian culture.⁴² The problem of multi-ethnic fracturing throughout Nigeria and the perceived need of a national culture would be particularly palpable in 1977 after the Biafran Civil War in which Igbo separatists sought to secede from Nigeria. So, it is under these terms that Nigeria sought to bring together local cultures and harness a pan-African identity for the sake of national unity.

This move to incorporate local cultures was not unique to the Nigerian nation-state; it had extended back to the colonial period and was used as a way of incorporating “local cultural identities and ethnicities into the administrative categories of indirect rule.”⁴³ In a similar way, local cultures and ethnicities were drawn on and recategorized into federal rather than ethnic

⁴⁰ J.D.Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisha Religion*, 199.

⁴¹ Apter, *The Pan-African Nation*, 45.

⁴² This problem still exists and Nigerian intellectuals have considered the role civil religion or philosophy can play in constructing a national identity. See: Simeon Ilesanmi, *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1996).

⁴³ Apter, *The Pan-African Nation*, 46.

categories. This was a type of abstraction for the sake of fitting those identities into a larger imagined national identity. In harnessing local cultures towards a national identity, FESTAC sought to incorporate the local and the past into the project of national development. This was in no way a pure representation of local cultures as these representations were shaped by post-colonial oil politics in Nigeria. Certainly FESTAC '77 was a celebration of culture, but it also sought to define Nigeria's national identity; it is in this context that early Pentecostal movements organized against the events at FESTAC.

§3.1 – *The Pentecostal Pushback*

While many received FESTAC as a sign of national unity and progress, many others objected to the festivities on both political and religious grounds. Pentecostals were one such early group of religious objectors, organizing to protest FESTAC on the grounds that it was a plot from the devil to revitalize idol worship.⁴⁴ What Apter takes as Nigeria seeking to create a national culture, Pentecostals took as “an attempt to revive the dying traditional religions.”⁴⁵ Throughout this section, I demonstrate the presence of Pentecostal contempt in receptions of FESTAC '77. Notable, though, is the way this Pentecostal contempt manifests in the production of religious knowledge seeking to know and explain the future and destiny of Nigeria. Nimi Wariboko argues that knowledge is key to Nigerian Pentecostal spirituality; “It is not enough to be *merely* saved; one must see into, hear from, and converse with beings in the spiritual realm.”⁴⁶ Pentecostals draw on contempt to generate spiritual knowledge as it pertains to a larger and very

⁴⁴ Ukah, *A New Paradigm for Pentecostal Power*, 119.

⁴⁵ Ojo, *The End-Time Army*, 74. It should be noted that historically speaking, contemporary Pentecostal movements had not yet started in 1977. Ojo refers to those Christians objecting to FESTAC in 1977 as “evangelicals.” I prefer to remain consistent in my language for the sake of continuity and to note that the Nigerian evangelicals under discussion would fall under my definition of Pentecostal. This is not meant to gloss over historical developments in the Nigerian Pentecostal movement, which Ojo details.

⁴⁶ Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 45-6.

consequential notion of destiny. The next section (§3.2) will expand on the themes of destiny and knowledge in Nigerian Pentecostalism, but for now this section demonstrates the presence of Pentecostal contempt, a concern for destiny, and the importance of spiritual knowledge in Pentecostal receptions of FESTAC '77.

Enoch Adeboye, perhaps the most recognizable Pentecostal pastor in Nigeria and current General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), got his start organizing campus ministries in opposition to FESTAC '77.⁴⁷ In fact, a high ranking pastor in the RCCG who was at the original 1977 worship services organized in opposition to FESTAC '77 points out that those evangelistic services were the genesis of and continue today as the RCCG's annual "Holy Ghost Congress."⁴⁸ Mathews Ojo describes Christian receptions of FESTAC '77: "Evangelical Christians viewed the daily activity of FESTAC that featured the display of half nude dancers in the guise of cultural renaissance as a government-sponsored resurgence of paganism and idolatry."⁴⁹ One of the earliest groups organizing in protest to FESTAC was the Christian Students' Social Movement of Nigeria (CSSM). This excerpt from a CSSM publication illustrates the spiritual stakes behind the initial negative reception of FESTAC:

During the latter part of the first quarter of 1977, the kingdom of darkness unleashed its wild moves calculated at taking over completely the spiritual leadership of this nation; when there was increased tendency towards occultism and cult membership, agitation to turn this country into the hands of atheists through certain ideologies and deliberate attempts at eradicating the effects of the gospel and stop its further spread. The FESTAC, sort of, threw wide the gates of Nigeria to those spirits from the kingdom of darkness and they all were offering our dear nation free tickets to hell and destruction.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Church of God in Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 2008), 120-2.

⁴⁸ Personal interview conducted February 17, 2023.

⁴⁹ Ojo, *The End-Time Army*, 107-8.

⁵⁰ *Christian Students' Social Movement of Nigeria Handbook* (Ibadan, 1979), 2. Cited by Ojo, *The End-Time Army*, 108.

Here, the stakes were understood as the “spiritual leadership of Nigeria.” Protests took the form of counter worship services, intended to worship God rather than African traditional religions, interpreted by Pentecostals as idols imported from all of Africa. The anthropologist, J.D.Y. Peel sees this as a change in that “This was the first public showing of not so much a new attitude as the revival of the old strategy of demonizing, rather than desacralizing, what was left of the old religion.”⁵¹ This interpretation of events did not fade after the closing of the festival. It was so strong that Ruth Marshall finds that among Nigerian Pentecostals FESTAC was “unanimously designated as the turning point in the spiritual and material demise of the nation, the sign of satanic power at work.”⁵² In fact, this narrative is still a potent way Pentecostals understand Nigeria’s past and future.

Since the initial protests of FESTAC ‘77, which saw the events as celebrating the worship of idols, Pentecostals have continued to understand FESTAC ‘77 as fundamentally altering Nigeria’s destiny and threatening the fate of the country. This does not merely imply that Nigeria became something that it would have otherwise not become, but that the material well-being of the country was hurt because of the spiritual forces affecting Nigeria’s destiny. As described above, FESTAC ‘77 was part of a project to craft a national culture, so issues of identity were very much on the table.⁵³ This project was flush with contradictions and corruption fueled by an oil-rich military dictatorship, but it was the object of contempt (traditional religion) that was seen as threatening the collective destiny of Nigeria.

From the very beginning, Pentecostals did not receive FESTAC as a means of achieving Nigeria’s destiny. Instead, FESTAC was seen as a spiritual calamity that would only derail

⁵¹ J.D.Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2016), 155.

⁵² Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 106.

⁵³ Apter, *The Pan-African Nation*, 8-9.

Nigeria's future. For many of those who protested the displays of "idol worship" at FESTAC '77, exactly this concern for the destiny of Nigeria was at stake. Contemporary Pentecostal understandings maintain this concern and then interpret Nigerian history through the lens of a contaminated destiny. This is not merely a concern that a national identity became "impure," but that such "impurity" has a bearing on how non-human agents act in relation to Nigeria. Sunday Oduala, the General Overseer of a Nigerian Pentecostal congregation in London, details his understanding of how FESTAC '77 affected Nigeria's future:

It was 15th January to 12th February 1977. Delegates from 62 nations were invited to come and celebrate the contamination of Nigeria's destiny through the display of man-made gods. An estimate of 25 million dollars was wasted to host the event. Satan was exalted, hence oil boom turned to oil doom. The law of the one and only true God was broken: "Thou shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20: 3). And because the law of God was broken, a curse was triggered. It was two years after the party of the devils, called FESTAC was hosted that God allowed high level corrupt political leaders to assume power in 1979.⁵⁴

For Pentecostals, Nigeria's greatness is premised upon how the nation relates to God. Notice especially the language of "contamination." That which is other than Christian is taken as a contamination to an otherwise pure Christian fate. This demonstrates the dynamics of Pentecostal contempt I outline in Chapter One, where a closed pneumatology identifies God's activity and presence in an exclusive community or an exclusive identity. That which is taken as beyond that identity is not only ethically inferior, here identified with a curse and corruption, but also a threat to the otherwise prosperous Pentecostal future. Here, material prosperity is almost an ethical outcome, whereby more material wealth is a sign on one's exceptional ethical status. Spiritual problems never remain strictly spiritual, they always have material consequences, and the curse triggered at FESTAC catalyzed a change in political leadership and a collapse in oil markets that would eventually roll back the perceived progress that a cash-flush Nigeria was able to make.

⁵⁴ Sunday Oduala, *Demons at Loose* (Self-Published, Sunday Oduala, 2019), 91.

A wide range of Pentecostal pastors and ministers continue to interpret the events of FESTAC as inviting idols and demons into the country. Felix Adunpe, the General Overseer of the Signs and Wonders Prayer Ministries in Lagos, echoed the concern in calling all of Nigeria to prayer and repentance, pointing out that “Nigeria must be redeemed from sin of glorifying idols above God; we must pray for the country to be free from all forms of demonic powers troubling the country since 1977 FESTAC.”⁵⁵ When asked about the relationship between FESTAC and Nigeria’s hardships, Baba Aladura Henry Phillips, the third Supreme Head of The Mount Shiloh Praying Band of the Holy Cherubim and Seraphim, drew an immediate connection.⁵⁶

About 42 years ago, the then military government under General Olusegun Obasanjo though we had the plan was on [sic.] during the regime of General Yakubu Gowon, through FESTAC ‘77 took the nation back to Egypt. All idols from other black African nations and even beyond were brought to our country. Those idols if not destroyed we cannot reach our goal. We had a good economy, which was more buoyant than that of America and our former colonial masters, the United Kingdom in 1977. After 1977, Nigeria found herself struggling. Our leaders have compromised. What I expect from President Muhammadu Buhari is for him to call the nation to repentance, sincere worship of God and take us back to the promised land.⁵⁷

Interestingly, while traditional religions are still seen with contempt, there is hope that a Muslim president would call a nation to repentance. Perceived idols threaten shared economic outcomes and it is up to the entire country to destroy them.

⁵⁵ Felix Adunpe, quoted in Ebum Sessou, “Demonic power troubling Nigeria since 1977 FESTAC – Cleric,” *Vanguard* (10 Feb, 2018), <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/02/demonic-powers-troubling-nigeria-since-1977-festac-cleric/>. Accessed June 11, 2022. Signs and Wonders Prayer Ministries is a deliverance ministry based in Lagos; Adunpe is often quoted by national Nigerian outlets and organizes national prayer meetings with larger organizations.

⁵⁶ Baba Aladura Henry Phillips is a leader in the Aladura movement, which is an early African-initiated Church (AIC) that broke off from European missionary churches. He leads a medium sized congregation in Lagos. Later Pentecostals rejected many AIC and Aladura teachings and practices, but both movements would still fit my definition of Pentecostal. Calling each Pentecostal is not meant to imply any sense of uniformity, but to signal a shared expectation of God’s activity and an emphasis on the supernatural. For a history of the transition from the Aladura movement to later Pentecostal movements in Nigeria, see: Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 19-20.

⁵⁷ Baba Aladura Henry Phillips, quoted in Olayinka Latona, “FESTAC ‘77 responsible for Nigeria’s woes — Baba Aladura Philips,” *Vanguard* (13 July, 2019), <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/07/festac-77-responsible-for-nigerias-woes-baba-aladura-philips/>. Accessed June 10, 2022.

Margaret Osundolire is a community organizer and evangelist who runs a tuition free school in Ogun state. She works with national Christian organizations to organize prayer and evangelism services with national repentance in mind, specifically referencing FESTAC in her motivations for doing so. She points to the damage caused by FESTAC in that the festival harmed or displeased God, “The Lord told me that the FESTAC ‘77 was like a knife thrust into his heart, which has made him bleed over this nation over the years.”⁵⁸ For Osundolire and others protesting the events at FESTAC, the traditional components of the festival are interpreted as the importation of idols into Nigeria. These idols, rather than merely false gods, pose a threat because they open doors for demons to influence Nigeria’s trajectory. Osundolire continues:

Nigeria had an oil boom at that time, and instead of Nigeria to utilise the money or do something else, Nigeria called on other nations to come and exhibit their idols. We were even told that even the idols that were brought to Nigeria at that time, some of those idols were never returned. The Lord revealed to me that those demons that accompanied those idols down to this nation are still dwelling in Nigeria today. To confirm this, about two years ago, I personally went to National Arts Theatre at Iganmu. At the time, I wanted to hold a programme there. I usually hold that programme every February. I met another man of God there and it was quite amazing that exactly the way God gave me this vision is the same way God gave the other man the same vision. The man has a church in that area, and he was sharing his experience, ordeals and travails, which resulted in long days of fasting and prayer. That is to confirm that what the Lord said is true. This same man has been around that place praying and interceding for Nigeria on the same purpose. I want to believe that in a way, God viewed it as lifting idols above Him. Whatever you do, that takes first place in your heart is what you lift up. At that particular time, Nigeria had the oil boom. So going to import idols all in the name of culture is what really annoyed God.⁵⁹

One thing to notice is that idolatry is here described as “Whatever you do, that takes first place in your heart you lift up.” Some things are understood as in competition with devotion to God while others are not. Objects of contempt that are coded as “religious” fit within the category that

⁵⁸ Tomi Falade and Seyi Taiwo-Oguntuase, “FESTAC ‘77 Was Like A Knife In God’s Heart – Evang Osundolire,” *Independent*, Jan. 21, 2018. <https://independent.ng/festac-77-like-knife-gods-heart-evang-osundolire/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.

⁵⁹ Falade and Taiwo-Oguntuase, “FESTAC ‘77 Was Like A Knife In God’s Heart.”

competes with God, but something like, say, oil wealth is never perceived as an idolatrous threat to Christian devotion. In fact, oil wealth is always seen as a form of God's blessing and devotion to that wealth cannot compete with devotion to God. In this way, Nigerian Pentecostals often equate the gears of racial capitalism with the hand of God and spiritualize wealth as blessing. Wealth, for Nigerian Pentecostals (and most of the world), is not received with contempt.

The special assistant to Enoch Adeboye, Pastor Johnson Odesola makes this call to repentance with material success in mind: "Shortly after Festac '77, we started experiencing negative development in the country. We didn't appreciate God with our oil boom. If we really want God to build this nation, we must return to Him and let Him occupy our national life and know how to manage our successes."⁶⁰ Pastor David Oluwashola Adepoju, the General Overseer of New Life Eternal Ministries, a prominent church in Lagos, diagnoses Nigeria's problems and describes FESTAC as the number one sin against God, naming repentance as the only solution to Nigeria's problems, pointing out that,

The problems of Nigeria are spiritual. Nigeria need National repentance. Nigeria sinned against God by the act of FESTAC '77. God hates idolatry. It is the number one sin of Nigeria against God. Until there is National repentance of FESTAC '77 there will be no solution to the country's problem.⁶¹

The presiding bishop of Divine Seed of God Chapel Ministry in Ibadan made a similar call in his annual prophecies for 2017. Here, Prophet Wale Olagunju names a blessing for Nigeria conditioned on Nigeria's repentance for FESTAC '77. "God says that except that the Nigeria

⁶⁰ Olayinka Latona, "Be grateful to God, Adeboye counsels Nigerians," *Vanguard*, April 16, 2016. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/04/grateful-god-adeboye-counsels-nigerians/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.

⁶¹ Isaac Ngumah, "FESTAC '77 number one sin of Nigeria against God- Pastor Adepoju," *Church Times Nigeria*, July 30, 2019. <https://churchtimesnigeria.net/festac-adepoju-nigeria/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022. Interestingly, Pastor Adepoju names other sins as "closely following" the sin of FESTAC. These sins include "neglecting the widows, the aged ones and the children" and "another grievous sin of the government which is closely following the sin of Festac and that is the neglect of the The Disabled. The physical challenged ones were created by God." Whereas one might see FESTAC as a more "spiritual" sin of idolatry, Adepoju sees FESTAC closely related to the neglect of those in need in that both require national repentance.

nation repent of the sin of its leaders who killed innocent souls, sin of FESTAC '77 and sin of corruption which placed the country under the curse of the Almighty, the country's problem will continue."⁶²

FESTAC invited idols to Nigeria resulting in negative material outcomes for the country. Interesting here is the way a closed pneumatology is both assumed and aspired to. Those objects of contempt, traditional religions, are seen as beyond the activity of God as a closed pneumatology would hold. Moreover, Nigeria as a community defined by the exclusive activity of the Christian God with all other idols and powers expelled is also an aspiration. It is something to be achieved. Material outcomes ought to then be read alongside a notion of ethical exceptionalism. Whereas some Pentecostal communities will see the exceptional status of the community as defined by moral outcomes, here material prosperity has a similar function. Those communities relating closely to God's activity and presence will have better material outcomes, while those outside of that community will experience curses and economic hardship.

For Pentecostals, FESTAC's association with demonic activity is so strong, that it continues to threaten Nigeria. Leading up to the fortieth anniversary of FESTAC '77, some advocates of FESTAC proposed hosting a second festival in Nigeria to commemorate the anniversary in 2017. These suggestions sparked backlash from Pentecostals who voiced concerns over what a new FESTAC might do to the nation. Andrew Morgridge, who is pastor of Christian Brethren Church International in Lagos, sees a new FESTAC as threatening the upward trajectory of Nigeria.

The tears, pains and sorrows we will experience as a nation will be unprecedented as FESTAC unleashes demons and wicked spiritual elements, and we will join the nations who get visited with natural disasters constantly. The Devil saw us winning against

⁶² Oludolapo Adelana, "Pastor Adebayo, Dr. Olukoya, Apostle Suleiman... See the amazing prophecies for 2017," *YNaija.com*, January 3, 2017. <https://ynaija.com/adeboye-olukoya-and-apostle-suleiman-lets-us-into-their-2017-predictions/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.

Ebola; to his chagrin, Boko Haram has been largely upstaged and the Niger Delta Militants who are bent on destroying their own land –cutting your nose to spite your face –are also cooling down. Because God loves Nigeria, He pushes us to pray and we see results.⁶³

For Morgridge, the positive outcomes for Nigeria are a result of Christian praise and prayer.

Morgridge sees “the Devil” as trying to stop that progress and a new FESTAC is exactly the plan the Devil needs.

This section has demonstrated the general shape of Pentecostal contempt as manifest in the reception of FESTAC ‘77. Traditional religions—the salient category for Pentecostals—are held as objects of contempt and interpreted as idols, demons, and the work of Satan himself. Throughout this section, I have demonstrated an operative category of destiny along with a way of claiming knowledge of spiritual things that might affect that destiny. Both destiny and Pentecostal knowledge deserve more explicit attention in order to understand the extent of Pentecostal contempt and the extent of the threats Pentecostals perceive from traditional religions. The next section seeks to make clear several dynamics shaping Pentecostal contempt in a unique Nigerian setting. These dynamics include vulnerable stakes of destiny and the unstable forms of Pentecostal knowledge and authority.

§3.2 – Destiny and the Production of Spiritual Knowledge

The previous section showed a continuous concern for the destiny of Nigeria with the fate of the country constantly subject to spiritual powers. But what all does a “destiny” include? And how does one come to know the spiritual powers that might affect it? Destiny is a familiar word to North Atlantic readers, but how it functions for Nigerian Pentecostals is not obvious. These

⁶³ Andrew Morgridge, “No to Another FESTAC,” *Vanguard*, December 18, 2016. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/12/no-to-another-festac/>. Accessed: July 3, 2022.

concerns with a person or nation's destiny, occur within a context in which that destiny can be given to or taken by the wrong power, perhaps even affected by a malicious neighbor. As such, the concern for destiny also demonstrates a sort of cosmic vulnerability facilitating a suspicion of others that draws on and fuels Pentecostal contempt. To better understand Pentecostal appeals to "destiny," this section draws on one Yoruba concept, that of *Ori*, to offer texture to the stakes for Nigerian Pentecostals in their reception of FESTAC '77. The section closes by pointing out the unstable nature of Pentecostal religious knowledge that requires large claims, separation or rupture from difference, and objects of contempt to justify the authority of the knower.

Ogbu Kalu argues that the ways African Pentecostalism developed within preexisting African cosmologies distinguishes it from Western forms of secularism or sacred/secular divides.⁶⁴ This is not to raise a concern over "syncretism," but to suggest that Nigerian Pentecostalism engages difference within a particular sort of spiritual milieu.⁶⁵ Nimi Wariboko argues that Nigerian Pentecostalism can neither be reduced to a product of Christian missionary activity nor the pre-existing African cosmologies into which those missionaries entered. Instead, Wariboko sees Nigerian Pentecostalism as carving out a "forty-five-degree line between [the axes of] missionary Christianity and African traditional religions."⁶⁶ This is not to say that Pentecostalism synthesizes missionary Christianity and African traditional religions, but that Pentecostalism develops in the context of and in reaction to each. The largest Pentecostal churches and much of the Pentecostal movement developed within a Yoruba context, thus warranting focus on specifically Yoruba concepts. I am not reducing Pentecostal notions of destiny to a Yoruba concept, rather I am introducing one concept from which Pentecostals draw

⁶⁴ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), xii.

⁶⁵ On the question of syncretism and Christian tradition, see: Ross Kane, *Syncretism and Christian Tradition: Race and Revelation in the Study of Religious Mixture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

⁶⁶ Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 163.

that can help understand the larger vulnerability and that fuels Pentecostal contempt. The point of this section is to introduce North Atlantic readers to a different notion of destiny that can help render Pentecostal anxiety over destiny more legible.

Among the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria, *Ori* refers to the head and has both the inner head, *Ori-inu*, and the outer physical head, *Ori-ode*.⁶⁷ *Ori* is often translated as “destiny” or “fate,” though Rowland Abiodun points out that this is not the same as the “immutable destiny” but is a destiny that requires “constant recourse to ‘*Ori*.’”⁶⁸ Abiodun’s distinction will seem in tension for readers assuming destiny as something like a fixed fate, but Abiodun’s distinction highlights both the given and dynamic nature of a destiny. One version of a Yoruba creation myth holds that after the body is molded and life is breathed into the body, the body “then goes to *Ajala* (deity responsible for making *Ori*) to select an *Ori*.”⁶⁹ Adebola Babatunde Ekanola describes three aspects surrounding the choice of *Ori*:

First, it is supposed to be one of free choice. You are said to be free to choose any of the *Ori* available in *Ajala*’s storehouse. Second, the *Ori* selected determines, finally and irreversibly, the life course and personality of its possessor on earth. Third, each individual is unaware of the content or quality of the chosen *Ori*, that is, the person making the choice does not know if the destiny embedded in an *Ori* is good or bad.⁷⁰

Following the choice of *Ori*, a person is said to go under the tree of forgetfulness before their birth. Olusegun Gbadegesin describes this selection of *Ori* as fundamental to a person’s “purpose

⁶⁷ Rowland Abiodun, *Yoruba Art and Language: Seeking the African in African Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 324.

⁶⁸ Abiodun, *Yoruba Art and Language*, 324. For one Yoruba philosophical study of destiny, see: Olúkáyòdé R. Adésuyì, “How to to Individuate Destiny: A Critique of Segun Ogungbemi’s Conception of Destiny,” *Philosophia* 47 (2019), 1391-1404.

⁶⁹ Adebola Babatunde Ekanola, “A Naturalistic Interpretation of the Yoruba Concepts of *Ori*,” *Philosophia Africana* vol. 9, no. I (March, 2006), 41.

⁷⁰ Ekanola, “A Naturalistic Interpretation of the Yoruba Concepts of *Ori*,” 41.

in life” because *Ori* “has the secret of the Deity’s plan for one. It is like a forerunner, the pathfinder in the earthly bush.”⁷¹

Ori is external to oneself, so not a product of hard work or something to be achieved and is always affected by other agents whether benevolent, malicious, or benign. In fact, the *Ori* is itself an *oriṣa* who “holds the next place to Oludmare [the supreme deity and source of creation]” because “*Ori* has chosen a destiny of the individual and it is believed that this has been sealed by Oludumare, the rest of the task belongs to *Ori* who therefore needs to be appeased from time to time.”⁷² As such, the Yoruba establish shrines and offer visual and spoken *oriki* (praise) to their *Ori*.⁷³ Such attention is paid to *Ori* because it determines the success or failure of a person’s life on earth. John Pemberton and Funso Afọlayan point out that a failure “to acknowledge one’s *Ori* through sacrifices is to risk failure in the actualization of our potentials.”⁷⁴ While the inner spiritual head is distinct from the outer head, the outer head is also revered because of its connection to the inner head and spiritual destiny.⁷⁵ It is for this reason that Yoruba artwork often depicts a person’s head as disproportionately large and prominent. Abiodun describes the centrality of the *Ori* to the person.

The concept of *Ori* in its religio-artistic manifestations fundamentally informs the overall Yoruba definition of the person, most especially a person’s spiritual essence or allotment, affecting his or her goals and achievements on earth. In figural sculpture, for example, the head, *Ori*, irrespective of its favored mode of representation, constitutes the essence and identity of the subject, be it an *oriṣa* or human being.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Olusegun Gbadegesin, “Destiny, Personality and the Ultimate Reality of Human Existence: A Yoruba Perspective,” *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* vol. 7 no. 3 (1984), 181.

⁷² Gbadegesin, “Destiny, Personality and the Ultimate Reality of Human Existence,” 188.

⁷³ On the prominence of *Ori*, see: Olatunde Bayo Lawuyi, “*Ori*, *Ayé* and the ontogeny of society,” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* vol. 39 no. 3 (2021), 353-363.

⁷⁴ John Pemberton III and Fuso S. Afọlayan, *Yoruba Sacred Kingship: “A Power Like That of the Gods”* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 90.

⁷⁵ Abiodun, *Yoruba Art and Language*, 41.

⁷⁶ Abiodun, *Yoruba Art and Language*, 48.

As the central spiritual essence of a person, then *Ori* is “recognized as the source of the *aṣẹ* [power or the ability to bring things to pass]. It makes all accomplishments possible.”⁷⁷ For this reason, the head of a leader or king is held as sacred and of the utmost importance to the community and the crown of the *oba* (king) is understood as the continuous *Ori* of the community. The crown that the *oba* wears is itself an *oriṣa* and has its own *Ori*; when the *oba* places the crown on his head his own *Ori* is joined with that of the crown and the community.⁷⁸ A community, therefore, has a vested interest in the *Ori* of their leader as the destiny of the community or nation is wrapped up in the destiny of the leader.⁷⁹

Now, *Ori* is the sort of thing that is connected to yet distinct from the self. A person must attend to their *Ori* with praise and various ritual rites, which is to say that a person does not possess but bears a relationship to their *Ori* as the *Ori* is “is our personal *oriṣa* and stands surety for the possibilities in our life.”⁸⁰ One’s *Ori* is understood as bearing a connection to a particular *oriṣa* who “owns” a person’s *Ori*. “Owning,” here, denotes a connection to a particular *oriṣa*, or Yoruba divinity, to whom the individual will offer sacrifices and participate in ritual worship.⁸¹ The process of discovering who owns the head of a new child involves a naming ceremony in which the connection is discerned. Commitment to that *oriṣa* is then understood as worship but also maintenance of one’s own destiny. Notice that a person’s actions directly affect spiritual realities, which always then shape a person’s destiny and future wellbeing.

With this in mind, consider Pentecostal concern with specific aspects of FESTAC ‘77. During multiple interviews, Pentecostal pastors identified the pouring of libations by the then

⁷⁷ Abiodun, *Yoruba Art and Language*, 42.

⁷⁸ Pemberton and Afọlayan, *Yoruba Sacred Kingship*, 90.

⁷⁹ Suzanne Preston Blier, *Art and Risk in Ancient Yoruba: Ife History, Power, and Identity, c. 1300* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 162.

⁸⁰ Pemberton and Afọlayan, *Yoruba Sacred Kingship*, 90.

⁸¹ Blier, *Art and Risk in Ancient Yoruba*, 165.

president Olusegun Obasanjo at the opening ceremony of FESTAC as inviting in demons to Nigeria. This was not a concern of respect for Christian practices or the individual soul of the president, but a concern for the ways Obasanjo's actions implicated the destiny of all Nigeria. Obasanjo's destiny was wrapped up with the destiny of all Nigeria. Pouring libations risked creating a connection with ancestors who never converted to Christianity. Those powers, then, would have the ability to affect the destiny of all Nigerians because of actions taken by a leader.

With this short introduction to the concept of *Ori* in mind, it is important to name how I see this in relation to Nigerian Pentecostalism. I, like Wariboko, do not see Pentecostals as adopting concepts and traditions from *oriṣa* traditions on a one to one basis. However, these concepts are very much part of the milieu from which Pentecostals draw while creating and seeking to understand their world.⁸² There exist other sources for understanding destiny, such as that of national chosenness that shape perceptions of Nigeria's destiny, similar to that of manifest destiny and American exceptionalism in the US. That powers other than the self can affect a person's *Ori* is of vital importance. Pentecostals see *oriṣa* (named as traditional religion) by and large as a pantheon of demonic powers who pose a risk to personal and communal wellbeing because of their capacity to influence another's destiny. Destiny is safe in the hands of Jesus, but it is for Nigerian Pentecostals rarely ever secure there.

Coming to know what powers affect a destiny, though, creates another layer of concern for Pentecostals in Nigeria. *Oriṣa* traditions have schools of expertise and training for understanding how to interact with the *oriṣa*. Detailing those traditions is beyond my expertise, but suffice it to say that they had achieved a sense of epistemic credibility that formed robust and

⁸² For further evidence that Nigerian, in this case Yoruba, Pentecostals draw from a milieu informed by *oriṣa* traditions, see Adalaku's description of Yoruba Pentecostal naming ceremonies. These ceremonies mirror the same naming ceremonies used in *oriṣa* traditions, except now names are understood as received from the Spirit and devotee one to following Jesus. See: Adalaku, *Performing Power in Nigeria*, ch. 6.

enduring systems of knowledge and authority in relation to the *oriṣa* and destiny.⁸³ However, colonialism eroded support for those stable systems of knowledge and authority and Pentecostal Christians have subsequently undertaken an assault on those traditions.⁸⁴ Despite this, a strong notion of destiny that is vulnerable to unseen powers remained, though now with different systems of knowledge to understand or interact with those powers. Spiritual warfare and political action, then, seek to engage what Kalu calls the “magical substratum that underpins the political culture.”⁸⁵ Take for example the previously cited Nigerian Pentecostal pastor, Sunday Oduala, who names the “symbols in the spirit realm” that guide his understanding of Nigeria’s destiny.

God does nothing by accident, if you look at the map of Africa very closely it looks like a gun trying to fire, and Nigeria’s position on the map is at the trigger point. As a prophet of God with understanding of natural symbols in the spirit realm, it suggests to me clearly that Nigeria was strategically positioned to be a blessing to Africa, Just as Israel is to the whole world.⁸⁶

Now, as Abimbola Adelokun points out, “the anointed pastor is the modern figuration of that local witch doctor who used to exist in traditional societies.”⁸⁷ Adelokun is right that the Pentecostal pastor performs a similar role to *oriṣa* priests, *babalawo*, and traditional chiefs. However, “witch doctor,” as a way of describing these diverse roles, is itself a distorting stereotype that has been deployed by colonial authorities and now Pentecostals in order to

⁸³ For more on this system of knowledge in Ifa, see: Oludamini Ogunnaike, *Deep Knowledge: Ways of Knowing in Sufism and Ifa, Two West African Intellectual Traditions* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021).

⁸⁴ One example of colonial erosion of the larger Yoruba cosmological world and system of knowing comes with the British demand that the *Oṣoni* of Ife leave Ife for a meeting with the colonial governor. Ife is considered the center of the Yoruba sacred universe, and prior to this the *Oṣoni* had never left Ife because of his sacred role as the embodiment of the community there. See: Jacob K. Olúpòṅà, *City of 201 Gods: Ilé-Ifè in Time, Space, and the Imagination* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 77-80.

⁸⁵ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 199.

⁸⁶ Oduala, *Demons at Loose*, 90.

⁸⁷ Adelokun, *Performing Power in Nigeria*, 105.

demonize and destroy African traditions.⁸⁸ The phrase is itself both contemptuous of traditional religions and inaccurate.

Pentecostal emphasis on rupture demands total separation from difference and takes the presence of that difference as a threat to be destroyed. Nimi Wariboko, who is himself a Nigerian Pentecostal pastor in the Redeemed Christian Church of God, calls this work of interpreting spiritual knowledge to name those threats the “spell of the invisible.”⁸⁹ How Pentecostals generate and apply knowledge of spiritual things under that spell draws on salient relations of contempt and directly informs the resulting Pentecostal approach to difference. The presence of evil and the need to break from it are for Pentecostals both assumed, but the generation of spiritual knowledge connects salient objects of contempt to other forms of evil in the world bolstering both the need for rupture and the cause for contempt.

Consider one example of how the readily available contempt of traditional religion helps a US based Nigerian Pentecostal to explain evil and suffering in Nigeria and the death of the brutal Nigerian dictator, General Sani Abacha. Here, the use of imagery associated with traditional religions offers an explanation of the spiritual workings affecting Nigeria’s destiny. Abacha’s death, for this Pentecostal, was the outcome of a spiritual conflict with Nigerian Christians:

An invisible spiritual battle raged during Abacha’s last days. While he had asked spiritists to bury fetishes, charms and live animals on the property at Aso Rock, Christians were fasting. Meanwhile, Adeboye, the head of the RCCG, prophesied on June 6, 1998, that

⁸⁸ While Pentecostal contempt breaks away from difference and seeks to destroy it, Yoruba traditions demonstrate one alternative way of receiving difference. Yoruba religions take a “comprehensive” approach to interreligious encounter, in which narratives are adapted and created to wrap other religions into the Yoruba religious world. For instance, Yoruba religions have narratives that include Jesus as an orisha. The point is not that Yoruba religions represent Christianity in a manner with which Christians might agree, but that Yoruba religions make a space for Christianity to exist in their world. See: Ayodeji Ogunnaike, “Comprehensive Religion: Traditional Religion(s) and the Expanding and Contracting Sacred Canopy,” presented to the Harvard African Studies Workshop (2015). Video available at: <https://vimeo.com/141433305>.

⁸⁹ Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, ch. 2.

God was about to bring a ‘new dawn’ to Nigeria. Abacha died of a heart attack three days later.⁹⁰

That Abacha, the evil dictator, is associated with charms and fetishes is no mistake, but conjures images of traditional religions more generally as associated with the evils experienced by Nigerians. Pentecostal receptions of FESTAC ‘77 utilize this same explanatory device of associating material misfortune with an object of contempt. Part of the problem of Pentecostal contempt is how certain it leaves Pentecostals in relation to their contempt of others, creating theological bulwarks against anything that might challenge such contempt. As such, the more certain Pentecostals become of their contempt, the more obvious it seems that the object of contempt bears a relationship to material and spiritual problems.

Concerns for collective destiny, the threat from spiritual powers, and the exclusive ways of imagining the Spirit of God or what I have called a closed pneumatology all demand knowledge of spiritual threats and those exclusive communities or practices offering connection to God. This demand for knowledge and the desire to become the type of person who can know spiritual things drives Nigerian Pentecostal religious practice. Wariboko’s study of Nigerian Pentecostalism differs from other existing studies in that Wariboko takes up a concern for the production of religious knowledge among Nigerian Pentecostals.⁹¹ Wariboko characterizes Nigerian Pentecostalism as a “pneumatological quest” to see the *noumena* behind the *phenomena*.⁹² Pentecostal spirituality, then, “strives to ‘step’ outside the realm of experiential objects, the finite reality of consciousness into the ontological foundation of knowing (the Real),

⁹⁰ J. Lee Grady, “Nigeria’s Miracle,” cover story, *Charisma*, May 2002, 4. Quoted in Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 217. “Aso Rock” refers to a geological formation near Abuja, Nigeria’s capital, and is an informal name for the presidential office and residence also known as “Aso Villa.”

⁹¹ Contrast this to Ebenezer Obadare who details the effects of religious authority in *Pentecostal Republic* and the formation of clerical authority in *Pastoral Power, Clerical State: Pentecostalism, Gender, and Sexuality in Nigeria* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2022).

⁹² Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 5.

which remains resistant to epistemological knowing.”⁹³As such, Pentecostal spirituality seeks to craft subjectivities capable of seeing beyond the “phenomenal veil.” The intuition that there is more to be seen beyond the phenomenal veil also provides a normative dimension for Pentecostals on which Pentecostal authority is constructed. Pentecostals in Nigeria seek to see those unseen things that can take control of a person or nation’s destiny. Pentecostal practices of praise, exorcism, Scripture reading, and prayer are all ways of fashioning the self as one who can see into the spiritual realm and extract knowledge. Those who are able to “use” or “access the invisible realm for revelation and miracle-working power for the benefit of his or her followers” are able to “build unquestioned authority.”⁹⁴

In her critique of Nigerian Pentecostalism, Ruth Marshall argues that the rupture-oriented form of spirituality will render Nigerian Pentecostalism unable to form stable political communities.⁹⁵ This constant instability is driven by the need for rupture and break as a form of spiritual practice. Marshall is right with regards to the political effects of rupture, but the theological motivations and workings within that rupture are not visible in Marshall’s study. Consider this emphasis on rupture or breaking with the dynamics of Pentecostal contempt. Rather than a notion of conversion in which one joins alongside the work of God that has always already been occurring, conversion as rupture assumes a closed pneumatology in which one identifies their past as a place of divine absence in order to clearly demarcate their transition into that community with a strong connection to the Holy Spirit.⁹⁶ With this in mind, though, that newfound connection to the Spirit demands an internal and external reevaluation along the lines

⁹³ Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 45.

⁹⁴ Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 4.

⁹⁵ Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 196-7.

⁹⁶ Interestingly, it is common to hear from those raised in Pentecostal communities a complaint that their own testimonies are devalued or not acknowledged because they have a sense of spiritual continuity without rupture.

of ethical exceptionalism. Internally, the convert must identify a new sense of moral progress. Externally, that means those objects from which they turned must become evil or sites of moral degeneracy. Associating one's past with salient objects of contempt, becomes one easy way to narrate rupture and conversion. The past or that from which one breaks always poses a threat, where one's destiny can easily be lost or overcome by other agents.

Rupture, then, has the effect of wrapping itself further into the power relations of the supernatural active in Nigeria, creating suspicion between neighbors and groups. Widespread material precarity and harm create an ever-present risk that the forces causing that precarity might spread and destabilize another's life. The lack of firm ground for discerning the presence of those powers coupled with the risks they pose raises the stakes for learning to see and avoid their influences. Marshall states:

Because there is no authoritative way to identify the source of supernatural power, converts cannot be sure that they or their neighbors are free from satanic influence. Hence arises the need to exorcise personal experiences of satanic affliction through public rituals of deliverance, and to interpret such experiences in terms not only of individual moral failure, but of the dangers posed by "enemies." The struggle to secure certainty, to institute the bases for new forms of social exchange and trust, is thus permanently interrupted by the omnipresent possibility of evil powers, and the exhortation to "love thy neighbor as thyself" is overcome by the necessity of discerning, convicting, and overcoming the evil the neighbor may be harboring with or without his or her knowledge.⁹⁷

For Marshall, the political spirituality of Pentecostalism calls for suspicion and the exercise of power to rid the body politic of the always potentially present supernatural evil. The need to interpret the presence of evil and the potential threats, therefore, creates a premium on spiritual authorities that can demonstrate their authority through miracles and signs of prophecy. As a needed commodity, this creates a competition between potential spiritual authorities (pastors)

⁹⁷ Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 195.

that fractures communities and demands identification of the demonic for the sake of staging public deliverance from those demonic forces.

With accusations flying between neighbors and distinctions between friends and enemies being made, one must ask how it is that another justifies the claim that the demonic is at work. Here, Wariboko points out the ways invisibility is used as a means of sustaining one's power in the attempt to reveal the other. He states,

The anointed Pentecostal Pastor wants to see through to the neighbor's spiritual secrets, render him or her visible in the born-again spiritual radar, but he neighbor should not see the Pentecostal pastor. The Pentecostal Christian wants her plans and the inner workings of the spirit to remain invisible to all unbelievers and dangerous strangers, but the plans and works of all of her enemies must be completely visible to her.⁹⁸

By remaining invisible—unaccountable to others or opaque in method—the Pentecostal remains beyond scrutiny, and the visible authority of their knowledge of unseen things is maintained by the visible scorn shown to the other. Contempt becomes more than a salient social category. Contempt becomes a way to sustain a sense of power over another or a sense of distinction over and above others.

This section has demonstrated some of the cosmological stakes around destiny within Nigerian Pentecostalism as well as the potential threat invisible or spiritual things can pose. This suspicious form of knowing takes place in a setting where destiny is vitally important and always vulnerable. Pentecostal contempt is a powerful source of theological motivation that, consciously or not, can shape the outcomes of spiritual discernment. Pentecostal contempt of FESTAC '77, then occurs within this frame where the nation's destiny is at risk and knowledge of the threats to that destiny draw from salient existing objects of contempt. While Pentecostal contempt is

⁹⁸ Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 295.

pervasive and powerful, it is neither consistent nor stagnant. The next section demonstrates ways that the scope of contempt differs along with one way contempt has changed over time.

§3.3 – *Throwing the Baby Out with the Bathwater: On the Scope of Pentecostal Contempt*

It would be absurd to characterize all Nigerian Pentecostal conversion as contemptuous merely because it is understood as a break from the past. In all conversions there is something of a turn or a change that forces one to reconsider their relationship with their past. This is not limited to religious conversion. However, there is certainly a large risk that if conversion is understood as breaking from or leaving behind, that which is left behind will then be held in contempt as the source of problems and that which is to be destroyed. Consider that Christians have held this contemptuous relationship to Judaism for most of Christian history, especially in its supersessionist forms when Christianity is understood as a turning away from a Jewish past. For Nigerian Pentecostals, there exists the potential for a contempt towards an “African past” that included veneration of ancestors and different forms of worship. African theologians, such as Kwame Bediako, have sought to work out the relationship between the Christian gospel and the African context into which that message entered.⁹⁹ African Christians will continue to articulate this relationship, the question is to what extent that relationship will draw on contempt.

Pentecostal contempt is not a binary issue where one is either contemptuous or not. Pentecostal contempt can be active in varying ways and one might understand it on a sliding scale between maximalist and minimalist forms of Pentecostal contempt. This section

⁹⁹ On Bediako’s theology, see: Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of Non-Western Religion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996); and Tim Hartman, *Kwame Bediako: African Theology for a World Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2022). For another account of how African Christians relate to and incorporate pre-Christian African culture, see: David Tonghou Ngong, “Formed by the village and the church: The reception of Stanley Hauerwas’s theological ethics in Africa,” *Review and Expositor* 112.1 (2015), 92-103.

demonstrates that variation showing how Pentecostal contempt can grow to encompass a contempt of entire cultures (maximalist) or take more limited views of what is to be rejected (minimalist). Contempt of the past and, in this case, traditional religions occurs when the past and traditional religions are understood as irredeemable and purely a threat or object of scorn. Many Nigerian Pentecostal receptions of traditional religions fall into this contemptuous mode. Traditional religion becomes an amorphous category that is understood as devoid of the Spirit (and full of evil spirits) and an ever-present threat to the desired Pentecostal future. It is against this past of traditional religion that Pentecostals seek a break, pitting their hopes for renewal and prosperity against lingering forces of “paganism,” interpreting “many of the causes of suffering in terms of the work of evil, occult powers, explicitly associated with the local past, [viewing] many local cultural practices or institutions, regrouped around the term “tradition,” as forms of potential pollution by these same powers.”¹⁰⁰ Andrew Apter connects rejection of traditional religions to a movement toward a “post-national consciousness” where many Nigerians seek to move beyond a “polluted past” toward a “purified Mecca or New-Jerusalem.”¹⁰¹ While several scholars have highlighted continuities between older African spiritualities and Pentecostal modes of spirituality, it is the act of rejection that for Pentecostal imaginations marks what it means to move “forward.”¹⁰²

Advocates and organizers of FESTAC ‘77 understood the festival as a gathering of cultural performances that would also give place to traditional religious practices. That these events were “cultural” rather than “religious” was an important distinction that held for some,

¹⁰⁰ Marshall, *Political Spiritualities*, 77.

¹⁰¹ Apter, *The Pan-African Nation*, 278.

¹⁰² Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa Religion*, 85.

but not for others.¹⁰³ Those I interviewed, both Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal, pointed to the ways religion and culture are intertwined in a Nigerian context. For those holding to the relevance of the distinction, the cultural events at FESTAC were not intended to compete with other religions nor draw devotion away from other religions. One Nigerian who performed in FESTAC '77 characterized the events as reestablishing African identity, asserting that “God speaks every language and has different pigmentations.”¹⁰⁴ For him, the events were a humanistic celebration of African culture.

For many Pentecostals, though, the perceived close relationship between religion and culture in Africa has only been reason to deepen contempt. Andrew Morgridge, the previously cited Pentecostal pastor in Lagos who opposed a new FESTAC, outright rejects the distinction between culture and religion. For Morgridge, culture is the very substance of the demonic. Cultural affiliation is what protects or threatens the well-being and prosperity of a country. He writes:

For a few examples consider:

Haiti –they pride themselves as the nation with Voodoo as a widely accepted way of life their official religion, and unwittingly are suffering for it: earthquakes devastate the country, as they are recovering, cholera strikes, killing more people; as they are recovering another hurricane strikes. They are perpetually in misery; and Asia -freely killing Christians as they worship Buddha and Hindu gods; they are the poorest nations in the world, with earthquakes and typhoons flooding them at will. You cannot separate culture from demons –culture usually revolves around local deities: a fancy name for demons and principalities. *Ipi Ntombi*, a home-grown dance and music celebration of black South African culture featured at FESTAC '77. They danced half naked. That’s a Zulu culture still being practiced. Incest and rape happens everyday in South Africa. Bring them in and you will have demons of lust and incest moving into your country. This is not farfetched; it is the reality. Hence God commanded the Israelites

¹⁰³ On how the introduction of the category of “religion” transformed *oriṣa* traditions, see: Ayodeji Ogunnaike, “How Worship Becomes Religion: Religious Change and Change in Religion in Eḍe and Salvador,” PhD diss., (Harvard University, 2019).

¹⁰⁴ Interview conducted February 24, 2023.

not to practice the culture of the Canaanites; because for their idolatry –culture, He was driving them out of the land 2nd Kings 17: 8,11 &15: 2nd Chronicles 20: 6; 28:3.¹⁰⁵

Morgridge's more maximalist understanding of idolatry at FESTAC is not universally held among Pentecostals, even those Pentecostal still receiving traditional religions from a posture of contempt. Though, Morgridge's comments do offer an opportunity to see how features of Pentecostal contempt manifest in the reception of cultural performances at FESTAC.

Notice first, the closed pneumatology which first identifies the boundary of God's activity by identifying a culture with a non-Christian religious group. This rhetorical move creates the theological foundation from which Morgridge can then make claims toward the ethical exceptionalism of Christianity. These claims need not rest on evidence or accuracy, as Morgridge takes up the mantle of the spiritual knower justifying his authority by the very act of making the claim to unmasking the workings of the demonic. He immediately connects a group's status as beyond the Christian community, here understood in more broadly cultural terms, to his devaluation of their ethical status as well as their material sufferings. In some cases, such as that of Haiti, this separation from God translates to an experience of worse fortunes. In other cases, such as that of Asia and South Africa, that identification is more threatening to Christians, leaving a threatened posture as the most salient way to encounter those cultural forms understood as other than Christian. Important here is the way there exists an imagined inside culture, here an unnamed Christianity that is conflated with Israel. Even when explicitly religious acts are not taken, cultural practices understood as beyond a particular conception of "Christian" still create a risk for demonic activity.

¹⁰⁵ Andrew Morgridge, "No to Another FESTAC," *Vanguard*, December 18, 2016. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/12/no-to-another-festac/>. Accessed: July 3, 2022.

This closed pneumatology is not defined as cleanly by ecclesial boundaries, but instead assumes an understanding of Christian culture as the basis for the activity of the Spirit. For some Pentecostals, this understanding of Christian culture and identification does not even require Christian practice. There can be something of a holdover for past action or the presence of a cultural Christianity that maintains a spiritual destiny and therefore prosperity. Remember the ways ethical exceptionalism, in this context, is associated with material prosperity, where one's ethical status closely correlates to their material well-being. Sunday Oduala, who wrote of the demonic influence of FESTAC '77, compares the situations of Africa and Europe, taking Europe's Christian history as reason the continent experienced such material wealth and prosperity and Africa's non-Christian past as reason God has not blessed the continent.¹⁰⁶

But when Christianity crossed the boundaries of Palestine into the so called gentile nations of the world (after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 28: 19-20) the white men embraced Christianity and spread it with all their passion with most of their forefathers dying in poor nations while they were serving there as missionaries. Christianity became the official religion of many European nations including the UK. During those years, the average African man or woman was deep in idolatry and serving man-made gods, not knowing that they were contaminating the destiny of the generations that were to come. Today, most of the European nations that embraced and sponsored Christianity are no longer active in the things of the almighty God, but the truth remains that a good foundation had been laid, mainly by serving the true God. This can be seen by observing their moderate honesty with public money and a welfare system that helps the needy etc. For the average politician in Africa or Asia, mainly in the developing part of these continents, an evil contaminated foundation has been laid that has made their politicians see holding public office as a means of enriching themselves. There is so much prayer going on in the Churches in Africa, yet it looks as if God is not interested in the affairs of the people living there.¹⁰⁷

This maximalist version of Pentecostal contempt takes Christian identification as a long-term determinant of a nation's destiny. Note that there is no mention of from where Europeans took their wealth, nor of the historical conditions leading to the present African situation. Where God

¹⁰⁶ Oduala does not mention that European colonial powers stole their wealth from other "non-Christian" nations.

¹⁰⁷ Oduala, *Demons at Loose*, 85.

is active and whose prayers God answers depends on a historical identification with Christianity. By predetermining the conclusion, Pentecostal contempt forecloses the possibility of self-reflection and repentance for Christians. History, rather than something to be inhabited and discerned, is instrumentalized for apologetic purposes. Inquiry and exploration have little place in this frame, as faithfulness is found in pronouncing the conclusion and not in an honest exploration of evidence. This perspective is not universal among Pentecostals, as I will show, but it does demonstrate the more extreme extent to which Pentecostals draw on contempt of difference to understand material circumstances and cultural identification. Material wealth is understood as a sign of the Spirit's presence and divine favor granted to Christian communities. Within this view, wealth and power are a sign of the Spirit's presence and membership in the divinely-chosen community of Christians, while exclusion from wealth and power are a sign of God's curse and Pentecostal contempt.

A current Pentecostal pastor in the Redeemed Christian Church of God who was at the initial events organized to protest FESTAC '77 commented on his initial reception of the festival compared to how he understands it now. The interview reveals a change, over time, from a more maximalist version of Pentecostal contempt to a minimalist one that is in the process of reckoning, struggling, and working out a relationship to difference. Instead of a wholesale rejection of a culture perceived as idolatrous, as seen above, where the act of rejection or breaking with past is taken as an act of faithfulness, here there is a different sort of process where individual issues come up rather than general concerns with identification or destiny. During the interview, conducted February 17, 2023, I asked the pastor to describe his initial experience with FESTAC '77. He went on to described his initial views and how they have changed over the years.

Incidentally, I became a Pentecostal believer just a year before the before the FESTAC '77. So I belonged to the school of thought that the FESTAC '77 was a revival of cultural heritage, that annoyed God because it brought about the revival of what we have discarded in the past through the advent of Christianity. So I belonged to that.

It was later, as I started to grow, particularly in my academic process that I personally believed that we are only throwing away the bathwater with the baby. It was not all true idolatry, that we have aspects of FESTAC '77 that looked idolatrous that induced people into going back to what they had forgotten.

These comments struck me as they demonstrated both the types of Pentecostal contempt I had been seeing in the initial receptions of FESTAC '77 as well as the reflections of a thoughtful man who had come to see things differently over the years. When I asked him to elaborate on his initial views, he had this to say:

Yeah, like I told you. I was part of the protest that FESTAC '77 was unnecessary for many reasons. I, being so young, and both young in age then young in Christian experience, I follow my leaders to believe that yes, we waste a lot of money, that we should use to develop our country, to host all African nations, one, and that is partly correct. Two, that some things that we've been preaching against, based on our Christian belief that we allowed to come in, I mean, for display to the entire world, particularly to the Nigerian populace, I also was averse to that, are you listening to me, being a young Christian pilgrim of that time and I was also happy that some Christian leaders organized alternatives, because Nigerians, we were given holidays. They organized a pilot program that while some people were at FESTAC, the venue of the festival, then Christians can gather to pray, to hear the Word of God, and direct our attention to things of God.

The description of FESTAC '77 as a waste of money that should have been used for national development is a perfectly legitimate concern. The sheer size of FESTAC brings to mind the potential havoc that hosting the Olympic Games can have on a host city. Other than this financial concern, the pastor's characterization of his initial reception of FESTAC '77 was not very specific. It would seem that there was a general aversion to the sorts of things being put on display that would not show Christian belief.

As our conversation continued, I returned to the pastor's change in perceptions. This is one of the driving questions of my overall project. I was excited to hear how this pastor, who

originally organized against FESTAC '77, came to change his views and see places of value in that which he initially held in contempt. The pastor had earlier named his PhD studies as a turning point, so I returned there and asked him what he had studied and how it affected his perceptions of FESTAC '77. I will quote his response at length.

I read religious studies and I specialized in Christianity theology. In the course of my scholarship I was exposed to very many religions, including African traditional religion. I now have discovered that there are some aspects of Africa traditional religion that are not idolatry, because African religion and culture are interwoven and we also possess misconception of African culture and religion, generally Christians have this. But through my scholarship I discovered that there are aspects of African culture and religion that are not anti-God particularly the God that Christians claim to serve. There and then my perception about African way of life began to change and it has actually helped me to reach out to my African brethren when I have discourse with them concerning religion. I now adapt that to our conception about FESTAC, that actually it was not everything that was done during FESTAC that was idolatrous. For example, dancing steps, the music and some other aspect of FESTAC '77 were part of our culture, but are not necessarily idolatrous. Incidentally, some of this type of music are now being incorporated, being adopted, being contextualized in our worship.

So, Jesus really really helped me to see after all yes, there are some serious aspects of the festival. And because I remember it was there when, on the day on the first opening, the President, now the ex-President, Olusegun Obasanjo, when he was declaring the summit open, he poured libation. I saw him, it was not that I read it, I watched it on the television. I saw him pouring libation, that is the African way of appealing to the ancestors. We don't worship ancestors in Christianity, these are aspects that we may frown at. He poured it. I saw him. I can vividly remember when he was declaring FESTAC open. These are the aspect that I would agree with my Christian brothers that we may not encourage.

But I also watched some other aspects via television: the dancing, the singing, the drumming, which I can by now, by my understanding now I can't see as idolatrous, because even in the Book of Psalms we are asked to sing, to clap, to use musical instruments in the praise of our God and by my study in theology I know that whatever we may think is of the devil I don't see it as such, because the devil has no creation. He could, he could steal it, and claim it to be his own. Like he told Jesus that I will give you all this if you bow to me. It was a lie of the devil. But he was not speaking to us as Christians, he was speaking to the author of Life himself that he should bow because he has it, and he could give it to him. So I have come to know in my study, I've gotten to know that the devil has nothing, but he could steal anything, and ascribe it as his own and for an ignorant fellow the fellow may sell his birthright in order to get what actually belong to him. So I saw African music as not belonging to the devil and with that as such there is an aspect that I disagree with my fellow Christians.

The pastor, here, names “encounter” with other religions via study as the primary experience by which his views on FESTAC ‘77 changed. Encounter, here, was not necessarily the face to face encounter of other people in public spaces. The pastor also describes a type of encounter with traditional religions as he observed them on the television. However, it is an encounter where the pastor put himself in a learning environment with an assumed role that he will be receiving something in his doctoral studies. Certainly, the pastor’s views did not change immediately, but underwent a process of revision whereby his views at the time I encountered him for our interview had significantly changed. Perhaps they are still changing.

After naming an academic encounter with traditional religions as a motivating factor for his own revision of views that would now disagree with his fellow Pentecostals, the pastor also goes through something of a theological rationale for his views. There exists a mode of theological reasoning that must render his new perceptions of traditional religions legible to the particular Christian tradition in which he finds himself. This is not to say that he must offer an account to superiors or an inquisition, but that this sort of theological reflection seems to have rendered his new perceptions legible to himself. In this new account though, the language and the ontological actors that previously existed in a contemptuous reception of FESTAC ‘77 persisted, offering some sort of continuity through the revision.

It is important to note that this pastor’s encounter with difference, an encounter that started to move him away from drawing on Pentecostal contempt to receive traditional religions, did not end in agreement or some sort synthesis or identification with those religions. Very real theological disagreements persist and this pastor, among others, will likely continue to consider those questions thoughtfully. The main issue named, here, is the pouring of libations in the veneration of ancestors. This is not the first time Christians have reckoned with the presence of

preexisting traditions of ancestor veneration. However, the key here is that rather than a dismissal based on a preexisting contempt for traditional religions, this pastor has moved into a phase of working out the particular issues of difference. This process of reckoning with difference and considering the substantive portions of that difference is the very substance of a shared life and the site at which Christians learn what it means to love both God and neighbors well. Pentecostal contempt creates a politics of separation that marks difference as beyond the activity of God, and therefore beyond the scope of what ought to be considered by faithful Christians. This pastor's experience offers a glimpse of the politics beyond contempt that I will explore in Part Two. But as Pentecostal politics based on contempt persist, there will continue to exist theological incentives for separating from others, destabilizing sites of shared life, and escalating conflicts.

§4 – Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates how Pentecostal contempt manifests in the case of Nigeria. The inner workings of Pentecostal contempt are particular to the setting in which it is found and therefore draws on social fractures local to that context. For Nigerian Pentecostals, contempt of traditional religions draws on mischaracterization and stereotype that is formed under conditions of distance. This chapter has demonstrated that Pentecostal receptions of FESTAC '77 draw on varying levels of contempt in order to produce spiritual knowledge about the destiny of Nigeria. This spiritual knowledge, though, is opaque and does not open itself up to accountability or transparency. The ability to name threats and draw on salient forms of suspicion in associating those threats with material misfortunes builds more authority over time and incentivizes separation and suspicion of neighbors.

Pentecostal contempt of traditional religions is not limited to their understanding of FESTAC '77. In fact, the drive to separate from and even destroy existing non-Christian traditions persists throughout Nigeria. For instance, those Yoruba traditions of sacred kingship that unite the social fabric of many communities have come under assault from Pentecostal Christians.¹⁰⁸ A Nigerian academic detailed in an interview the ways that Pentecostals protest and oppose even the study or display of traditional religions at Nigerian universities.¹⁰⁹ In the acts of rejecting quickly and separating from the past, Pentecostals rarely consider, like the pastor I quoted earlier, what will be lost and what effect that Pentecostal rupture will have on the larger society. In more tense moments of conflict, those Pentecostals who can persuasively draw on contempt in its Pentecostal forms, will pose real risks of escalating those conflicts with few tools or theological incentives to deescalate or make peace.¹¹⁰

The closed pneumatology of Nigerian Pentecostalism closes Pentecostals off from non-Christians, and sometimes even Christians. This particular closed pneumatology associates the presence of the Holy Spirit with Christian communities. At times, this pneumatology can be so closed as to imagine only particular Pentecostal communities as sites of the Spirit's activity. At other times this closed pneumatology can associate the Holy Spirit with that which is historically identified as Christian. In all of these variations, though, is an understanding of the Holy Spirit as empowering a rupture from a dark African past, associated with traditional religions. This is in many ways an evolution of the same missionary Christianity which associated Africa with the pagan and as a site of divine absence.

¹⁰⁸ See: Olúpòná, *City of 201 Gods*, ch. 10.

¹⁰⁹ Interview conducted February 17, 2023.

¹¹⁰ See those calls from David Oyedepo and others for Pentecostals to kill Fulani herdsmen or anyone who looks like Boko Haram. Abiodun Alao, *Rage and Carnage in the Name of God* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022), 83-6.

The ethical exceptionalism resulting from this closed pneumatology associates that which is beyond the Christian community as associated with evil Spirits and demonic activity. As objects of contempt outside of Christian communities, traditional religions are then strictly associated with evil spirits and are seen as a material and spiritual risk to the well-being of Nigeria. Within Nigerian Pentecostalism, there is a close association with material wealth and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Wealth and power are themselves proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit and therefore also proof of an ethically exceptional status. Conversely, those without material wealth or power are understood as ethically inferior or subject to demonic influence. Racial capitalism is so associated with God's favor that merely having wealth and power is taken as a sign of God's favor and an ethically exceptional status.

I demonstrate the value of a Yoruba concept of *Ori* for thinking about the vulnerable nature of Nigerian destiny. *Ori* is always vulnerable to outside influence and can be tarnished with the wrong spiritual influences. This spiritual precarity of Nigeria's destiny creates the conditions in which Nigerian Pentecostals experience a threatened posture towards the presence of traditional religions. Rather than mere cultural performances, FESTAC '77 was seen as inviting demons and evil spirits into Nigeria. Doing so threatened the collective destiny of the country in a way that only proper Christian identification can remedy. Pentecostals perceive the threat of traditional religion to be so strong that strong denunciations and refusal to share any association with traditional religions is taken as a sign of one's spiritual authority and ability to make claims on the spiritual threats of traditional religions.

While the particular account of Pentecostal contempt demonstrated in this chapter is unique to a Nigerian context, the dynamics of Pentecostal contempt are not. The next case study returns to a US context in which White Pentecostals draw on contempt to justify similar sorts of

separation from others. Again, my argument is not that contempt is a necessary outgrowth of Pentecostalism nor that every existing Pentecostal interaction with difference draws on contempt. But, as I demonstrate, there is something about Pentecostalism that makes a distinctly Pentecostal form of contempt a persuasive and salient tool for navigating interactions with difference so common in the modern world.

Chapter 3: White Pentecostalism and The Segregated Spirit

The great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all we do.
- James Baldwin, “The White Man’s Guilt.”

...space itself is one of the understood privileges of whiteness.
- Claudia Rankine, *Just Us: An American Conversation*

§1 – Introduction: The “Memphis Miracle”

Chapter Two was a case study of Nigerian Pentecostal contempt as it manifests in Nigerian Pentecostal receptions of FESTAC ‘77. Taking a transnational approach to studying Pentecostalism is a strategic methodological choice that better isolates Pentecostalism as a phenomenon for analysis. Doing so does not deny that each instantiation of Pentecostalism is localized or assume any form of absolute uniformity throughout the Pentecostal movement. Instead, this approach analyzes the *Pentecostal* aspects of the diverse manifestations of Pentecostalism. With this in mind, Chapter Three turns to a case study of White Pentecostalism in the US, demonstrating an anti-Black contempt that both persists and transforms over time. The salient objects of contempt for White Pentecostals, being Black people and cities, are different than those in Nigeria, but the theological dynamics of Pentecostal contempt I outline in Chapter One are still very much identifiable. What these two chapters together can demonstrate are the ways Pentecostal contempt creates false perceptions of others that then go to reinforce the same posture of contempt.

White Pentecostals have invested in “racial reconciliation” efforts, but racial stigma persists. Memphis 1994 would be the site of the most significant such effort toward racial reconciliation since the beginning of the movement. Founded in 1948, the all-White Pentecostal

Fellowship of North America (PFNA) existed for 46 years without including non-White Pentecostal fellowships. However, at this annual meeting in Memphis, the PFNA was set to “admit its racist past.”¹ There, the White PFNA gathered scholars and representatives from Black Pentecostal denominations to hear presentations critical of White Pentecostals’ track record on race. White leaders publicly repented and washed the feet of Black Pentecostals present at the meeting, eventually voting to disband the PFNA and create a new interdenominational Pentecostal fellowship, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). This new fellowship included Black Pentecostals and added Mexico into the designation of “North America” while committing to an ongoing rejection of racism in White Pentecostal churches. Today, this meeting is known as the “Memphis Miracle.”

How miraculous was it? It would be wrong to say that no advance was made in Memphis. But many of those who participated in the initial meeting soon after voiced disappointment about the state of White supremacy within Pentecostalism. The late Leonard Lovett, a Black Pentecostal ethicist, gave some of the most skeptical words following the gathering in Memphis:

Racism will persist despite the cosmetics of countless "ecclesiastical conclaves," pseudo-political solutions and "empty agreements" which promise change without changing anything. It is much easier to reject than refute the fact that racial reconciliation within the Pentecostal movement is nowhere near realization in our time. The dialogue was no more than a temporary "peak of progress," a short lived miracle that will eventually slide into irrelevance as racial patterns within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement adapt in ways that maintain and give credence to white dominance.²

Lovett was not alone in his skepticism. Ithiel C. Clemmons, who was elected to lead the new PCCNA, wondered with his wife after the Memphis meeting “whether or not the deeply sincere and genuinely repentant White pastor who washed my feet under the prompting of the Holy

¹ Frank D. Macchia *et al*, “From Azusa to Memphis: Where Do We Go From Here? Roundtable Discussions on the Memphis Colloquy,” *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 113.

² Leonard Lovett, “Looking Backward to Go Forward,” *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 123-4.

Spirit would or would not vote for Affirmative Action given the opportunity?”³ Clemmons’s question about Affirmative Action, though, gets at a deeper reality. One in which Affirmative Action often stands in for larger racially stigmatizing views.

At one point during the Azusa Street Revival, understood as the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement, onlookers observed that the “color line had been washed away in the blood.” Such an observation seemed true because people of many different races were worshiping together in the old stable in Los Angeles. William J. Seymour, a one-eyed Black son of sharecroppers, preached the Good News and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost to integrated crowds. Newspapers reported stories in horror of Black men touching White women, while everyone danced and shouted in religious frenzy. For a short period, this frenzy, or foretaste of the Spirit, seemed to show how social and racial relations could be otherwise. There seemed to be a time when Pentecostalism might have a transforming power that would overcome the ways of the world. This period did not last long, as White Pentecostals would lead “revolts” that included attempts to undermine or overtake the Azusa Street Mission from its Black leadership. And, eventually, Pentecostal denominations formed around the same logics of racial separation that governed the rest of the US.⁴

What happened that dimmed the radical inclusion at Azusa Street? What are the dynamics at play for White Pentecostals today, maintaining the same race-based hierarchies and contemptuous modes of relating to difference? White Pentecostalism formed with explicit theologies of racial segregation and racial hierarchy, but White Pentecostals later abandoned

³ Ithiel C. Clemmons, “What Price Reconciliation: Reflections on the Memphis Dialogue,” *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 119.

⁴ On the history of the Azusa Street Revival, see: Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. *The Azusa St Mission & Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006); Gastón Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

these explicit teachings of biological racial hierarchy and through the 1960's transformed into a self-identifying White suburban movement. I trace this transformation and argue that despite the transformation of White Pentecostalism, racialized spatial relationships maintained a continuity of anti-Black contempt. As such, I characterize White Pentecostalism as one potent yet unnecessary example of contempt within Pentecostal politics. Here, rather than developing an entirely distinct form of contempt, Pentecostals contempt is coincidental to existing contemptuous social relations, while stylizing those relations in a distinctly Pentecostal manner.

I develop the argument of this chapter in five sections. Following this introduction where I detail existing approaches to White Pentecostalism, Section Two identifies the contours of early White Pentecostal racism that relied on notions of biological inferiority to justify anti-blackness. These particular racist views eventually become alien to White Pentecostals but there remained continuity despite transformation. Section Three argues that anti-Black contempt persists as racial stigma that is sustained through racial segregation. Drawing on the work of Charles Tilly and Elizabeth Anderson, I argue that racial segregation creates socially closed communities that then draw on stigma and stereotype to justify the unequal distribution of goods. Section Four then demonstrates the presence of Pentecostal contempt through the Assemblies of God's reluctant transition from racial segregation and later racial stigma toward urban centers and Black people. The AG was slow to move on from explicit racial segregation and even after publicly denouncing segregation it would continue to shape White Pentecostal contempt in the AG. I draw on archival resources from White Pentecostal publications and minutes from the Assemblies of God General Council to demonstrate the relationship between White Pentecostal self-identification with White suburbs, moralizing perceptions of crime in inner cities, and calls

for the re-evangelization of those cities. I then close the chapter with a conclusion in Section Five.

Many have theorized whiteness as a social identity and status within a larger racial hierarchy.⁵ Whiteness is a social status that draws on custom and exclusion to enforce a particular set of social relations. These relations are maintained by a scaffolding of racial hierarchy, where whiteness attaches itself to superiority as well as material, social, and political power. This represents a form of contempt worth considering in this project because the social relations embedded within a self-aggrandizing whiteness have the effects of doing material harm to communities excluded from the social category of “White,” while simultaneously closing White communities off from encounter with others. Toni Morrison rightly notes that White constructions of blackness are central to maintaining the boundaries of whiteness as an identity.⁶ As such, representations of blackness by self-identifying White groups are often central to the self-understanding of those groups as White.

I am not the first to theorize the existence of a distinctly White Pentecostalism. Gastón Espinosa, Chris Green, and Ashon Crawley have all theorized White Pentecostalism as an independent development within the U.S. Pentecostal movement that begins with Charles Fox Parham.⁷ Parham represents an early form of White Pentecostalism. Explicit racism and White supremacist theology shaped his own ministry, but the contours of his particular racist theology

⁵ On histories and theories of whiteness, see: Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010); Richard Dyer, *White, Twentieth Anniversary Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2017); Grace Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

⁶ Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, ch. 1.

⁷ Ashon T. Crawley, *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 235; Chris E.W. Green, “The Spirit that Makes Us (Number) One: Racism, Tongues, and the Evidences of Spirit Baptism,” *Pneuma* 41 (2019), 397-420; Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism*.

do not persist in any explicit way among White Pentecostals today. In fact, by the 1960's White Pentecostals were overtly refuting the more explicit theological scaffolding of Parham's White supremacy. Despite this change, some level of continuity exists between Parham's White Pentecostalism and later transformations of White Pentecostalism.

White Pentecostals have not been silent on the problems of racism in Pentecostalism, but they have often been reluctant to speak on the issue. Cecil M. Robeck rightly points out that White Pentecostals too easily saw racism as a "political" rather than "moral" issue, and therefore wrote it off as beyond the scope of their faith. If White Pentecostals were willing to address racism, they typically reached for one time "miraculous" events like what took place in Memphis without any significant understanding of racism or the long term struggle it demands.⁸ These approaches identify issues of race as political issues over which Christians need not divide and are one prevalent way White Pentecostals have thought and think about race. Here, calls for unity and a fear of divisiveness push controversial or "political" issues beyond the scope of acceptable topics for Christian consideration. Pushing controversial topics into a category of the "political" inevitably designates issues of race to a different category than Christian teaching, a flawed category distinction that does not hold up to modest scrutiny. Christian faith is inevitably influenced by public context, particularly for White people living in contexts of racial segregation. Within the context of the AG's policy on race, the real motivating energy seemed to come from a fear that moving too quickly on segregation would risk splitting the fellowship. Robeck details how the drive for unity incentivized approaches to racial segregation similar to those described above, creating a movement capacious enough to house polite northerners and

⁸ Cecil M. Robeck Jr., "Racial Reconciliation at Memphis: Some Personal Reflections," *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 137-9.

ardent segregationists, such as W.F. Carothers, in the south.⁹ Maintaining White Christian unity proved the bottom-line issue in approaching White supremacy in the US. This approach, while perhaps seeming silly to some, is still widely used to guide Christian approaches to controversial issues, especially issues surrounding race. Doing nothing is always one potential approach to any problem, but in this case doing nothing means that White Pentecostals are still formed by segregated societies and racism/racial stigma are left unchallenged. Put differently, White Pentecostals still organize around a coalition of silence—or White ignorance, as Charles Mills would say—on issues of White supremacy and racial separation.¹⁰

Many approaches to White Pentecostal racism have taken Charles Fox Parham's views as a starting point for critical reflection.¹¹ Parham was a White holiness evangelist who is credited with discovering the doctrine of tongues as the initial physical evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit—a doctrine that still makes up the core distinctive for classical Pentecostal groups in North America. Parham held overtly White supremacist views that only hardened with age. Responses to Parham's racism have grown more prevalent, typically focusing on Parham as an individual with failed theological views. Studies focusing on individual views are sometimes helpful yet limited approaches to White Pentecostal racism. Approaches focusing on individual views share the intuition that Christians should be concerned with White supremacy and segregation, but they often focus on racist views that seem outlandish to most today and miss the

⁹ Cecil M. Robeck, "The Past: Historical Roots of Racial Unity and Division in American Pentecostalism," *Cyber-Journal for Pentecostal Charismatic Research* no. 14 (May 2005), available at: http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj14/robeck.html#N_73_. For Carother's, a founding member of the AG executive presbytery, defense of racial segregation, see: W.F. Carothers, "Attitude of Pentecostal Whites to the Colored Brethren in the South," *The Weekly Evangel* (August 14, 1915), 2.

¹⁰ See, Charles Mills, "White Ignorance," in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, eds. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007), 13-38.

¹¹ See, for example: Allan Anderson, "The Dubious Legacy of Charles Parham: Racism and Cultural Insensitivities Among Pentecostals," *Pneuma* 27 no. 1 (Spring 2005), 51-64; Leslie D. Callahan, "Redeemed or Destroyed: Re-evaluating the Social Dimensions of Bodily Destiny in the Thought of Charles Parham," *Pneuma* 28 no. 2 (Fall 2006), 203-227; Chris E.W. Green, "The Spirit that Makes Us (Number) One."

social contexts that might have made those racist views persuasive. Of course, Charles Parham held racist views—he published them—and perhaps there is value in naming his racism in White Pentecostal contexts.¹² However, doing so does not help to identify or interrogate the presence of racial stigma among White Pentecostals, and can create “safe spaces” for White people to identify themselves as “not that” and therefore beyond scrutiny.

As an alternative to the failed approaches to White supremacy that take race as a political issue or an issue of individual views, I suggest an approach that considers social arrangements as formative for the creation and maintenance of racism and racial stigma.¹³ Social arrangements are always an embodied experience that includes the places we live, work, eat, and entertain ourselves; they include the relationships we hold with other people in those spaces. In fact, the very experience of space and the spatial arrangements of other bodies has profound effects on how humans understand themselves and relationships with others. As a more general argument concerning theological method, focusing on social arrangements has many benefits, though, here, I am primarily interested in (1) understanding White Pentecostalism and (2) bringing White Christian thinkers, such as myself, to account for the larger social dynamics bearing on White Christian thought. This approach considers the ways social arrangements shape theological thinking and Christian faith more generally and is thus interested in the methodological

¹² As a scholarly debate, focusing exclusively on Parham’s racism, while serving a purpose, creates something of a cul-de-sac where debates ask whether or not “racist” is an appropriate word to describe Parham. James R. Goff’s biography of Parham is one example of the self-contorting that comes from over-adjudicating one individual’s views on race. See: James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988), especially p. 110.

¹³ Keri Day has highlighted the importance of social arrangements, particularly that of racial capitalism, for understanding the transgressive nature of the Azusa Street Mission. My approach is similar to that which she deploys, but focuses more explicitly on racial segregation and its relationship to White Pentecostal perceptions of Black people and cities. See: Keri Day, *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022).

integration of those sources that can help better understand social arrangements.¹⁴ One way to think of this integration for the sake of “loving your neighbor as yourself” is as a process of discerning Spirit(s). Amos Yong points to the necessity of examining the material world for the sake of discerning the Spirit(s) active and present in the world.¹⁵ By asking discerning questions about material and social arrangements in the world, we simultaneously ask about the Spirit(s) bearing on the formation of the world. Given the power of social arrangements to shape theological thinking, this approach could also be taken as a way to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God.”¹⁶

I now turn to demonstrating a second case of Pentecostal contempt in the form of White Pentecostalism. That contempt transformed over time but maintained the dynamics of Pentecostal Contempt I outline in Chapter One. Section Two demonstrates the early forms of that contempt, particularly as displayed by Charles Fox Parham.

§2 – Charles Fox Parham and the Beginnings of White Pentecostalism

Charles Fox Parham was a White holiness evangelist who invented the doctrine of tongues as the initial physical evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit—a doctrine that still makes up the core distinctive for classical Pentecostal groups in North America. He and his followers in Topeka, Kansas received this baptism, and he would take the message of Spirit baptism on the road from there. Parham’s teachings eventually found enough influence to directly link him to

¹⁴ This statement is not intended in a reductive way. Rather, this should be read as part of the larger argument I am making throughout the project about the co-constitutive relationship between theology and politics.

¹⁵ Yong develops the philosophical foundations for this approach in: Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002). The case is made along biblical lines in: Amos Yong, “Spiritual Discernment: A Biblical-Theological Reconsideration,” in Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies eds., *The Spirit and Spiritualities* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 83-107.

¹⁶ 1 John 4:1

the later Azusa Street Revival. It was in Parham's Houston based ministry school that William Seymour, the Black minister who founded the Azusa Street Revival, learned the teaching before traveling to Los Angeles. Parham accepted Seymour as a student into his Houston based ministry school, an act which some consider bucking the predominant segregationist norms of the South. However, to respect local customs of racial segregation, Parham forced Seymour to sit in a room adjacent to the classroom with the door propped open. While some consider Parham's teaching as foundational to Seymour's ministry, the influence is disputed because Seymour only stayed with Parham for somewhere between two to eight weeks.¹⁷

Parham's decision to segregate Seymour in a different classroom has been characterized by some as not accurately representing Parham's views on race or segregation. Instead, this action, according to historian James R. Goff, was more one of reluctant acquiescence to local custom.¹⁸ However, Parham held overtly White supremacist views that only hardened with age. These views carried the markers of Pentecostal contempt as I describe it in Chapter One. For instance, earlier in his career – around 1900 – Parham spent six weeks at Frank Sandford's Shiloh community in Maine where he adopted “most of Sandford's doctrines, including Anglo-Israelism and “missionary tongues,” doctrines that Parham maintained for the rest of his life.”¹⁹ Anglo-Israelism, or British Israelism, is of particular import because of the theological scaffolding it provided for White supremacist Pentecostal contempt.²⁰ Drawing on a range of

¹⁷ Gastón Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 50-1.

¹⁸ James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988), 110.

¹⁹ Allan Anderson, “The Dubious Legacy of Charles Parham: Racism and Cultural Insensitivities Among Pentecostals,” *Pneuma* 27 no. 1 (Spring 2005), 52.

²⁰ For an overview of British Israelism, see: Aidan Cottrell-Boyce, *Israelism in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 2021). For an account of British Israelism's influence among Pentecostals, see: Christopher J. Richmann, “Prophecy and Politics: British-Israelism in American Pentecostalism,” *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 22 (January 2013), available at: <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj22/richmann.html>. For a polemic restating and

erroneous archeological and biblical claims, Anglo-Israelists imagined an immediate connection between the Anglo race and the Northern tribes of Israel. Gastón Espinosa details a few of these claims:

Parham also embraced the British-Israelism theory, which claimed that the Anglo-Saxon race were the lineal descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel and therefore God's chosen people. He adopted a sacred genealogy that traced Queen Victoria's ancestral pedigree all the way back to the Tribe of Judah, the ten lost tribes of Israel, and Adam and Eve. He believed that the Stone of Scone, on which the kings of England, Scotland, and Ireland had been crowned for a thousand years, was brought to Ireland by the prophet Jeremiah and the ten lost tribes.²¹

These (erroneous) biblical and archaeological beliefs did not exist in a vacuum but were helpful for explaining the perceived success of the Anglo race. For Parham and others holding this view, the expansion of the British Empire was evidence of innate Anglo superiority and thus demanded a theological explanation.²² Natural racial hierarchy was, in one way, a White theodicy for colonial domination.

Parham's resulting theology depended on a hierarchy corresponding to presumed racial capacities for spiritual empowerment and evangelization. Only those races capable of baptism in the Spirit, the Anglo and Northern European races, were fit to spread the gospel and reign over the creation. Goff insists that Parham was not a racist because he included Black people in his evangelistic outreach. However, Parham's ministry to black people throughout his career does not depart from this racial scheme, because Black people still needed to be brought into the Kingdom, rightly ordered beneath the reign of Anglo races.²³ Parham's own words are striking:

refuting the views of British Israelism, see: Roy L. Aldrich, "Anglo-Israelism Refuted," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 93, no. 369 (Jan-Mar 1936), 41-63.

²¹ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism*, 44.

²² Leslie Callahan makes the connection between Parham's Anglo-Israelist views and his perceptions of the British Empire. See: Leslie D. Callahan, "Redeemed or Destroyed: Re-evaluating the Social Dimensions of Bodily Destiny in the Thought of Charles Parham," *Pneuma* 28 no. 2 (Fall 2006), 203-227.

²³ Goff holds that Parham's outreach to Black people proves he was not a racist, or at least as bad of a racist as others. See: Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, 110.

Today the descendants of Abraham are the Hindus, the Japanese, the high Germans, the Danes (tribe of Dan) the Scandinavians, the Anglo-Saxon and their descendants in all parts of the world. These are the nations who have acquired and retained experimental salvation and deep spiritual truths; while the Gentiles,—the Russians, the Greek, the Italian, the low German, the French, the Spanish and their descendants in all parts are formalists, scarce ever obtaining the knowledge and truth discovered by Luther,—that of justification by faith or of the truth taught by Wesley, sanctification by faith; while the heathen,—the Black race, the Brown race, the Red Race, the Yellow race, in spite of missionary zeal and effort are nearly all heathen still; but will in the dawning of the coming age be given to Jesus for an inheritance.²⁴

Naming particular races as capable of “deep spiritual truths” and the baptism in the Holy Spirit to the exclusion of others is itself a closed pneumatology, because the activity and presence of the Spirit are limited to a group of racial insiders. The resulting missionary mandate and view of sanctification carry a sort of ethical exceptionalism, where those races with access to the Spirit are both initiated into a process of sanctification and are necessarily more holy than the “heathen” who are “heathen still” despite “missionary zeal and effort.” Pentecostal missions to those assumed to be outside the fold would take on a paternalistic tone that both sought to save the other through conversion and require a constant characterization of the other as void of the Spirit’s activity in order to justify a self-understanding of the White Pentecostal as called and empowered to evangelize the other.

Parham maintained this undergirding belief of Anglo-superiority, and steadily migrated from a paternalistic racism to a more abrasive racism. One result of his paternalistic attitude – or his understanding that a White minister should oversee the work of a Black minister – came when Parham traveled to Los Angeles after reports of growth at the Azusa Street Mission. Once there Parham assumed he would be given control of the Mission, only to experience shock when

²⁴ Charles F. Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness* (Baxter Springs, KS: Apostolic Faith Bible College, 1902), 106-7.

Seymour and the leaders of the Mission barred him from preaching. In response, he took issue with the practices of the mission and wrote in outrage at the “racial mixing” at Azusa:

Men and women, whites and blacks, knelt together or fell across one another, frequently, a white woman, perhaps of wealth and culture, could be seen thrown back in the arms of a big “buck nigger,” and held tightly thus as she shivered and shook in freak imitation of Pentecost. Horrible, awful shame!²⁵

Parham’s racism hardened over time, especially after his paternalism was rejected at Azusa Street. This outrage represents a threatened posture, where the development of Pentecostal practices outside the oversight of White Pentecostals creates a sense of outrage and suspicion from those whose oversight is rejected. Pentecostals have long been too sanguine about Parham’s legacy, but more recent work is beginning to unsettle that sentiment. For my purposes, however, Parham shows the beginnings of White Pentecostalism, where Pentecost is understood as an outpouring of the Spirit for White people to evangelize and lead the non-White world. This is not to say “the gospel” was not for non-Whites, but that “the gospel” saved non-Whites by placing them under White oversight.

Focusing exclusively on Parham’s racism certainly serves a somewhat useful purpose. But, as a scholarly debate it creates something of a cul-de-sac where debates ask whether or not “racist” is an appropriate word to describe Parham. Goff, one of Parham’s biographers, takes great care to triangulate Parham’s position on race in a way that distinguishes him from the radical egalitarianism of some northerners, as well as the hardened segregationist views of someone like W.F. Carothers – elected to the Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God in 1914. Ultimately, Goff’s claim is “the Charles Parham who made provisions for Seymour in December 1905 was far from a ranting, card-carrying racist.”²⁶ But this conclusion begins to

²⁵ *The Apostolic Faith* (December 1912), as cited in Green, “The Spirit Makes us (Number) One,” 399.

²⁶ Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, 110.

seem unfounded when in the very next sentence Goff admits that Parham believed his race superior to others – which seems a reasonably workable definition of a “racist.”²⁷ The debate spirals further when Goff responds to Douglas Nelson’s more pointed charges against Parham’s racist statements at Azusa Street and Parham’s support of the Ku Klux Klan. For Goff, the comments at Azusa Street were the result of anger after not being given control of the revival, and support for the KKK was mostly anti-modernism and anti-Catholic sentiment.²⁸ Goff’s treatment here over adjudicates Parham’s obviously racist views and behaviors in a way that so isolates them to the individual that they lose any sort of connection to the historical moment in which they were held. That a White man in the US who ministered to and supported the Klan also held racist views does not seem an outlandish conclusion. Especially given that Parham published those views. What seems to carry a much higher burden of proof, though, is the notion that one man who showed all the signs of his contemporary racism was actually an exception to the historical moment and social context in which he found himself. Parham represented an early form of White Pentecostal contempt which was embedded in a setting that understood biological inferiority as the justification for White anti-blackness and racial hierarchy. The nature of that anti-Black contempt would change, but the markers of Pentecostal contempt would persist. How, though, can that persistence despite transformation be understood?

²⁷ Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, 110.

²⁸ See Goff’s footnote addressing the particular charges in, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, 210-11:

For Nelson’s analysis of Parham as a racist, see Nelson, pp. 97-98, 208-11. Nelson correctly gauges that Parham’s efforts were paternalistic but he fails to distinguish the evangelist’s blatant racial remarks in the post-Azusa period from his more benign racial policy during the early years of Pentecostal development. Parham’s occasional racial barbs all date to the post-1910 period and are best viewed as a reaction to his disappointing loss of stature after the Azusa Street breach late in 1906. His laudatory comments of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920s are as much a reaction to the perceived dangers of modernism as any expression of Parham’s racial ideology. See Parham, *Life*, pp. 162—64, 246 and *Apostolic Faith* (Baxter) I (December 1912):4-5; 3 (March 1927):5; 3 (January 1927): 7. (diaries Driscoll’s article points out that religious support of the Ku Klux Klan in Kansas was a result, by and large, of a fear of Catholics. See Driscoll, p. 22.

§3 – Persistence through Change: From Biological Racism to Racial Stigma

While biological racism was one crucial source of early White Pentecostal contempt, changing social arrangements would transform the shape of that contempt. This section demonstrates the changing nature of racial stigma and its relationship to racial segregation that persists to this day. This section will offer theoretical tools for interpreting the continued history of White Pentecostal contempt that I demonstrate in Section Four.

Over time because of nondiscrimination laws and changing social norms, the old more overt Jim Crow style of racism began to “go underground.” Rather than overt racism, which certainly still existed and persists today, Whites began displaying forms of racial stigmatization, or a reluctance to express racist views while still holding them. Public opinion researchers characterize this change as away from Jim Crow era views of Black biological inferiority to “ambivalent,” “symbolic,” or “modern” racism.²⁹ These views are characterized by:

(1) subtly felt or unconscious resentment of blacks; (2) representations of blacks as lacking the virtues of self-reliance, enterprise, studiousness, and dedication to hard, honest work, but claiming goods to which they would be entitled only if they had these virtues; and (3) opposition to political programs such as school integration, welfare (perceived to disproportionately aid blacks), affirmative action, active government enforcement of antidiscrimination law, and other state efforts to help blacks.³⁰

Multiple lines of analysis demonstrate that racially stigmatizing views are covertly active and harmful. In compiling an overwhelming amount of audit studies, laboratory studies, statistical

²⁹ Irwin Katz and R. Glen Hass, “Racial Ambivalence and American Value Conflict: Correlational and Priming Studies of Dual Cognitive Structures,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* vol. 55 no. 6 (1988), 893-905. P.J. Henry and David Sears, “The Symbolic Racism 2000 Scale,” *Political Psychology* vol. 22 no. 2 (2002), 253-83. John McConahay, “Modern Racism, Ambivalence, and the Modern Racism Scale,” in *Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism*, 91-125. All as cited in Elizabeth Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 52. On the similar phenomenon of “structural racism,” see: Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America* 6th ed. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022).

³⁰ Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, 52. For classic studies of “modern racism” and local television news, see the work of Robert Entman: Robert M. Entman, “Modern racism and the images of blacks in local television news,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* vol. 7.4 (1990), 332-345; Robert Entman, “Blacks in the News: Television, Modern Racism and Cultural Change,” *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* vol. 69 no. 2 (Summer 1992), 341-361.

studies, and tests of implicit bias, Elizabeth Anderson rebuts those who question the presence of racial stigma, appealing to “the *convergence of numerous, independent lines of evidence, using diverse methods, samples, and measurements techniques, on the conclusion that black stigma and discrimination remain pervasive.*”³¹

When racial stereotypes are “in the air” or there is a public awareness of those stereotypes, even if no one in an engagement believes those stereotypes to be true, people in an interaction inevitably navigate the presence of those stereotypes. One result is that Black people must endure the public harm of navigating negative stereotypes during interactions, again even if no one holds the stereotype to be true. As an example, Anderson describes an encounter with a Black man who approached her at a gas station to help check the oil in her car only after he announced with his hands raised that he was not going to rob her. Anderson did not suspect him a robber, but the existence of a well-known stereotype was still present in the interaction.³² This additional baggage creates a public harm that Black people endure as a result of navigating unequal public standing. Moreover, the presence of stereotypes can cause White people to behave “awkwardly” toward Black people out of a fear that their awareness of the stereotype is affecting their behavior. This perceived awkwardness causes White people to avoid interactions and reifies existing norms of segregation.³³

Cecil M. Robeck, a White Pentecostal historian who also participated in the conference at Memphis, rightly pointed to the “newsworthiness” of the event. What happened at Memphis was a significant step, but if left alone it would become yet another symbolic act without meaningful change. According to Robeck, White Pentecostals too easily saw racism as a “political” rather

³¹ Elizabeth Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 51.

³² Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, 53-55.

³³ Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, 54.

than “moral” issue, and therefore wrote it off as beyond the scope of their faith. If White Pentecostals were willing to address racism, they typically reached for one time “miraculous” events like what took place in Memphis without any significant understanding of racism or the long term struggle it demands.³⁴ Contempt has the power to divide people, but perhaps more importantly it can keep people from hearing or seeing one another. The result is that White people are unable to comprehend the ethical issues facing Black people. Put differently, the experiences of Black people are neither salient nor plausible for White people holding stigmatizing views. Whether that stigma manifests in an inability to see why Affirmative Action is an important policy or why “Black lives matter” would be a meaningful affirmation for Black people, racial stigma distorts White perceptions.

Remember Ithiel Clemmons’ question to his wife following the conference at Memphis where he wondered “whether or not the deeply sincere and genuinely repentant White pastor who washed my feet under the prompting of the Holy Spirit would or would not vote for Affirmative Action given the opportunity?”³⁵ Rather than a question about a public policy that had been deemed a “Black issue,” Clemmons’s question got to the very core of the unequal distribution of goods between Black and White people; in doing so, Clemmons asked about the stereotypes and stigmas that justified such an unequal distribution. George Lipsitz has tracked the many benefits in health outcomes and financial status afforded to White people.³⁶ This is not to say that every individual White person is prospering financially, but that whiteness as a social

³⁴ Cecil M. Robeck Jr., “Racial Reconciliation at Memphis: Some Personal Reflections,” *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 137-9.

³⁵ Ithiel C. Clemmons, “What Price Reconciliation: Reflections on the Memphis Dialogue,” *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 119.

³⁶ See: George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2018).

status comes with incredible benefits when evaluated from the societal level.³⁷ White people are afforded billions of dollars through inheritance and have historically excluded Black people from purchasing houses and accruing those benefits.³⁸ Whites used housing discrimination, vigilante violence, and creative zoning laws in order to maintain White control over the ownership of property. This financial investment in maintaining the stereotypes that deem Black people unfit or unworthy of Affirmative Action and other policies leads Lipsitz to refer to whiteness as a “racial cartel.”³⁹ Lipsitz characterizes the dynamic by suggesting “because whiteness rarely speaks its names or admits to its advantages, it requires the construction of a devalued and even demonized blackness to be credible and legitimate.”⁴⁰

Racial segregation necessarily has a spatial dynamic, and many have considered the formational effects space has for self and group identities. Reflecting on Richard Wright’s consideration of the ways space comes to bear on the formation of black selves, Rashad Shabazz explains the impacts space can have for the formation of identity.

Space also plays a role in the production of identities. Physical space and where one is located within it tell us much about the “space of the subject.” Who we are as subjects—the kind of people we are—is greatly influenced by our geographies. Language, personal habits, the kinds of foods we eat, the diseases we may become susceptible to, our sexual practices, our understanding of family, and our cultural conventions are products of the spaces we live in. Space is fundamental to identity, and we depend on it to help construct meaning, to explain the world around us, and to highlight what is particular about us.⁴¹

³⁷ On disparate outcomes based on race, see: Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Harriett Washington, *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Anchor Books, 2008).

³⁸ George Lipsitz, “The Racialization of Space, and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape,” *Landscape Journal* 26:1-07 (2007), 16.

³⁹ George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011), 36.

⁴⁰ Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, 37.

⁴¹ Rashad Shabazz, *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicago* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 46.

Shabazz has in mind the ways space can bear on the formation of black selves, but his description can give insight into how spatial dynamics and social geographies can bear on the formation of White selves as well. With whom we are willing to share space determines with whom we are willing to enter into relationship and with whom we are willing to build bonds of social trust.

Ryan Enos's work confirms the importance of space for understandings of the self and others, suggesting "our geographic distribution – our social geography – also shapes our individual psychology. It is intertwined with our most basic cognitive architecture. It deeply affects how we perceive other people."⁴² It is not mere separation that forms White consciousness toward blackness, but it is the proximity of the separation. In fact, an overwhelming scholarly consensus confirms the relationship between outgroup segregation, proximity, and size, "individual negative attitudes about groups and redistribution, to vote choices, to increases in political participation, including voter turnout, and even to violence."⁴³

There is an incredible base of literature documenting the presence of racial segregation in the U.S. along with a steady flow of social scientific research confirming that presence. Elizabeth Anderson correctly identifies the deep grooves of racial segregation in the U.S., but her description of racial stigma can make it seem like White people are purely passive agents in the maintenance of racial segregation. This is not entirely inaccurate, but it misses the comparative profit that White people have enjoyed from racial segregation and suburbanization. George Lipsitz takes a much stronger line identifying whiteness as a "racial cartel" that "skews

⁴² Ryan Enos, *The Space Between Us: Social Geography and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 33. The limited scope of Enos's experiments do not justify his universal claims about "human nature." While incredibly illuminating about particular forms of human spatial relationship, these experiments do not even begin to explore evidence of pre-modern or non-Western modes of being. With this in mind, though, his work offers powerful evidence for the relationship between whiteness and space I am considering here.

⁴³ Enos, *The Space Between Us*, 44.

opportunities and life chances for their own benefit [...] externaliz[ing] the worst social conditions onto communities of color and provides Whites with a floor below which they cannot fall.”⁴⁴ In naming whiteness as a racial cartel, Lipsitz more explicitly identifies whiteness and anti-blackness with the material advantages afforded to Whites. Citing Thomas Shapiro’s work, Lipsitz identifies the material advantages Whites still experience as a result of discriminatory housing markets, “Shapiro shows that between 1990 and 2020, some seven to nine trillion dollars will be inherited by the baby boom generation. Almost all of that money is rooted in gains made by Whites from overtly discriminatory housing markets before 1968.”⁴⁵ Racial segregation has afforded White people tremendous financial benefit at the expense of black people’s material well-being. When racial integration seemed immanent, White people have been adept at legal and extra-legal maneuvering to prevent any meaningful integration.⁴⁶

So what do racially stigmatizing views have to do with segregation and social arrangements? It might be easy to think of racially stigmatizing views as causing segregation, but my argument is that the relationship is more co-constitutive than uni-directional. I follow Elizabeth Anderson and Charles Tilly in naming racial stigmatization as a result of social closure. Tilly’s account of durable inequality is much broader than my own focus on racial stigma, but it provides a way to understand the dynamics of unequal social arrangements. Tilly builds on Weber’s concept of “social closure,” in which advantaged organizations gain access to resources and closely monitor the boundaries of that organization.⁴⁷ Whereas Weber assumes a relatively

⁴⁴ George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011), 36.

⁴⁵ George Lipsitz, “The Racialization of Space, and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape,” *Landscape Journal* 26:1-07 (2007), 19. For Lipsitz’s more complete account of the material benefits of whiteness, see: George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics, Twentieth Anniversary Edition* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2018).

⁴⁶ Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, 76.

⁴⁷ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds. (New York: Bedminster, 1968), I, 43.

stable organization that can police its boundaries, Tilly points out that “completely bounded categories are rare and difficult to maintain, that most categorical inequality relies on establishment of a partial frontier and defined social relations across that frontier, with much less control in regions distant from the frontier.”⁴⁸ In rejecting systemic approaches that identify stable systems as the starting point of analysis, Tilly is questioning the stability of any social “system” that governs interactions, prioritizing the interactions themselves as a way to understand inequality.

Four mechanisms when combined with the use of paired unequal categories create durable inequality. (1) Exploitation and (2) opportunity hoarding “cause durable inequality when agents incorporate paired unequal categories” (citizen/foreigner, Muslim/Jew, male/female, black/white, etc.) “at crucial organizational boundaries.”⁴⁹ These first two mechanisms can explain limited inequalities, but they expand via (3) emulation, which involves the copying of social relations or categorical distinctions into multiple contexts, and (4) adaptation, or “the elaboration of daily routines such as mutual aid, political influence, courtship, and information gathering on the basis of categorically unequal structures.”⁵⁰ For Tilly, these mechanisms by themselves do not necessarily stem from out group antipathy so much as they do from in group favoritism.⁵¹ But, the conditions of durable inequality facilitate improvisation and the creation of social scripts that then rely on paired unequal categories to explain inequality.

Segregation makes particular categories salient. That there are “Black” and “White” parts of town and that White people are incredibly adept at identifying these geographical differences,

⁴⁸ Charles Tilly, *Identities, Boundaries & Social Ties* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 72.

⁴⁹ Tilly, *Identities, Boundaries & Social Ties*, 73.

⁵⁰ Charles Tilly, *Durable Inequality* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 10.

⁵¹ I see my use of Tilly as similar to Keri Day’s understanding of the erotic in relation to racism. For day, “A focus on the language of desire, then, does not personalize racism as prejudice but discloses how structural racism orders and is reinforced by the psychosocial life of racist practice.” Keri Day, *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022), 106.

makes race a salient category for understanding the differences between areas.⁵² Humans have a way of drawing on spatial categories to organize the world, and racial segregation turns race into a spatial category that increases its salience. As the salience of a category grows, it becomes the primary mechanism for explaining difference. Elizabeth Anderson, who relies on Tilly's theory of group inequality, makes the connection between segregation and racial stigma in the particular context of racial inequality in the US. For Anderson, exploitation and opportunity hoarding create unequal material conditions which White people seek to explain with racial stereotypes and racial stigmatization. So, racial segregation creates conditions where Black communities are deprived of basic public services and opportunity, and can as a result experience higher crime, higher unemployment, and crumbling infrastructure. White people create social scripts to understand these phenomena with explanations like: Black people are predisposed to crime, lazy, and do not care for their communities. Correcting White people's perceptions without meaningful integration does not create material change or lasting change in perceptions because there is not meaningful experience upon which to build knowledge.

Harmful social scripts rely on racial stigma developed in conditions of cultural ignorance and creates deficits of cultural capital. So, for instance, White professionals who hold gatekeeping power over many good jobs, embed unspoken norms created in segregated White communities within professional expectations. The result being that many Black applicants do not have experience navigating or performing unspoken White expectations. Here, limited experiences between White people and Black people creates a lack of understanding between groups that furthers material inequality and racial stigma among White people. White people in

⁵² Enos, *The Space Between Us*, 84-5.

gatekeeping positions can exclude Black people because diverging norms and habits seem strange to the unspoken White expectations.

Often job advancement relies on loose concepts like cultural fit or an employer's comfort around potential candidates. So, whether an employer is comfortable joking or playing golf with a potential employee is more important than the employee's actual qualifications. One study of over 120 interviews with employers found that hiring practices were most influenced by a desire for cultural matching, or finding perceived cultural sameness. This is a more complicated picture than merely White employers wanting to hire White employees, but it does illustrate the necessity of cultural competence or the necessary cultural capital required for White people to feel comfortable enough to hire someone.⁵³ Additionally, it demonstrates a burden placed on Black people who "have been forced to become lay anthropologists, studying the strange culture, customs and mind-set of the 'white tribe' that has such frightening power over them."⁵⁴ Beyond hiring practices, social scripts have the effect of furthering racial segregation. Pentecostal contempt calls for a separation from the object of contempt because of the threat posed by the object of contempt. This section has demonstrated that separation, or here racial segregation, has the effect of reinforcing the very same stereotypes and stigmas that spurred separation in the first place. The next section demonstrates how these very dynamics drove White Pentecostal perceptions of God, Black people, and inner cities.

⁵³ Lauren A. Rivera, "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms," *American Sociological Review* vol. 77 no. 6 (2012), 999-1022.

⁵⁴ Mills, "White Ignorance," 18.

§4 – The Assemblies of God, Segregation, and White Pentecostal Contempt

White Pentecostalism would come to move away from the biological racism held by Parham, though White Pentecostal denominations would hold a conservative energy toward issues of race. This section demonstrates the ways Pentecostal contempt transformed by explicitly and inexplicitly drawing on existing social arrangements to shape their understanding. The point is not to reduce Pentecostals to their social settings, but to suggest that the Pentecostal task of walking with the Spirit requires more explicit attention to the setting in which one walks.

§4.1 – Soft Peddling on Race

Parham's influence waned over time and he fell out with other influential White Pentecostals, such as W.F. Carothers. While he never took a significant position with the Assemblies of God, Pentecostals have maintained a prominent place for Parham in understandings of Pentecostal history. The Assemblies of God never took on the theology behind Parham's explicit White Supremacist Pentecostal contempt, though, it always made room for similar forms of White Supremacy as it sought to hold together a coalition of outright segregationists in the South and more liberal anti-segregationist northerners. The AG has balanced this position since the early days, attempting to create a space capacious enough so as to house many forms of politics around "one gospel." What has not seemed as visible are the ways a capaciousness towards segregation and White supremacy both closed off the potential of fellowship with Black Pentecostals and changed the very meaning of "the gospel" around which they sought to unite. Here an unwillingness to confront existing contempt foreclosed the possibility of encountering those objects of contempt differently.

Whether the nearly all White Assemblies of God (AG) formed in a racially motivated schism from the historically Black Church of God in Christ or arose as a "sibling" is disputed.

What is clear, however, is that the AG created a home for White segregationists in the American south. From its founding at Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914, the AG did not have a national stance on the issue of racial segregation and allowed individual churches or districts to make decisions about segregation in churches or credentialing Black ministers.⁵⁵ The coalition that formed worked to include polite northerners and the staunchest of southern segregationists. Sometimes, preserving an openness to outright segregation took some massaging from high levels of the AG. A founding member of the AG executive presbytery and ardent defender of racial segregation, W.F. Carothers wrote an article to Northern AG ministers in defense of segregation in 1915. In this article, titled “Attitude of Pentecostal Whites to the Colored Brethren in the South,” Carothers argued that God had created many nations, distinguished by their skin color, and desired to preserve their integrity.⁵⁶ While his views were not unique among southern Christians, there were concerns among those in the north about the continued practice of segregation among southern Pentecostals. This article was intended to quell those concerns and demonstrated the prevailing strategy within the Assemblies of God on issues of segregation: keep northern concerns and AG policy out of southern churches. This would define the movement’s approach for years to come and created an institutional context in which anti-Black contempt could adapt and flourish.⁵⁷

Alongside the issue of segregation in churches, Pentecostal churches and AG districts had to answer whether they would ordain Black ministers. Maintaining the “unity” of the status quo

⁵⁵ Cecil M. Robeck, “The Past: Historical Roots of Racial Unity and Division in American Pentecostalism,” *Cyber-Journal for Pentecostal Charismatic Research*, available at: http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj14/robeck.html#N_73_. All primary sources in this section are taken from Robeck’s account cited here.

⁵⁶ W.F. Carothers, “Attitude of Pentecostal Whites to the Colored Brethren in the South,” *The Weekly Evangel* (August 14, 1915), 2. Defenses of segregation relying on the “integrity” of “naturally created” races illustrate a threatened posture where the presence of blackness threatens the “integrity” of a protected White racial identity.

⁵⁷ Robeck, “The Past: Historical Roots.”

became a strategy for avoiding significant controversy. These question of how and if the AG would include Black ministers appeared at AG General Council meetings in 1943 and 1945, where the Home Missions Department began discussing the need for a “colored branch” of the AG.⁵⁸ Rather than ordaining Black ministers through the existing ordination structures, the formation of a “colored branch” would allow the AG to maintain southern calls for segregation while attempting to meet northern calls for inclusion. The Home Missions Department had begun working on the details of this new branch, but there were significant concerns from the beginning. The minutes of the 1945 General Council reflect some of the prevailing concerns that shaped the rationale for creating a new branch. Among Pentecostals, one might expect to hear an appeal to Scripture or the guiding of the Spirit, but the Home Missions Committee’s comments introduced a distinct but powerful norming force that shaped their decision. The committee commented: “*Conforming to American law and society* our work amongst the Colored People will remain distinct and separate, and the Colored Branch when formed shall be under the supervision of the Home Missions Department. It is further understood that no transfers to or from any District shall be given or received.”⁵⁹ This language is but one example of the paternalistic manner in which the AG interacted with Black people and the Church of God in Christ, but for my purposes the language of “Conforming to American law and society” is particularly telling. Here it denotes a controlling conservative energy that insulates Pentecostal institutions from appeals to Scripture or the Spirit on issues that are deemed “political” or taken as a potential threat to unity.

⁵⁸ Robeck, “The Past: Historical Roots.”

⁵⁹ Minutes of the Twentieth General Council of the Assemblies of God Convened in Springfield, Missouri, September 13-18, 1945, 35. Emphasis added.

A report commissioned by the General Presbytery of the AG released in 1957 appealed to a similar regulating principle. While the report did make positive movements toward the inclusion of Black ministers and recognized that “Scripture affirmed that before God, everyone was equal,” the report also argued that integration of the AG was inadvisable because the issue was unresolved in the larger society.⁶⁰ Of particular concern was how the controversy would affect the unity of the movement, even compelling drafters to argue that the national AG wait on announcing that “we consider all men equal” until “the general public is ready and it will not interfere with the progress and expansion of our movement.”⁶¹ Again, the AG would choose to follow the lead of the larger society, because issues of race were not the sorts of things that should interfere with the expansion of the AG’s message. Unity for White Pentecostals depended on maintaining silence toward Pentecostal segregation. White Pentecostals were unwilling to push against racial segregation, but that same racial segregation would continue to push against and form White Pentecostals.

§4.2 – A New Segregation and a New Pentecostal Contempt

This hesitance on the issue of integration ended in the 1960’s when the 31st General Council of the Assemblies of God, meeting in Des Moines, Iowa in August of 1965, seeing the need for “further elucidation,” passed a resolution on Civil Rights affirming:

RESOLVED, That we adhere. To the Bible’s teachings, with the practice of Christian principles in social, economic, and political life and recognize them as relevant to the solution of all social problems and the establishment of the best human relations; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm our: belief: in the teachings of Christ including His emphasis upon the inherent worth and intrinsic value of every man, regardless of race,

⁶⁰ Robeck, “The Past: Historical Roots.”

⁶¹ “Segregation Versus Integration,” General Presbytery File, 7.

class, creed, or color; and we urge all our constituency to discourage unfair and discriminatory practices wherever they may exist; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That we believe those in authority in political, social, and particularly in evangelical groups, have a moral responsibility toward the creation of those situations which will provide equal rights, and opportunities for every individual.⁶²

This affirmation of integration, while not condemning segregation as directly as some might wish, was a clear statement on racial equality and condemnation of racial discrimination. One could easily read this as White Pentecostals in the AG outgrowing the needs to make space for segregationists. Such a reading, though, is only part of the process by which whiteness and White Pentecostalism transform over this period. Whereas Parham and Carothers represented a White Pentecostalism defined by outright separation and stated theologies of segregation, the White Pentecostalism of the 1960's and beyond would develop an identity as White and suburban, a perception of crime and immorality in the inner cities, and a feeling of duty to save those in the cities.

Often a group will self-identify as White without naming that identity. Articles published in the *Pentecostal Evangel (PE)*, a monthly magazine published by the Assemblies of God and distributed to AG churches nationwide demonstrate this identity. One need only ask “who is the intended reader” to identify an assumed White audience. For example, an article published in February of 1968 titled, “The New Neighbors,” works through an issue that was salient for a group of White readers at the time. Nancy Jones, the author, had a Black family move in next door to her suburban home. She describes herself as terrified and convinced she would have to move because the Black children would inevitably destroy her yard and flowers. Jones reveals both a sense of her own ethical exceptionalism and a threatened posture when she writes that

⁶² General Council of the Assemblies of God, Resolution on Civil Rights, Minutes, Revised Constitution and Bylaws. The Thirty-First General Council, Des Moines, Iowa, August 25-30, 1965. 60-61.

“Unbidden stories came to mind of what happened in a neighborhood when a Negro family moved into it: the deterioration of lawns, the destruction by children, the devaluation of property. My heart skipped a beat. Was this really true? All my savings was tied up in this small cottage.”⁶³ After crying at her table about these problems, Jones remembers that she had recently spoken of the evils of racial prejudice to her church and felt convicted by her own contradictions. Over time, Jones interacts with the Black family and comes to appreciate them, wondering not what she will do now that they have moved in, but what she will do if they ever leave.

Individual character is not a dynamic that I am particularly interested in here. The shape of whiteness is always larger than the individual, though individuals give a glimpse into the social dynamics of whiteness. What the article does show, however, are the types of issues and audiences the *Pentecostal Evangel* addressed. The threat of Black families moving into a neighborhood was hugely salient at the time and “The New Neighbors” shows how one woman worked through the fears of new Black neighbors and her perceived Christian duties of neighbor love. Stereotypes initially guided her actions and personal encounters pushed her to change her behavior. Perhaps this was a more progressive and honest take on housing integration for the time, but it is undeniably written for a White audience with concerns of suburban home ownership in mind. This White suburban identity would come to define the “we” of White Pentecostalism.

From this positionality, White Pentecostals did a fair share of pearl clutching and speculating about the state of Black people and the inner cities. This speculation, though, was typically done from a distance. “Ghetto Negroes are Apathetic, Not Angry” was a *PE* article reporting on the status of Black people in inner cities. Never missing a chance to reject the

⁶³ Nancy Jones, “The New Neighbors,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 25, 1968. 22-23.

efficacy of material investment, the article concludes that Black people “are rather ‘overly content or apathetic,’ [...] contradict[ing] the notion that summer programs to provide youths with employment, recreation, and education can prevent riots.”⁶⁴ White concern for inner city crime dominated much of the conversation around blackness and cities. The *PE* regularly published crime statistics, which spurred many Pentecostals to decry the lawlessness of the age and speculate on the second coming of Christ.⁶⁵ Mrs. W.C. Langford, a Nashville based Pentecostal, wrote about her fear of “riots” in her own city and their connection to Christ’s coming:

Thinking upon these things—violence, rebellion, rioting, and crime so near us now—I was unable to sleep and had prayed until early morning. Then the Lord Jesus spoke so clearly to my heart: “As the clouds precede the storm, as the thunder precedes the rain, so this turmoil and violence precedes My coming. I am nearer than you think.”⁶⁶

Perceptions of crime were a way to explain the hopelessness of the world, but the inner cities where crime and “race riots” happened came to be understood as oppositional to Christ, or the very thing Christ sought to save people from.⁶⁷ Put differently, White Pentecostals constructed cities and Black people in a way that simultaneously confirmed their own sense of ethical exceptionalism. Worth noting here, is the complete estrangement White Pentecostals felt from

⁶⁴ This Present World: News and Notes on our Times, “News of Modern Man: Ghetto Negroes are Apathetic, Not Angry,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (March 1968), 7.

⁶⁵ For examples of crime statistics published in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, see: *Pentecostal Evangel* (April 10, 1960), 11; “...at a Glance,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (September 7, 1969), 15; “One Out of Every 50 Americans was Victim of Crime Last Year,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (September 28, 1969), 27; Lawrence V. Pennington, “Days of Lawlessness,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (February, 1968), 15.

⁶⁶ Mrs. W.C. Langford, “Curfew,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (August 18, 1968), 21.

⁶⁷ The development of crime statistics in the U.S. after the turn of the twentieth century were measured in a way so as to connect blackness with crime. Initially, biological inferiority served as the explanation for these crime rates and later did the inferiority of “Black culture” serve as the explanation for Black crime. These statistics did not measure crime of any other group or the material circumstances of segregation and over policing that might contribute to these inflated crime measurements and had the effect of implicitly attaching White understandings of crime to blackness. See: Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

the movements toward racial justice or uprisings against racially unjust social arrangements. All White Pentecostals saw was disorder, from which Christ would restore order.⁶⁸

An article in the same issue that reported on Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral potentially showed the salience of "order" for understanding how White Pentecostalism's Christ would relate to inner cities. Roberta Lashley Bonnici drew a metaphor between the disorder of a riot and the inner disorder of the soul. For Bonnici, riots were only the result of an inner problem of the heart; she put it like this: "While the cost of recent riots sweeps into the millions, the cost of inner discord is incalculable." Perceived solutions for riots could do nothing to solve the problems of the inner heart, which spurred the external rebellion in the first place.

Armed troops are useless in bringing the secret thoughts of the heart under control. A greater Presence is necessary. Only the Son of God Himself can conquer these elements of destruction. *When Jesus comes, the tempter's power is broken; When Jesus comes, the tears are wiped away. He takes the gloom and fills the life with glory, For all is changed when Jesus comes to stay.* When His presence is recognized, the powers of darkness fade into the background. The divided personality is made whole. The conflicting emotions are subdued. Order is restored.⁶⁹

Here, Jesus has the same goals as armed troops who break up a riot. Jesus is the perfected Adam, the perfect priest, and the perfect cop. Rather than an understanding of what causes crime or uprisings, White Pentecostalism became defined by a drive for order. An insatiable thirst for an order which no material changes could bring about, but an order that could only come by the power of "the gospel."

In the same issue of the *PE*, a White AG minister from Atlanta shares a reflection on Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral. L. Calvin Bacon made his way to King's funeral without clear

⁶⁸ Keri Day comments that White resistance to protest or social movements was prevalent during the Azusa Street Revival, especially when protest was done by Black people or immigrants. During this time, Black protest was moralized as taken as "heretical religious and social belief among racial others." See: Keri Day, *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2022), 63-4.

⁶⁹ Roberta Lashley Bonnici, "Order Restored," *Pentecostal Evangel* January 14, 1968. 32.

purpose; his trip certainly was not out of a deep sense of respect for King's work, in fact, he openly questions why the funeral was such a big deal. Bacon did not openly disparage King, but he did speak disapprovingly of King's tactics:

I began to react to my own feelings about Dr. King and what he stood for. I can't say I fully agreed with his "nonviolent civil disobedience." Nonviolence, yes; but I wasn't sure that our definitions were the same. Civil disobedience, no; I knew the Scriptures stated that we were to submit to our rulers.⁷⁰

For Bacon, King was in constant violation of the gospel of order. But, as was likely the case with many White people at the time, Bacon acknowledged King's work was not for *nothing*, "Yet I knew that the American Negroes had not been treated right. For years I have felt that we have done more to evangelize the Black African than we have the Black American." Bacon knows enough to understand that something is off, but the limits of that understanding become clear when he identifies the problems of Black America as a failure in White evangelism. Without stating it directly, pointing to the failures of White evangelism also signals a closed pneumatology where White Pentecostals are the source and gateway for Black people to enter the church and encounter the Spirit.

Whiteness habituates particular ethical saliences, leaving experiences and problems that White people do not face seeming strange and incomprehensible. After leaving the funeral, Bacon demonstrates this limited scope of understanding in a way that should elicit a visceral reaction from modern readers. After questioning, "Why all the trouble? How long will such violence last? Who is responsible? What is the solution?" Bacon shares the Scriptures that came to mind after the funeral along with his lesson from the visit:

As I drove along, verses from the sixth chapter of 1 Timothy kept coming to my mind. When I got back to the church I read it: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." The chapter spoke of godliness with contentment as being great gain. It

⁷⁰ L. Calvin Bacon, "Eyewitness at a Funeral," *Pentecostal Evangel* (January 14, 1968), 20.

spoke of the evil caused by those who are “doting about questions and strifes of words.” And I noticed that it concluded with a warning to those who have prospered materially that “they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God.” And Paul had instructed “that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” I had wondered why I went. I now had a clearer understanding—a new appreciation for God’s Word and its ability to show us the root and the solution to our problems. Civil Rights legislation and government spending cannot, I believe, meet the basic needs of the ghettos, but the gospel can.⁷¹

Of all the verses in an entire Bible, the one that comes to the mind of a White Assemblies of God minister driving home from Martin Luther King Jr.’s funeral is “slaves obey your masters.” As Bacon begins to hint at a call for those with material fortune to distribute their wealth for the betterment of everyone, he snaps away from the possibility of material distribution and denounces “Civil Rights legislation and government spending” as unable to solve the problems. Only “the gospel” will work.

It is worth asking how Bacon identifies the problems to which “Civil Rights legislation and government spending” are ineffective solutions. What is the issue that “the gospel” is going to solve? Nowhere in the article does Bacon make references to anti-Black violence or ongoing discrimination against Black people. Instead, the problem is something more like “racial unrest.” The problems are things like King’s nonviolent civil disobedience. At no point is there a connection between White people or the status quo social arrangements and perceived “racial unrest.” The problems are a lack of order in the cities. So, what is this gospel that will solve this problem?

At the end of the article, Bacon bemoans the fact that Black people do not seem to trust White people to minister to them. For Bacon, this causes quite a problem because, while one might expect to find a Black minister capable of the necessary spiritual leadership, “many of

⁷¹ Bacon, “Eyewitness at a Funeral,” 21.

their ministers are now preaching social revolution instead of the gospel of Christ's saving power."⁷² This distrust of Black ministers sets up a dynamic that makes clear a later prayer: "I pray that all who love God and who love all the people of the world may find some way to help our Black neighbors spiritually—through gospel preaching and Bible teaching."⁷³ If "our" refers to a relationship with Black neighbors, and therefore does not include Black people, then to whom does "our" refer? "Our" refers to "all who love God and who love all the people of the world," but with the distrust of Black ministers and the distinction of Black neighbors from the "our" in mind, the agents who are to offer spiritual direction "through gospel preaching and Bible teaching" have to be White Pentecostals. Bacon sees "the spreading revolution and lawlessness [as] part of divine judgment" precisely because Whites have not ministered to Black people.⁷⁴ Bacon continues: "The sooner we repent and begin to show our Christian love toward all our fellowman, the better it will be for America. But what we do must be done quickly."⁷⁵ Again, the "we" is unmistakably White and "the gospel," if it is to be a solution, should be delivered by White ministers.

The calls for White missions to the inner cities or "ghettos" were much more pervasive than individual magazine articles. In fact, the self-identification as a White suburban Pentecostal movement went to the highest levels of the Assemblies of God. J. Philip Hogan, who served as the Executive Director of the Division Foreign Missions from 1959-1989, rallied missionary fervor in the Assemblies of God.⁷⁶ It is common for directors of foreign missions to speak one night at the Assemblies of God General Council, which is its biannual national meeting.

⁷² Bacon, "Eyewitness at a Funeral," 21.

⁷³ Bacon, "Eyewitness at a Funeral," 21.

⁷⁴ Bacon, "Eyewitness at a Funeral," 21.

⁷⁵ Bacon, "Eyewitness at a Funeral," 21.

⁷⁶ On Hogan's legacy, see: Byron D. Klaus and Douglas P. Peterson, *The Essential J. Philip Hogan* (Springfield, MO: The Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2006).

Following the 1969 meeting, the *Pentecostal Evangel* republished Hogan's message to the AG General Council, which was a war cry for AG missions and called for a reinvigorated mission to the inner city.

We dare not settle down and be a comfortable, middle-class, suburban church, leaving the ghettos and the inner city to the devil, the mobs, the communists, and the Roman Catholics. Neither climate, nor race, nor distance, nor mounting statistics of the population explosion can be allowed to daunt us. If radio is the medium, we must use it. If television is the medium, then under God we fail if we do not use this, too. If literature contacts the most, then this must become our first foot forward. If population shifts and cultural pattern shifts, it is our business to shift with them. It is tragic and yet startlingly true that Anglo-Saxon Protestantism has been in flight since the first non-Anglo-Saxon arrived on our shores. We ran away from the Irish; we ran away from the Italians; we ran away from the Polish; we ran away from the Central Europeans; and now we are running away from the Blacks! But this pattern of abandonment must somehow be reversed. One of America's great missionary churches in recent years sold out and relocated in the safety of a comfortable suburb. It incidentally still calls itself one of America's great missionary churches. Whether there be moral cowardice, spiritual indifference, or un-Christlike racial barriers—these have to go! Perhaps, like Jonah of old, we will have to have a ship drop from under us before we realize that God really means business when He tells us to go to Nineveh. Let's keep our theology straight here. God never asked us to go out and improve society. He never asked us to make the world such a wonderful place that He can come and set up His kingdom here.⁷⁷

Despite material improvements for White people—self-identified here as Anglo-Saxon Protestants—through suburbanization, Hogan goes out of his way to say that material improvements for cities are not within the scope of the mission. Rather, Anglo-Saxon Protestants, who had been in retreat, are called back into the cities (Nineveh) for the sake of Pentecostal missions. Perceptions of inner cities as sites of sin, crime, and immorality in part motivated this drive for evangelism, though always undergirded by the assumption reflected in the *PE* headline “U.S. Negroes Said to be Without ‘Pure Gospel’”.⁷⁸ While “inner cities” does

⁷⁷ J. Philip Hogan, “The Assemblies of God in Mission,” *Pentecostal Evangel* (October 12, 1969), 4.

⁷⁸ This Present World: News and Notes on our Times, “U.S. Negroes Said to be without ‘Pure Gospel,’” *Pentecostal Evangel* (April 1, 1956), 11.

not name an explicitly racialized group, one need not think hard to see that it is coding the last of the non-Anglo-Saxon groups from which Protestants have fled: “the Blacks.”

Hogan is more self-aware of the transition White Pentecostals made into the middle class along with some of its isolating risks. Gibson Winter made similar observations about the suburbanization of White Protestant churches in his landmark study, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches*. There, Winter details the appeal of an identity seeking and status panicked middle class that fled problems of the inner city for the sake of self-protection.⁷⁹ Certainly, there is a vision of the good life at play in the White flight to the suburbs. Things like home ownership, perceived order, and control over space and noise all attracted White people to a suburban way of life. For White Pentecostals, this way of life was what it meant for God to bless a people. However, this vision was built on White fear of blackness and as a result was incredibly brittle to the point of necessitating the exclusion of blackness for the sake of a positive White good. A threatened posture manifesting as fear of immoral and corrupting blackness would become a central aspect of White life.

Home missions through the 60’s became an opportunity to name and attempt to excise the demons of White fear. Typically calls for missionary activity in the cities were made by naming the crime rates of inner cities and pointing to the moral degradation therein. Naming exactly these dynamics and pointing to the isolation of White Pentecostals from inner city problems wrought by suburbanization, Curtis W. Ringness, the Assemblies of God Director of Home Missions, called Pentecostals to fulfill the call of the Great Commission by going into the cities.

If the church is to fulfill the "go ... teach" of the Great Commission it must also reach in to the strategic centers of civilization where life-and-death issues are born. Christians must be willing to do more than read about inner city problems, juvenile delinquency, the ravages of the ghetto and moral decay. They must go where these people are. A person

⁷⁹ Gibson Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches: An Analysis of Protestant Responsibility in the Expanding Metropolis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961), 34.

cannot relate to a man's basic need of God unless he can see him in the context of his life. The Great Commission is binding on the entire church. No amount of monetary giving, so that someone can go for you, can be construed as obedience to the command of Christ to every individual Christian and church.⁸⁰

Ringness's call for AG Urban Missions was consistent throughout the late 60's and relied on a perception of inner-city problems as needing a solution, which the Assemblies of God was suited to bring, as well as a perception that the cities were "lost ground" that the AG would benefit from retaking. Ringness saw the task as creating "new churches, evangelistic centers, storefront chapels, branch Sunday schools, neighborhood Bible clubs, and prayer cells" for the sake of "regain[ing] the advantage we have lost and mov[ing] back into the city."⁸¹ The motivations were not merely for strategic advantage, though, as Ringness believed "prayerful interest and by involvement in aggressive witnessing efforts" could "help answer many of the problems of urban America."⁸²

The project of urban missions departed on older iterations of White Pentecostalism in that there was not a call for racial separation like with Carothers or Parham. Quite the opposite. Separation was decried as an obstacle to the gospel and seen as a barrier that the gospel could overcome. The opportunity to bring the gospel to the cities represented one way White Pentecostals saw themselves as overcoming or moving beyond older segregationist forms of racial hierarchy. But, the unidirectional relationship of that imagination, in which White suburbanites took back the city or carried the gospel from the suburbs to the cities still assumed a working hierarchy in which White Pentecostals were the carriers of the gospel that alone had the power to save inner cities and "ghettos" from themselves. One could easily miss the closed pneumatology at work in these claims. For classic Pentecostals, which includes the Assemblies

⁸⁰ Curtis W. Ringness, "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel* (November 24, 1968), 12.

⁸¹ Curtis W. Ringness, "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel* (January 12, 1969), 15.

⁸² Curtis W. Ringness, "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel* (January 12, 1969), 15.

of God, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is understood as empowering the minister for the work of evangelism. By casting suspicion on Black minister's capacity for evangelizing Black people, White Pentecostals implicitly make a claim about who is empowered to share "the gospel." The Holy Spirit, here, is present with White communities, empowering them to spread "the gospel" to others who are not empowered for such a task.

White Pentecostalism came to identify itself with the suburban project and all of the material benefits of that exclusive way of life. This identification developed and persisted through the late sixties and into the early nineties. Whereas Ringness called White Pentecostals to reach those "living on the other side of the tracks" in 1969, which came hand in hand with perception that the other side of the tracks posed a threat to the material prosperity of White suburban Pentecostals.⁸³ This view did not go away, but only seemed to harden in the early 1990's. In 1991, the new national director of AG Home Missions, Charles Hackett, gave a report to the Assemblies of God General Presbytery. Not all reports to the General Presbytery were given to the General Council of the Assemblies of God, but Hackett's was deemed so important that it was read to the General Council, included in the minutes, and distributed to every AG minister in the US. In his report, Hackett made a call for a return to Urban Missions. He closed the report with these words:

Over 30 years ago the plague of drugs invaded the ghettos (the inner cities) and the Church did nothing. The results drugs are now everywhere including our churches. There is not a town or community in America that does not have a drug problem. Either we take the gospel to the inner cities now or the inner cities will come to us with their violence, crime, immorality, broken families, and hopelessness. We will lose the battle in the suburbs like we lost the battle in the cities. The Assemblies of God began among the poor and downtrodden. Let us return to our roots. We must keep the middle-class God has

⁸³ Curtis W. Ringness, "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel* (June 8, 1969), 17.

given us but we can no longer ignore the sea of humanity in America who need the gospel.⁸⁴

So knit together was the identity of White Pentecostalism with suburban White America, that the project of urban missions could not be disconnected from desire to bring cities in line with the gospel of the White suburbs for the sake of protecting those suburbs. White Pentecostalism would no longer publish or make explicit racist beliefs, but there would persist a self-identification as distinctly White. Whiteness, here, mapped onto spatial categories that would define the very places where “the gospel” was and where it needed to be taken. It would draw on a sense of ethical exceptionalism derived from the perceived value of suburban order. While certainly a transformation, the core of a distinctly White Pentecostalism that would be separate and that would carry the burden of evangelizing other races persisted.

§5 – Conclusion

From the earliest days of the Pentecostal movement, there developed a strand of Pentecostalism that was unmistakably White in its insistence that an anti-Black racial hierarchy remain within the new Pentecostal movement. This early form of racism took race as a biological phenomenon and attached theological significance to that perceived biological hierarchy. Over time, the shape of anti-blackness would both transform and persist. White Pentecostal contempt would also persist and continue to draw on salient objects of contempt, here cities and Black people.

White Pentecostals would draw their conclusions about the state of inner cities and issues facing Black people from a distance. Conditions of racial segregation would separate White

⁸⁴ Charles Hackett, “Report from the National Director of the Division of Home Missions,” in Minutes, Revised Constitution and Bylaws, *The General Council of the Assemblies of God: The Forty-Fourth General Council: Portland, Oregon, August 6-11, 1991*, 84.

Pentecostals from Black people, but that spatial distance and unequal distribution of goods would facilitate the formation, persistence, and innovation of stereotypes whereby White Pentecostals sought to explain why Black people had less and suffered more. This alone would constitute anti-blackness and is not unique to Pentecostalism, but the ways these issues were spiritualized in a way that mapped onto the dynamics of Pentecostal contempt. Consider the perceived threat that drug use and crime posed to White Pentecostal suburban life as one-way White suburban Pentecostals both considered themselves ethically exceptional and under threat. The only way to hold back that threat was to retake cities.

In addition to the use of stereotypes, Pentecostal contempt and racial segregation created a uniquely White relationship to movements for racial justice. That relationship was and in many ways still is defined by disassociation and ignorance. Movements for racial justice were always a thing that other people were doing somewhere else. In fact those movements, perceived as “race riots,” posed a threat to the goods of suburban life that White Pentecostals understood as bestowed by God. White Pentecostals fail to see themselves as part of struggles against White supremacy and fail to see the stakes for White Pentecostals in those struggles. What’s more, this disassociation came with a general ignorance and incompetence on issues facing cities and Black people. White Pentecostals left incredibly confused at monumental moments such as Martin Luther King Jr.’s funeral. White Pentecostals also *knew*, with no reason, that government spending and other programs could not help inner cities. White Pentecostals could not understand issues facing Black people, but they did know that “the gospel” would solve them.

“The gospel,” though, would be defined by the same disassociation and ignorance or, put differently, suburban whiteness. The spatialized social arrangement and the conditions under which Pentecostals sought to maintain material wealth created perceptions of God that matched

the conditions in which they were made. God was compared to a strong police presence that would bring order to cities and neighbors were taken as threats to property values. Suburbia's status as a blessing from God was so unquestioned as to constitute a suburban closed pneumatology, where the activity of the Spirit could hardly be imagined beyond the suburbs. Pentecostals seeking to follow the Spirit could not see beyond their new housing developments. Theological reflection certainly affects social arrangements, but this chapter demonstrates one way a social arrangement affects theological reflection in turn.

Does this, then, imply that all theological reflection is doomed to reproduce the social arrangement in which that reflection is done? Certainly not, though, it does imply that humans will not somehow escape social arrangements to make clean universal claims about reality. Some Pentecostals, such as those at the Memphis Miracle, have imagined a move of the Spirit transcending racial barriers. Of course, the Spirit is not bound by human social arrangements, racial or otherwise, but the Spirit does not erase human culture or the social arrangements in which humans find themselves. In fact, quite the opposite. True moves of the Spirit can reveal the contingency of human social arrangements and empower humans to endure and transgress those arrangements in different ways. This way of following the Spirit, though, requires a different mode of theological reflection that is more attuned to the moment and social arrangement in which one lives.

Conclusion to Part One

In Chapter One, I asked, why are other people such a problem for Pentecostals? Part One, then offered an analytic diagnosis of the theological dynamics that render other people as problems. The diagnosis takes seriously the role of the theological in forming Pentecostal perceptions of others. There is not a shortage of Pentecostal theologians, however, those accounts of Pentecostalism are often too sanguine about the political futures of Pentecostalism. As such, critical interpretations of Pentecostalism have typically been left up to the social sciences. The social sciences are helpful but limited in their appraisals of Pentecostalism. Throughout Part One I name a key limitation as a discomfort with the theological and therefore an inability to name how Pentecostal political action relates to how Pentecostals see God and other non-human agents acting upon them.

Pentecostal contempt takes others as objects of moral discernment, but undergoes that process of discernment at a distance. Distance, here, can imply a physical distance, as in the case of White Pentecostals in this chapter, or it can imply something of a refusal to engage or encounter the object of contempt. This mode of moral reflection serves a self-justifying purpose, but it is also usually quite inept at understanding others accurately often relying on rumor and stereotype. In both case studies, Pentecostal contempt is parasitic on larger social dynamics, drawing from existing social fractures and salient objects of contempt. Rather than creating objects of contempt, Pentecostals identify existing objects of contempt and infuse those contemptuous social relations with theological meaning. Pentecostals stylize contempt rather than create it. Pentecostal contempt, though, can create a dangerous dynamic that escalates those contemptuous relationships and creating forms of social and epistemic closure. This is certainly a danger for diverse societies in which Pentecostals must share a life with others, but this is also a

danger for Pentecostals seeking to follow the Spirit of Christ. Pentecostal contempt is not a reliable guide to Pentecostal life insofar as that life is one invested in following the Spirit.

As an alternative to these approaches, I name Pentecostal contempt as one prevalent and dangerous way Pentecostals relate to difference. Pentecostal contempt, as I describe it, has three interrelated theological dynamics. Closed pneumatologies understand the Holy Spirit as relating exclusively to particular communities. So, one community is understood as a site of the Spirit's presence and activity while those beyond that community are understood as sites of God's absence. Often the particular community imagined as an exclusive site of God's activity is a church or Christian community, but that community can at different times expand and contract. The key is that the Spirit of God is understood as absent or inactive beyond the boundaries of a given community.

A closed pneumatology then creates a sense of ethical exceptionalism whereby the community relating exclusively to the Holy Spirit has necessary moral and ethical outcomes. Ethical exceptionalism requires both a self-understanding of a given community as holy and a demonized other imagined as beyond the activity of the Spirit and therefore less holy or ethically inferior. Such a move to compare the ethical worth of a community to those beyond the community is necessary for justifying the prior claim to the Holy Spirit's exclusive presence and activity there. The construction of an ethically inferior other then haunts Pentecostal communities leaving them with a threatened posture towards those taken as different or beyond that particular community.

Remember that part of Pentecostal contempt, especially around ethical exceptionalism, includes drawing moral conclusions about different people and groups. As objects of contempt, though, those groups are categorically excluded as reliable sources of moral information.

Therefore, Pentecostal contempt facilitates a form of moral discernment about others that is not only self-justifying and demonizing of difference, but is also done at a distance from those about which Pentecostals seek to discern. As a result, Pentecostal contempt often relies on stereotypes and misinformation that is never checked. Pentecostal moral knowledge about the world, under conditions of Pentecostal contempt, becomes little more than rumor that then further justifies contempt towards others.

Pentecostal contempt is not a uniform phenomenon; it always occurs within a given historical, cultural, and political setting. Chapter Two drew on one example of Pentecostal contempt in Nigeria. Here, Pentecostals receive of *oriṣa* traditions, usually referred to by Pentecostals as “traditional religions,” with contempt. The Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture hosted in Lagos in 1977 is one flashpoint of this contempt for *oriṣa* traditions. To this day, Pentecostals understand FESTAC ‘77 as polluting the destiny of Nigeria and inviting demons into Nigeria. Pentecostal contempt is not a binary issue, as many work through their relationship to FESTAC ‘77 with varying levels of contempt. The forms of spiritual knowledge used to justify that contempt, though, are often opaque and use their own displays of contempt or ruptures with difference in order to justify that knowledge. Here, discernment becomes predictable but unreliable with those generating knowledge about others doing so only after excluding *oriṣa* traditions as objects of contempt.

My second case study showed Pentecostal contempt in the form of White Pentecostal perceptions of Black people and cities. Here, I demonstrate one way social theory can contribute to understanding the formation of theological thought. White people use racial segregation to create physical distance from Black communities and maintain unequal distributions of wealth. As a result, White people draw on limited experience and faulty information (stereotype, rumor,

caricature, etc.) to justify that unequal distribution. White Pentecostals undergo this process by spiritualizing the wealth accrued by White people in the suburbs as a blessing from God and the perceived crime and immorality in the inner cities as a sign of the Spirit's absence. An order-driven way of life crafted in the exclusivity of White suburbs captured White Pentecostal understandings of what it meant to be blessed by God and what it meant for the Spirit to be present.

Each of these examples demonstrates Pentecostal contempt within a particular cultural, historical, and political setting. The language I create and deploy throughout Part One cannot be laid on top of any situation in order to insist on a singular form of Pentecostal politics. Instead, the language of Pentecostal contempt and the three dynamics I demonstrate is intended as a tool to be used alongside other methods of inquiry and can help social scientists attend more directly to how the theological is functioning for Pentecostals. Social scientific inquiry and attention to the theological need not share an oppositional relationship with one another.

Part One also demonstrates the ways social scientific inquiry can be helpful for Pentecostals in at least two ways. First, social scientific inquiry can help in the task of critical self-reflection. Listening to how the social sciences are characterizing Pentecostals and the Pentecostal movement writ large can help in identifying trends and practices that may not be serving Pentecostals in the task of following the Spirit of Christ. Second, social scientific inquiry can aid in both moral and spiritual discernment. I have demonstrated that Pentecostal contempt is often sustained by faulty information and stereotype. Social scientific inquiry is one tool Pentecostals can use to better investigate issues of moral discernment and call into question the use of stereotypes. This is not to imply that the social sciences are neutral or inevitably undercut stereotypes; social scientific thought has been used to sustain both racial hierarchy and

stereotype. However, the social sciences, or attention to the work being done in the social sciences, is one additional tool Pentecostals can deploy.

Now, to take stock of my thesis up to this point. While there is an ongoing conversation about the relationship between theology and the social sciences as well as the descriptive and the normative, those are secondary to my thesis that for Pentecostals, contempt is one prevalent, dangerous, and unnecessary way of receiving difference. Part One has defined Pentecostal contempt and demonstrated two case studies that show the prevalence and danger of the phenomenon under study. At times in Part One, there are moments where I demonstrate Pentecostals working through their contempt or relating to difference in a way that does not draw on contempt. These moments do demonstrate that Pentecostal contempt is not a necessary outgrowth of Pentecostal spirituality, however, they do not finish the task. Even if there are small departures from Pentecostal contempt, it could still be the case that contempt is by and large a necessary result of Pentecostal spirituality. What's more, there is a risk that the social theory I deploy throughout Part One could render a picture of Pentecostalism as determined by the social setting in which it finds itself. Are White Pentecostals in conditions of racial segregation doomed to a contemptuous form of anti-blackness? Are Nigerian Pentecostals in a post-colonial setting doomed to contempt of traditional religions?

With these questions in mind, Part Two of this dissertation will need to offer an alternative to Pentecostal contempt that remains plausibly Pentecostal. Scavenging for theological resources too far beyond Pentecostalism will only prove the point that Pentecostalism needs outside help to avoid contempt. Further, given the relationship between theology and social arrangements demonstrated in Part One, this account will need to engage both the theologies Pentecostals subscribe to and the ways Pentecostals live. However, the relationship

between political habit and belief is not obvious and will require more explanation. With this in mind, I turn to Part Two which considers the relationship between the theological and the political while making the case for a plausibly Pentecostal way of relating to difference that does not rely on contempt.

Part Two: Encounter

Introduction to Part Two

Part Two moves from a descriptive and diagnostic approach to a prescriptive and constructive approach to Pentecostalism. In doing so, Part Two further demonstrates the third component of my thesis that Pentecostal contempt is an unnecessary outcome of a Pentecostal spirituality. Certainly, one could continue rely on descriptive methods that give accounts of places where Pentecostalism has not manifested in contempt in order to dislodge the necessity of Pentecostal contempt. Such an approach may well be useful, but it is not the one I take here. Relying exclusively on descriptive methodologies has limitations for considering religious agency. Put differently, purely descriptive methodologies can help show where Pentecostalism does not rely on contempt or even how a group came to move beyond contempt, but they can neither normatively justify that move nor reason through a Pentecostal frame how such a transition away from contempt might occur. To be sure, Part Two deploys descriptive insights learned in the social sciences as evidence that certain behaviors can help to move away from contempt, but there is an unabashedly normative edge to the way in which those insights are used. Throughout Part Two of this dissertation, I remain committed to crafting a proposal that is plausible to Pentecostals, so I engage scholarly Pentecostal sources and keep Pentecostal concerns such as moral discernment and encounter with God at the forefront of the discussion. The descriptive work done in Part One informs the theology and political habits I propose in Part Two.

Some scholars of religion will feel uneasy with the presence of prescription and normativity in this dissertation. Often these scholars will defend a posture towards religions in which scholars are to exclusively describe religion without engaging in those religions' internal normative discourses. Interestingly, the normative value of such a posture towards religions often

goes unstated or even unnoticed. Certainly, a normative claim regarding what is perceived as an appropriate objectivity towards religions differs from normative claims made within religious traditions. However, the stakes here concern who can speak in the university. Those seeking to exclude the normative from conversation also exclude any voice speaking from a religious perspective, unless, of course, that voice is first filtered through the self-imagined objective academic. Here, normative religious thought is imagined as spoiling the credibility of an otherwise objective study.

Alternatively, I take normative and descriptive reflection as mutually beneficial. Normative reflection without descriptive methods can end up tilting at windmills or devoting incredible energy to perceived issues that do not actually exist in reality. Further, normative reflection done with no descriptive analysis has no way of testing its own prescriptions and therefore ends in a feedback loop of its own self-justification. Descriptive analysis done to the exclusion of self-conscious normative reflection, though, can end up unconsciously deploying existing categories and hierarchies without considering their normative value. Consider that race science was once imagined as objective. Further, descriptive analysis without mindful normativity can assume the methodological exclusion of religious thought as necessary and risk demanding a purity from religion by those scholars admitted into the field while alienating the study of religion from religious concerns.

The normative reflection done here is not intended as universal in the sense that everyone will or should agree with it. Rather, this form of reflection takes up one discourse, that of Christian theological ethics, in order to reflect on normative ends of life for Pentecostals sharing those assumptions. This dissertation does not have any coercive power attached to it, but it contributes to a conversation concerning what it means for Pentecostals to live well. For non-

Pentecostals, this is an opportunity to overhear one form of religious reasoning that is increasingly impacting societies across the globe.

In addition to a shift to the normative, Part Two also engages the relationship between the theological and the political. Chapter Five explicitly considers the normative relationship between the theological and political, but there exists an overarching question of how things people believe (theology) relate to the ways they live with others (politics). This question is important, especially given the findings of Part One where I demonstrate how social arrangements bear on perceptions of God and others.

Theological reflection is a discourse typically, though not only, concerning things that people believe. This is especially true in Protestant traditions, but it is true of other traditions as well. Kathryn Tanner sees beliefs as having power over “actions and attitudes” more so than actions and attitudes having power over beliefs. She states:

Beliefs have power over actions and attitudes to the extent that such beliefs are necessary in order for those actions and attitudes to make sense. Beliefs have power over actions since beliefs about what is the case are necessary in order for action to appear reasonable, meaningful, practically possible, and motivated. Because these relations of intelligibility hold, beliefs can promote certain forms of action and attitude—those that make sense given those beliefs. Or such beliefs can countermand certain forms of action and attitude, undercutting attitudes by making them appear out of place, bizarrely quixotic, or nonsensical, and undercutting forms of action by making them seem unreasonable, unmotivated, irrelevant, or pointless.¹

For Tanner, beliefs offer coherence to actions; this is by and large what I mean when I deploy the language of “salience” throughout this dissertation. As it pertains to Pentecostal contempt, there is a set of beliefs that give coherence to contemptuous attitudes and actions. As such, Chapter Four in this section will engage those beliefs on theological grounds for the sake of rendering Pentecostal contempt “out of place” and “nonsensical.”

¹ Kathryn Tanner, *The Politics of God: Christian Theologies and Social Justice* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 15-16.

For Tanner, “the influence of Christian beliefs has a logical precedence over that of actions and attitudes.”² The reason for this priority is that beliefs, for Tanner, “do not require this psychosocial confirmation by appropriate attitudes and actions the way attitudes and actions require the support of appropriate beliefs.”³ However, the formation of beliefs and the experience of attitudes and actions are more interconnected than Tanner acknowledges. Consider that the category of belief cannot be so cleanly separated from attitudes and actions. I demonstrate throughout Chapters Two and Three that social arrangements and historical settings facilitate particular experiences that then inform belief. For instance, conditions of racial segregation create experiences around which White people then build knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs that then inform future actions. The beliefs of Pentecostal contempt give coherence to people’s contemptuous attitudes and actions; those contemptuous attitudes and actions—separation from others, the use of stereotypes and demonization to interpret others—then confirm and reinscribe those contemptuous beliefs.

Pentecostal contempt is a self-confirming cycle and Part Two of this dissertation intervenes at both the levels of belief and action. After the more directly theological Chapter Four, Chapters Five and Six consider political practices that can both construct a Pentecostal politics informed by the theology articulated in Chapter Four and create experiences that then render theologies of contempt “out of place” and “nonsensical.” New experiences raise new questions that theological reflection can then answer. Of course there is no way of determining the types of experiences people will have, but there exists impressive social scientific data that offers insight into the types of outcomes specific political situations create. Adopting the habits outlined in Chapters Five and Six does not necessarily overcome the theological thinking that

² Tanner, *The Politics of God*, 16.

³ Tanner, *The Politics of God*, 17.

undergirds Pentecostal contempt, but those habits can raise new theological questions and facilitate attitudes more welcoming to theologies of encounter.

My use of democratic theory and my relatively positive outlook on Pentecostal life in democracy should not be taken as an attempt to imagine a Pentecostalism that is more acceptable to liberal democratic norms. Rather, I am seeking to locate a theological politics committed to the Spirit of Pentecost that transgresses existing boundaries and also takes seriously the common Pentecostal experience of being encountered by God. I will make clear these motivations throughout this Part Two but suffice it to say that Pentecostal concerns are steering the project. At stake are the fundamental questions of what it means to anticipate God in the face of our neighbors and how Pentecostals understand Christian identity and mission. I now turn to Chapter Four, which begins that process of offering a viable alternative to Pentecostal contempt.

Chapter 4: A Theology of Encounter

*“The face that gazes on a vessel filled with oil
sees its reflection there, and he who gazes hard sets his spiritual gaze thereon
and sees in its symbols Christ. And as the beauty of Christ is manifold,
so the olive’s symbols are manifold.
Christ has many facets, and the oil acts as a mirror to them all:
from whatever angle I look at the oil, Christ looks out at me from it.”*
- Ephraim the Syrian, from “Hymn on Virginity, 7”

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,
in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*
-Acts 1:8

§1 – Introduction

While Pentecostals have more recently articulated political theologies and works of ethics, the core of Pentecostal political thought has been worked out under the banner of missiology, or a study of theoretical approaches to Christian missions often narrowly conceived as proselytism. This makes sense historically, as Pentecostals have reflected on themselves as a constituting a modern missionary movement where relationships to the world and others are understood through the lens of missions, here meaning strategic proselytism. Understanding Pentecostal politics as missiology has kept central for Pentecostals a concern for participating in the Spirit and following the Spirit wherever the Spirit might lead one.¹

Throughout this chapter I draw on questions that Pentecostals have developed in missiological thinking, though I also depart from these conversations in important ways. On the one hand missiology offers an appropriate context for the types of questions I engage. Missiology concerns the shape of the church in relation to others considered beyond the church.

¹ One can hear this intuition throughout popular Pentecostal worship music lyrics, such as “Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders...”

This concern further brings to mind questions of the appropriate porosity of the church's borders, which is at the heart of my inquiry. With these helpful contexts in mind, though, missiology also offers a largely inappropriate context for the argument I am making throughout this project. Missiology is too narrowly focused on "religious" difference and those differences that are not coded as "religious" are either not considered or are distorted to fit an uninterrogated category of "religion" so that it can be analyzed as an object of potential conversion.² As such, this chapter both draws on and departs from these existing debates in missiology and theology of religions to consider the broader category of difference. Doing so will allow me to take seriously the theological advancements made in Pentecostal missiology, while considering how they bear on the types of modern encounters with difference I outline in Part One.

Throughout this chapter, I make a strategic choice of dialogue partners that prioritizes existing Pentecostal literature. This choice is motivated by the state of Pentecostal theology and my understanding of tradition. For many years, Pentecostals seeking Ph.D.'s in theology (rather than biblical studies or history) have had to start from non-Pentecostal literature in order to make theological arguments that would be taken as credible by the larger academy. Later in their careers, Pentecostals could build on their theological training and write more explicitly from Pentecostal perspectives. These groundbreaking studies and those constructive studies of Pentecostalism that followed have created a base of literature in Pentecostal theology written by Pentecostals. As there now exist a number of Pentecostals in senior academic posts specializing in theology and ethics, my generation of Pentecostal academics can engage with Pentecostal

² For example of what I mean by practices being distorted to fit a category of "religion," see: Ayodeji Ogunnaike, "How Worship Becomes Religion: Religious Change and Change in Religion in Ede and Salvador," PhD diss., (Harvard University, 2019).

theology differently.³ This is a contribution to the formation of Pentecostal thought, but also a contribution to the larger academy that holds an obstinate fixation on Pentecostals as objects of study rather than partners in conversation.

In addition to the moment in Pentecostal theology into which I enter, I also prioritize a select group of Pentecostal theologians for reasons of engaging a particular tradition. Tradition can have both a normative and epistemic value. The normative value of tradition is, for Pentecostals, complicated due to the lack of a united body through which one would affirm that tradition and the lack of accepted traditional social teaching. As such, this chapter will not directly engage the normative value of tradition. The epistemic value of tradition, though, does guide my strategic choice of dialogue partners. There exist Pentecostal concerns and themes that simply are not coherent or immediately legible to those outside of Pentecostal communities. While others can listen in and Pentecostals can, and have, made use of non-Pentecostal theology to reflect on Pentecostal concerns, my strategic limiting of sources is intended to begin the conversation from Pentecostal concerns within a Pentecostal language. In a sense, this is a practice of speaking in our own tongues.

This insistence does not, however, imply a Pentecostalism detached from a larger Christian tradition or even a detachment from traditions other than Christianity. I agree with Simon Chan that Pentecostalism is in dire need of a closer connection with a larger Christian tradition.⁴ I also acknowledge the generative work done by those Pentecostals who use non-

³ This is not, of course, to say that Pentecostals have not taken the approach I am taking here. Nor is it to say that Pentecostals have not taken up academic training around Pentecostal literature in a concentrated way. Rather, I mean to suggest that these approaches are still relatively rare and a relatively new opportunity for Pentecostals in the academy. For one example, among others, of a Pentecostal classic taking this approach, see: Stephen Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010). For an example of newer literature prioritizing existing Pentecostal scholarship, see: Christopher A. Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁴ Daniel Castelo, *Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2017); Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011).

Pentecostal sources to reflect on Pentecostal concerns. Rather, I am hesitant of the ways following, as distinct from introducing into dialogue, theological reflection done from outside an immediate Pentecostal context can sideline Pentecostal concerns and render Pentecostal theology mere cosplay of other theological traditions.

This more constructive part of my project assumes two differing audiences. First, it offers for those considering themselves outside of Pentecostalism the opportunity to “sit in” on one way a Pentecostal might work through, in a more explicitly theological register, the opportunities difference poses for Pentecostal life. Second, and perhaps more directly, I target as an audience those Pentecostals engaging in academic theological reflection. This is admittedly a narrow audience. Though, it is one with a level of influence that is still being realized. These theologians over the past thirty years have created the very substance of Pentecostal theology in the US at places like the Society for Pentecostal Studies, *Pneuma*, *The Journal for Pentecostal Theology*, Lee University, the Pentecostal Theological Seminary, along with many others. This is not to say that Pentecostal theology did not exist prior to the formation of academic Pentecostal theology, nor is this to say that the aforementioned institutions are necessarily the future for Pentecostal thought; each in its own way has demonstrated sustained anti-blackness and homophobia. Rather, this strategic choice in audience is to say that academic theology affords some space for critical reflection on praxis. Scholarly reflection is important as an end in itself, but this reflection can also shape Pentecostal institutions while creating a body of literature in hope that there will come a wider group of Pentecostals eager to read it.

Some may hold concerns that targeting such a focused audience risks alienating the larger and growing Pentecostal world. Christianity has a long history of holding the tension between

popular religion and the religion of the educated “elites.”⁵ However, imagine if Catholic thinkers, say Karl Rahner or M. Shawn Copeland, were written off or ignored because their views did not represent Catholicism as it “really” exists. Of course, there exist ecclesiological differences between Catholicism and Pentecostalism, but my point is that Pentecostal theologians have among Christian traditions almost uniquely been excluded as interpreters of their own practices. More than just kibitzing about bibliographic deficiencies in the academy, I am suggesting that an important part of the tension between “elite” and “non-elite” religion is ignored in Pentecostal studies. The social sciences have long fetishized the pursuit of the most “authentic” versions of Pentecostalism “on the ground,” while marginalizing those Pentecostals with academic training as insufficiently Pentecostal or out of touch with “real” Pentecostalism. Certainly, historical and anthropological approaches have their value (which I draw on throughout Part One), but they are not the only game in town. Prioritizing Pentecostal academic sources allows for the normative work of imagining Pentecostalism beyond contempt, which can perhaps help see more clearly existing forms of Pentecostalism that are not so motivated by a contempt of difference.⁶ As such, this chapter makes no attempt to develop an account of Pentecostalism that represents all of Pentecostalism, but only demonstrates one way Pentecostals might reconcile encounters with difference and a desire to faithfully follow the Spirit of Christ.

As a work of constructive thought engaging Pentecostal theologians, this chapter will feel very “Spirit forward.” Such an approach is essential for articulating a theology that speaks to Pentecostal life. Throughout the chapter I will defend the following thesis: *The activity of the*

⁵ See Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002).

⁶ For one such work of an ethnographer demonstrating the value of Pentecostal theology for interpreting Pentecostalism as a social scientist, see: Devaka Premawardhana, *Faith in Flux: Pentecostalism and Mobility in Rural Mozambique* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

Holy Spirit exceeds the church; Christian mission is a life of joining in that activity which transgresses boundaries and stirs encounter. This theological argument is intended as an alternative to the theologies of Pentecostal contempt outlined in Part One. As such, Section Two inverts the components of Pentecostal contempt to set a broad outline for theologies of encounter. In Section Three I offer a reading of Peter's encounter with Cornelius in Acts 10 as an encounter with the Spirit. I will return to Acts 10 in Section Six, but this initial reading sets the stage for the pneumatological questions I consider throughout the chapter. Section Four engages Simon Chan's sophisticated account of what I call a closed pneumatology. In this engagement, I accept many of Chan's concerns, but reject the exclusiveness of his pneumatology. As an alternative, I argue for pneumatologically informed ecclesiology that can sustain both the distinctiveness of the church and the universal reach of the Spirit. Section Five, then, offers a Pentecostal pneumatology grounded in both creation and Pentecost that can undergird theology of encounter I am proposing. This section prioritizes both the continuity of the Spirit and the manner in which the Spirit crosses boundaries creating new forms of community and fructifying life. Finally, Section Six returns to Acts 10 and identifies Peter's encounter with Cornelius as a part of a larger encounter with the Holy Spirit. Christian mission, rather than strategic proselytism, is a life of joining in the activity of the Spirit who draws us out to encounter others, especially those others who we might otherwise exclude.

The theology I articulate throughout this chapter is not entirely new. In fact, this chapter strategically draws from existing Pentecostal theologies in order to articulate a plausibly Pentecostal theology of encounter. What existing Pentecostal theologies lack, however, is the confrontation with Pentecostal contempt that I undertake throughout this project. This chapter articulates a vision for Pentecostal encounter as a more faithful way of following the Spirit of

Christ. In doing so, the theology is certainly oriented towards correcting the errors of Pentecostal contempt, but it is not purely reactive. Instead, the chapter is motivated by a positive vision for a Pentecostalism that begins from anticipation and openness to the Spirit.

§2 – Pentecostal Theologies of Encounter

As superior to Pentecostal contempt, it is helpful to think of theologies of Pentecostal encounter as inverting each of the three components of Pentecostal contempt I name in Chapter One. These components included: 1) closed pneumatologies, 2) ethical exceptionalism, and 3) threatened postures. So, rather than closed pneumatologies, I name “open pneumatologies.” Rather than ethical exceptionalism, here, I name “ethical commonality.” Rather than threatened postures, I name “anticipatory postures.” These terms will serve as tools to flag contrasts with Pentecostal contempt and pin down exactly where I am identifying theological differences between politics based on contempt and those based on encounter.

This chapter invests most heavily in overturning closed pneumatologies into open pneumatologies, which should denote its relationship to other components of Pentecostal contempt and Pentecostal encounter, respectively. While not cleanly relating in terms of cause and effect, ethical exceptionalism and ethical commonality are certainly downstream from their respective pneumatologies. Ultimately, an anticipatory posture is an achievement in theological thought, cultural practice, and personal virtue. This chapter gives anticipatory postures the least immediate attention, but one should read anticipation and the resulting posture as the direction in which the chapter is moving precisely because the willingness to encounter others in their difference requires a sense of secure anticipation rather than fear and contempt.

Certainly, there are many forms of Pentecostal encounter that different thinkers with different theological proclivities could articulate. I demonstrate one way to think through a

Pentecostal theology beyond contempt, but the language of Pentecostal encounter and its three components derived from a contrast with Pentecostal contempt can also undergird similar reflection from other Pentecostals, be they oneness Pentecostals or Pentecostals less invested in engaging a US theological academy. These terms beg what it would mean to move beyond the three components of Pentecostal contempt, though the terms do not necessarily have the exact content I assign them throughout this chapter.

§2.1 – Open Pneumatologies

Before moving too far along, I find it important to preemptively deal with potential misunderstandings based on the language I have chosen. A considerable part of the trouble is finding nomenclature that will set off the alarms I hope to set off while leaving others untriggered. I will begin by hedging against some of these confusions with the hopes of avoiding distraction. New phrases inevitably stir some to open fire with mere word association as the only guide. A phrase like “open pneumatologies” has several specific risks that come with it, though I land on it as a helpful term for identifying the narrow claim I am making. Certainly, the “open” in open pneumatologies could stir a fuss because it brings “Open Theism” to mind. I have no intention of directly commenting for or against any open theists, and open pneumatologies does not refer to an openness of God in the same way. Rather, “open” here refers to an expectation toward the potential encounter of the Spirit in all things.

Open pneumatologies refers to an approach to God that is open to all things as potential sites of God’s activity and presence. Some may further level a charge of pantheism or panentheism, and while such a conversation may well be interesting, it is not the one I undertake here. My use of open pneumatology is distinct because it does not make a hard claim on the manner in which God is active or present in the world, though I will without a doubt characterize

instances of that presence from time to time. I do not suggest that God is *necessarily* active or present in any part of the world, in fact degrees of “absence” are important for understanding God’s relationship to evil in the world. Nor do I characterize the manner in which the “natural” world reveals God. Instead, open pneumatologies are built around an expectation that the presence of God is far more pervasive than many Pentecostals might currently acknowledge.⁷

One final anticipated trigger I would like to avoid, not because it is unimportant, is the question of “universal” salvation. As I make the case for *Open Pneumatologies*, I will at times use the word “universal” to characterize my position. This is not to comment on historical Christian debates around universal salvation or whatever Frankenstein version of that debate the internet is undertaking at any given time. While I find arguments in favor of universal salvation ultimately persuasive and a nice fit with the cosmic claims I make throughout this project, my position here does not depend on conclusion. To say that a group or individual participates in the Holy Spirit or that the Spirit rests upon them is not necessarily to say they are among the elect. Rather than a soteriological claim, “universal” refers more closely to the sovereignty of God as one who reigns over all of the cosmos; this claim is “universal” in the sense that the reign of God is universal and there are not parts of the creation beyond the potential activity of God. As such, an open pneumatology makes a strongly monotheistic claim before anything else, which is to say that Christian interpretations of the world are made in light of the reality that there is only one God and not many gods.

My position here is not unique in the Christian tradition, and often encounters with “other religions” can spur similar reflection to what I undertake here. Certainly, there are multiple ways

⁷ This is a direct reference to Acts 2:17, though the theme of “all flesh” is central to the work of Amos Yong that I detail below. Acts is of particular import to Pentecostal spirituality, and later sections make my case within that narrative.

to account for the presence of “other religions” and the proximity or epistemic presence of “other religions” can push different types of answers. Jesuit missionaries developed a sense that they should expect to encounter God already active and present when they arrive on a new mission field.⁸ This is a deeply monotheistic conviction rooted in a sense that there is only one God who created and tends to all people. Schleiermacher offers a similar reflection on the category of “religion” that accounts for a shared human experience of religion. For Schleiermacher, religion “spring[s] necessarily and by itself from the interior of every better soul.”⁹ This united experience of “religion” is similar to my account of the Holy Spirit as potentially active and present in all things, but it differs in important ways. First, exporting the category of “religion” can have a distorting affect on practices and culture. My account of the Holy Spirit’s activity does not necessitate a uniform experience of “religion.” Second, Schleiermacher uses the shared experience of religion to inform a hierarchical understanding of religious difference with Christianity as the end of religion. I do not follow this impulse.

While I, at times, characterize the problems I hope to address in terms of religious difference, I do not want to follow any hierarchical notion of “religion” with Christianity as its telos nor limit my argument to the modern category of “religion.” The cosmological reach of the Spirit begs a way of being that seeks after the Spirit in all things and interprets reality through the presence, activity, and absence of the Spirit. Distinct from Christian religion, life in the Triune

⁸ Here I have in mind Mateo Ricci’s mission to China and the subsequent controversies with Rome regarding Ricci’s decision to incorporate the Chinese veneration of ancestors into Catholic faith. See: Charles Taylor, *A Catholic Modernity: Charles Taylor’s Marianist Award Lectures*, ed. James L. Heft (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 15-16.

⁹ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, translated and edited by Richard Crouter (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 17. For a secondary account of Schleiermacher on this question, see: Thomas Reynolds, “Reconsidering Schleiermacher and the Problem of Religious Diversity: Toward a Dialectical Pluralism,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73.1 (March 2005), 151-181; and Jacqueline Marina, “Schleiermacher on the outpourings of the inner fire: experiential expressivism and religious pluralism,” *Religious Studies* 40.2 (June 2004), 125-143.

God, or communion with Christ, becomes the telos of human life.¹⁰ Certainly, I prioritize a Christian eschatological position as the telos of human life, but that should remain distinct from any evolutionary notion of religion or any notion that identification as Christian is an end of human existence. Difference, while perhaps destabilizing, becomes a site beyond the self for encountering the Spirit of Christ as others participate in the Spirit.

§2.2 – *Ethical Commonality*

Beginning with an open pneumatology makes possible the type of ethical commonality that undergirds a Pentecostal politics of encounter. As a holiness movement, Pentecostals have long identified the moral and ethical rigor of their movement as an outgrowth of their participation in the Spirit, understood as a baptism in the Holy Spirit. In fact, debates over the nature of sanctification, or the manner in which one becomes holy, caused large rifts early in the Pentecostal movement with some holding to the “finished work” doctrine that one’s sanctification is complete at Christian initiation and others holding to a Wesleyan progressive sanctification. Despite these debates, the initial insight is a good one, insofar as participation in the Spirit of Christ should have identifiable moral and ethical outcomes, however undetermined or unexpected those outcomes might be.¹¹

¹⁰ Taking an explicitly Trinitarian approach to Pentecostal understandings of the Spirit isolates this project from large numbers of Pentecostals outside of Trinitarian traditions. My choice to prioritize Trinitarian theology as a way to understand the Spirit is not intended to alienate those groups so much as it is intended to lean on a vital part of my own theological tradition. Others have invested in fruitful dialogues between Trinitarian and Oneness Pentecostals; that is not a dialogue in which I am engaging here.

¹¹ Here, I agree with Simeon Zahl that the work of the Spirit should be “practically recognizable.” Though, I would like to problematize the uniformity of these outcomes as well as the normative universality of what Christians might recognize as moral improvement. As the first half of this project demonstrated, moral perceptions and perceptions of the Spirit are shaped by cultural and physical settings in ways that can undermine the normative validity of Christian moral perceptions. See, Simeon Zahl, *The Holy Spirit and Christian Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 48-79.

Remember, this portion of my argument is only outlining the terms of a theology of encounter, of which there can and must be many articulations, and therefore does not overdetermine the content of any of the three categories for Pentecostal encounter. Later sections will fill in more particular content for each category given the trinitarian approach I adopt. For now suffice it to say that ethical commonality concerns the source of all ethical action. One need not say that Islamic art is somehow evil or lesser than because it is not Christian. Instead, the goodness that is manifest in all people, Christian and non, is participation in the Spirit of Christ. Holding to ethical commonality allows one to value the actions of another as a theological good even if they do not share a religious identification. This claim to commonality prioritizes both the sovereignty of God as the source of all fruits of the Spirit and the value of honest reflection and repentance on the part of Christians. As such, ethical commonality makes possible a consideration of the fruits of the Spirit among non-Christians as well as the difficulty and value of recognizing ecclesial sin.

§2.3 – Anticipatory Postures

Ultimately, rather than entering into encounters with difference from a threatened posture, the altered theological conditions within Pentecostal encounter facilitate an anticipatory posture. Anticipatory, here, implies both the capacity to have a nondefensive encounter with difference and a posture towards that encounter that seeks out or hopes to receive an encounter with God. Augustinians often speak of “enduring” the world. Anticipation is similar in its longing for God to break into the course of history, though without the dark angst many Augustinians carry. God is active in the world in limited ways, and an anticipatory posture awaits encounters with that activity. Of course a nondefensive approach to difference could be described as “secure,” but “security” might signal a closed-off stance towards difference, whereas anticipation signals an

open vulnerability whereby one waits the touch of the Spirit. This sense of anticipation implies confidence when entering an encounter; not confidence in an apologetic mode, but confidence that the Spirit will be at work in an encounter. This posture, rather than seeking out threats or manufacturing opponents, begins from a hope that God may confront one through difference, or merely that which is beyond the self or the familiar, and give one eyes to recognize more of God than they have. This sense of anticipation captures both a nondefensive posture towards difference, but is also a posture towards God that should be familiar to most Pentecostals who have waited on God at the altar in prayer.

One can and likely will hope for an anticipatory posture, but it is an achievement won through both the habits that build up confidence and faith over time. Theological arguments like the one I offer here can give coherence to those habits and motivation for continuing them despite their many discomforts. The conditions of modernity outlined in Chapter One may well be such that humans will live with both regular encounters of difference and regular awareness of different ways of life. On my view, altering the first two conditions of Pentecostal encounter allows for a more anticipatory reception of that difference, which renders contempt less attractive as an approach to difference. The anticipatory posture outlined here is certainly an achievement, but it is one that also opens possibilities for hearing the Spirit of God and following that voice where it may lead.

With the broader contours of Pentecostal encounter outlined, I now turn to a more particular theological account that prioritizes encounter rather than contempt as a means of navigating difference. There exist manifold examples of Pentecostalism for which contempt is not a central energy; while I articulate one example, this chapter is also an invitation for others to articulate their own. The theology offered here is grounded in trinitarian theology, which renders

it immediately implausible to large swaths of global Pentecostalism. The goal of the chapter is not to write a theology for all Pentecostals, but to identify particular ideas within existing Pentecostal scholarship and to model the type of reflection on contempt that I see as necessary for Pentecostals to do from their own particularities. There does not exist one single way of conceptualizing the Spirit and therefore this chapter does not seek to offer a theology that Pentecostals the world over should accept. Rather, this theology should be read as one way of thinking about the Spirit and encounters with difference; a way of thinking, which the author submits to global thinkers for consideration and conversation.¹²

§3 – Framing the Question: Peter’s Encounter with Cornelius

Christian tradition has taken Pentecost as the founding of the church where the Spirit of Christ poured out gathers believers into the life of the church. For Pentecostals, the many tongues spoken at Pentecost and the resulting missionary activities “to the ends of the earth” are key markers of this outpouring of the Spirit. Here, the identity of the church is taken as culturally inclusive, where the Spirit overcomes barriers of language for the purpose of gathering all nations into the church. The subsequent empowerment for missions is often understood as the Spirit calling forth the church to witness to all nations.¹³ Such understandings of Pentecost and

¹² Given that I use a case study of Nigerian Pentecostalism, readers will be tempted to see this chapter as attempting to “fix” Nigerian Pentecostalism. Uncharitable readers will jump at the opportunity to name this a western theology superimposed on a Nigerian context. I take seriously these potential risks, but also the particularity of the theology offered here. Readers should see this as one particular articulation of a theology submitted to global colleagues, rather than a theological prescription lacking awareness of difference. Nigerian thinkers, be they theologians, philosophers, political theorists, or otherwise, are colleagues whose contributions I deeply value. This chapter does not in any way speak for Nigerians. In my experience, Nigerian thinkers do not have any trouble responding or speaking for themselves.

¹³ For examples of common proselytizing readings of Acts among Pentecostals, see: Craig Keener, “Power of Pentecost: Luke’s Missiology in Acts 1-2,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 12:1 (2009), 47-73; Craig Keener, “The Spirit and the Mission of the Church in Acts 1-2,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62.1 (2019), 25-45; Robert P. Menzies, “Acts 2.17-21: A Paradigm for Pentecostal Mission,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 17 (2008), 200-218.

the activity of the Spirit there are not necessarily closed or open, in my use of the terms.

However, the freedom of the Spirit at Pentecost and throughout Luke/Acts brings to the forefront questions of how the Spirit relates to both the church and the world, raising a secondary question, then, of how the church and the world ought to relate to one another.

In this section, I expand on traditional interpretations of Pentecost and the subsequent missionary activity detailed in Acts to argue that Pentecost and the narrative of Acts are better understood through the lens of an open pneumatology. The Acts of the Apostles shows a Spirit transgressing boundaries and creating new possibilities for human relations, whereas a closed pneumatology limits the possibilities of the Spirit's activity to assumed group categories. An open pneumatology allows for the freedom of the Spirit to surprise and bring forth life from ossified or otherwise dead human relationships; to challenge the boundaries of how humans understand the church or even how humans understand the Spirit's relationship to those one would exclude. This is the larger argument of the chapter, but this section only seeks to frame the question in the context of a biblical narrative.

Peter's encounter with the Spirit and the household of Cornelius raises questions of where and in what manner the Spirit is active in relation to understood boundaries, namely the boundaries of the church. In Acts 10, Cornelius is understood as a "devout man" who "feared God." A Roman centurion who would represent more so the occupying force of Rome rather than the covenant people of God, Cornelius was still taken as one who "gave generously" and "prayed constantly." Despite this reputation, though, Luke depicts Cornelius as outside of the covenantal community, at least beyond Peter's understanding of that community. With these assumed boundaries in mind, an angel goes to Cornelius and recognizes Cornelius's righteous actions, commanding Cornelius to send messengers to Peter at Joppa. Here, through the words of an

angel, Luke demonstrates the first move of God's activity and presence beyond those initially gathered to witness to the resurrection of Christ. This small portion of the narrative demonstrates two things immediately relevant to my argument. First, though Cornelius is not yet named as included in the covenant people of God, God recognizes his alms giving and prayers as legitimate goods. Rather than waiting on ecclesial authorization, God recognizes Cornelius as righteous and leads Peter to see what God has already done.¹⁴ Second, while here in the form of a prevenient grace, God's activity toward one not yet recognized as part of the church is unmistakable. Without naming the Spirit directly, Luke identifies God as the one acting on both sides of this intimate encounter.

If God is active with Cornelius while Peter would still exclude him and his household from the covenant community, then there exists a relevant ordering question regarding the relationship of the Holy Spirit and the church. Overwhelmingly, Pentecostal theologians have identified the Spirit as the main actor which the church then seeks to follow. Steven Studebaker notes that this is exactly the pattern in Acts with regards to the inclusion of the Gentiles.

The Christian leadership in Jerusalem takes ten years to ratify the Spirit's inclusion of the Gentiles. [...] Through Peter's rooftop vision, the outpouring of the Spirit on Cornelius's household, and Peter's commentary on the events, the narrative of Acts 10-11 shows that the Spirit has already included the Gentiles, though the official church leadership does not do so until Acts 15.¹⁵

The church is a reality which is gathered in the context of a much larger reality of the Spirit's baptism of the whole creation. Certainly, the church plays an essential role to the activity of the

¹⁴ New Testament scholar Matthew Thiessen argues, contra John Barclay, that Luke depicts the merit of Cornelius as reason for God's sending the *pneuma* to Cornelius and his household. Interestingly, and for my purposes, Thiessen demonstrates a break between the gift of the Spirit and Cornelius's ethical status. Prior to the coming of the Spirit upon Cornelius's household, God recognizes Cornelius's good works; this is one half of what I mean by "ethical commonality." See: Matthew Thiessen, "A Worthy Cornelius and Divine Grace: Complicating John Barclay's *Paul and the Gift*," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 84 (2022), 462-479.

¹⁵ Steven Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012), 30.

Spirit in the world, but as shown here, the Spirit leads while the church struggles to keep up. Historical examples abound of the church coming to see others as legitimate and equal members of the ecclesial community or coming to see the illegitimacy of others' exclusion from the community. The church's struggle with intimacy and the embrace of others is not emblematic of the Spirit, but the church's, at times, inability to follow the Spirit well.

Following Cornelius's encounter with the angel of God, Peter falls into a trance on a rooftop while praying. During this trance, Peter has a vision in which a sheet covered with food, both ritually clean and unclean, becomes visible and God commands him to eat. In line with this command to eat "profane" or "unclean" foods, the voice commands "What God has made clean, you must not call profane."¹⁶ It is important to note that the stakes of such a change would be incredibly high as maintaining rules around purity were a display of faithfulness and Jews had historically "preferred death to eating" profane foods.¹⁷ This transformation, though, would not have merely altered the foods available for Peter. As Craig Keener argues, such a change equates to removing "the barrier to table fellowship" between Jews and Gentiles.¹⁸ Following this experience, Peter travels to the household of Cornelius where Peter would reject worship from Cornelius. Upon arrival, Peter announces the unlawful nature of his, a Jew, visit to a Gentile household, only to further declare "I should not call anyone profane or unclean."¹⁹ Willie Jennings characterizes this transgressive meeting as a result of Peter's listening to God, where

¹⁶ Acts 10:15. On the connection between this purification of animal foods and the purification of the nations, see: Jason A. Staples, "'Rise, Kill and Eat': Animals as Nations in Early Jewish Visionary Literature and Acts 10," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 42(1) (2019), 3-17. On the inclusion of nations in Acts 2 as a statement of God's dominion, see: Gary Gilbert, "The List of Nations in Acts 2: Roman Propaganda and the Lukan Response," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121.3 (2002), 497-529.

¹⁷ Craig Keener, *Acts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 300.

¹⁸ Keener, *Acts*, 300.

¹⁹ Acts 10:28.

the Spirit of God draws Peter beyond known boundaries and into intimate communion with God and others.

Peter listens and hears the word of God in new and unanticipated places. Before Peter will offer his truth he must listen. This is the key currency of the new order. This is the engine that will operationalize holy joining. Listening for the word of God in others who are not imagined with God, not imagined as involved with God, but whom God has sought out and is bringing near to the divine life and to our lives.²⁰

It is after this transgressive meeting, where Peter moves to encounter those who are not imagined with God, Peter bears witness to the gospel which he had received and the household of Cornelius is filled with the Spirit. There is more to be said on Peter's experience with Cornelius, but for now, allow this short narrative to raise the question of the Spirit's relationship to the community of Christ followers. It would suggest, and I will argue, that the Spirit moves across boundaries and brings the church along. However, some would argue that the Spirit is the Spirit of the church and therefore should not be anticipated beyond the boundaries of that community. In the next section I take up this disagreement directly.

§4 – The Holy Spirit, the Church, and the World

This section probes the relationship of the Spirit to the church and the world. In doing so, I prioritize both the universality of the Spirit and the distinctiveness of the church. By now, my insistence on the universality of the Spirit should be obvious, but a similar insistence on the distinctiveness of the church will not seem as obvious to many. This insistence is not built on anxieties of "syncretism" or a concern for maintaining a unique identity. Rather my concerns are twofold. First, a Christian account of the Spirit ought to make some sense of Christian practices and traditions. This is not to say there exist stagnant practices in which Christians must always

²⁰ Willie James Jennings, *Acts* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017), 111.

engage, but to say a Christian account of the Spirit that renders both a Christian grammar and Christian life unnecessary is incoherent. Second, insisting on the distinctiveness of the church is a way of insisting that the church recognize its particular experiences and commitments that are neither universally held nor universally obvious. Doing so names more clearly the grounds from which Christians might encounter others, while preventing a manner of self-understanding that collapses otherness into sameness and thus avoiding genuine encounters with difference. Therefore, this section first engages with and rejects a sophisticated account of a closed pneumatology, namely that of Simon Chan. Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 then offer a constructive account of an open pneumatology grounded in the Spirit's relationship to the world.

§4.1 – The Spirit of the Church or the Church of the Spirit?

Responding to calls for a more defined Pentecostal ecclesiology, several Pentecostal theologians have written detailed proposals articulating the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the church.²¹ One such theologian, Simon Chan, has taken up questions of Pentecostal tradition and ecclesiology in great detail. Chan's work has been widely influential in the broader evangelical world and has offered an in-depth engagement between Pentecostalism, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox theologies. Chan's ecclesiology and the attached pneumatology are largely antithetical to the open pneumatology I outline; in fact, Chan represents an opportunity to work out my own position in dialogue with a sophisticated articulation of the closed pneumatologies I mention above.

²¹ For example, see: Frank D. Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church: A Dogmatic Inquiry* (New York: T&T Clark, 2020); Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (New York: T&T Clark, 2017), ch. 10. For one similar account of God's activity from an Orthodox perspective, see: Athanasios Paphanasiou, "If I Cross the Boundaries, You are There! An Affirmation of God's Action Outside the Canonical Boundaries of the Church," *Communio Viatorum* 53.3 (2011), 40-55.

Chan's concerns are liturgical and sacramental, and his work rightly insists on a characterization of the church as a worshipping community before anything else.²² Chan imbeds his ecclesial ontology within a critique of evangelical ecclesiologies that begin from a functionalist or instrumentalist approach. For Chan, these approaches assume that the church exists for the sake of redeeming the world, and therefore the actions of the church should then serve the purpose of spreading the Kingdom to the world. Within evangelical contexts, this has translated into a pragmatic approach to the liturgy in which churches are strategically designed to maximize efforts toward proselytism. This might be most recognizable in the "seeker-friendly" approaches to Sunday worship that characterize many evangelical and Pentecostal churches. Chan voices his distaste with the "rock concert" that individualizes members of the church and alienates them from the work of the liturgy.²³

Chan diagnoses this instrumental approach as a failure to probe the ontology of the church. For Chan, the ontological identity of the church is found in its identity as a worshipping community "making a normative response to the revelation of the triune God."²⁴ Theologically, instrumental approaches have no role for the Hebrew Bible beyond mere background and cannot account for God's calling of Abraham and Israel. The ontological approach differs by taking God as creating the church for the purpose of entering into covenant relationship with it. It is from this identity that the liturgy should be crafted for the sake of forming Christians into the story of God. Much of what Chan is doing is leveraging the language of "ontology" to adjust how evangelicals think about ecclesiology. That is all fine and good, but the shape of that ontology

²² Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), ch. 1.

²³ Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 153.

²⁴ Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 42.

and the resulting claims about pneumatology are where Chan articulates the substance of a closed pneumatology.

When he is most clear, Chan identifies the church as a worshipping community responding to the revelation of the triune God. This response is normatively constructed in the liturgy where worship, which “constitutes the primary practice of the church,” makes up the very identity of the church or “what makes the church the church.”²⁵ Problems quickly come to mind with identifying the ontology of the church as a flattened notion of worship that cannot immediately account for acts of service, love of neighbor, or witnessing to the resurrection of Christ as acts of worship or part of the church’s identity. This anemic understanding of worship, so isolated to the liturgical response of the church, is only hardened as Chan explains his understanding of the church’s relationship to the world.

The church is created before the foundations of the world and therefore takes priority to the creation. Put differently, the world exists for the sake of the church and not the church for the sake of the world.²⁶ Chan goes as far as to say that God created the world so that it “would become the church;” there is not “some bigger purpose in the world, such as peace and justice.”²⁷ My own approach in Chapter Five will insist that Pentecostals use politics for larger theological ends, but my approach differs in that there is a theological warrant for the creation of world as well as a theological warrant for the church encountering the world as the world. Chan does not have a vision for the world other than eventually becoming the church. Insofar as Chan’s

²⁵ Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 90.

²⁶ To make this point, Chan quotes Frank Senn, *New Creation: A Liturgical Worldview* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), p. 63: “We think the church exists for the sake of the world, but that is not true. The world, indeed the whole universe, exists for the church...The world exists as the arena in which the gospel of Jesus Christ, the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord of all, can be proclaimed, and as source of fresh recruits for the royal priesthood of the redeemed world.”

²⁷ Simon Chan, “The Nature of the Church: The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Life,” *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 22 (January 2013), available at: <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj22/chan.html>.

statement can be taken to mean that the world is eventually gathered up in union with the Triune God, I agree. But, Chan's insistence on the church as the visible hierarchical institutions of the church make it unclear whether the world becoming the church is an eschatological hope for union between God and the whole creation, or a claim of the authority of the institutional church over all else. No matter Chan's eschatological vision, his ecclesial pneumatology represents a closed pneumatology because the Christian should only anticipate an encounter with the Spirit within the church or more specifically, the liturgy.

One could read these claims about the purpose of the world and church without necessarily also holding the same view of the Spirit's activity in the world. Chan does not. For Chan, the Spirit is best understood through the Spirit's relationship to the church: "the way to understand the Spirit's role in creation is to see it in terms of his primary role in the church. The Spirit is primarily the Spirit of the church and through and in the church creation finds its ultimate meaning and fulfillment."²⁸ Chan makes this claim more directly about the nature of the Spirit at other points:

The Spirit's work in creation cannot be interpreted as something independent of the church. Creation does not have its own autonomous purpose to which the church is called to serve; rather what God intends for creation can only be understood in terms of what He intends for the church and what the Spirit is doing in the church. Without coming to terms with the close connection between the Spirit and the church we fundamentally misinterpret the Spirit's work in creation.²⁹

So, the Spirit is best understood and perceived through what the Spirit is doing in the church. There is no generic Spirit working throughout the creation, but only the Spirit of Christ enlivening the church. No problems yet. For Chan, this then means that the church's relationship to the world and the Spirit's relationship to the world are best understood as bringing the world

²⁸ Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay in the Development of Doctrine* (Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2011), 9.

²⁹ Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 25.

into the church. In fact, the mission of the Spirit and the church insofar as it “images the Spirit” “always looks beyond itself to transform the world into the church, to call those who are not God’s people to become the people of God.”³⁰ Those who are not God’s people are relevant to the Christian only insofar as they may “become the people of God.” One can imagine Spanish priests blessing the first colonial ships to cross the Atlantic with similar words.

There are multiple ways to read a statement like this. One, which I will defend, is that the Spirit brings the world into the church in the sense that the activity of the Spirit inaugurates an eschatological reality in which the whole creation is brought into Trinitarian life. At times, Chan gets close to a reading such as this, though it functions as more of a fallback with which to respond to criticism rather than the core of his positive argument. In one instance when Chan is responding to “creation-centered Pneumatologies,” Chan points to the ecclesial elements within a notion of the Kingdom of God or communion with God.

Yet, if what the Spirit is doing in the church is a true foretaste of the new creation, advocates of creation-centered pneumatologies cannot avoid speaking of the kingdom in terms which are quite unmistakably ecclesial. Thus according to Pinnock, creation is aimed ‘at increasing levels of participation in the fellowship of love ... The Spirit aims to bring about the sabbath rest of new creation and the joys of the kingdom of God’. If the goal of creation is ‘the new humanity’ brought about by ‘Christ’s mighty acts’ through the church (the ‘new family on earth’) one cannot escape the fact that the work of the Spirit in creation and in the church is directed towards the same ultimate end, namely, communion with God. If this is so, then we cannot say ‘The church exists for the world, not for itself’; it would be more accurate to say that the church exists for the world in order to make the world the church, the universal communion of saints. Macchia, along a similar line, speaks of the kingdom of God as ‘[d]ecisively inaugurated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus’ and ‘directed toward the divine indwelling in all of creation so that all things might be conformed to Christ’s image’. Isn’t this what the church is in its final perfection?³¹

Notice here, the willingness to place in the eschaton both the perfection of the church and the eventual communion of the creation in Christ. Such a willingness, however, is not consistent

³⁰ Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 86.

³¹ Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 20.

throughout Chan's position as he insists that the church and therefore the Spirit have a necessary connection with the institutional church (especially in the liturgy).

This position seems most clear in his resistance to proposals that name the universal or cosmic reach of the Spirit's activity. Chan is consistently dismissive of Moltmann's work on the Holy Spirit, even declaring Moltmann "pretentious" for titling *The Spirit of Life with A Universal Affirmation*. It is worth noting that "universal" here is not a claim of the universality of Moltmann's pneumatology, but a claim concerning the reach of the Spirit's sovereignty as universal.³² The resistance to an open pneumatology goes further as Chan labels those Protestant ecclesiologies drawing on the work of the Spirit as gathering the church in ways that will not always map onto the institutional church as "docetic" because they assume only a spiritual body of Christ on earth rather than the physical body of Christ in the institutional church.³³ This claim only seems to harden as Chan moves from an insistence that the Spirit is exclusively understood through the institutional church to a straight forward claim about the unity of the church.

The one church is one precisely because it is united to Christ the Head by the one Spirit who indwells it, making it the one temple of the Spirit and the one body of Christ. The church is holy precisely because it is the temple indwelled by the Holy Spirit. The church is apostolic precisely because the Spirit guides it into all truth and preserves it from error by binding it diachronically to the apostles in an unbroken succession.³⁴

³² Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998), 27-8.

³³ See: Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 37-8. Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 14, 36 (below).

Protestantism has no sense of the continuation of the gospel into ecclesiology and pneumatology. When it comes to understanding the church, sociology takes over. As for the Spirit, he is seen as essentially One who helps the church to carry out some extrinsic task, even if it is conceived as a divine task, such as evangelism. If the Spirit is linked to the church in any way, it is to the invisible church, such as in the Spirit's bringing spiritual rebirth to individuals. The visible church is largely defined sociologically, while the "real" church cannot be identified with anything visible. Such an ecclesiology could only be described as docetic.

³⁴ Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 36.

Such a strong pneumatological connection to concrete ecclesial structures can create a coherent system and it has for many in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions. Whether, however, such a claim is coherent for Chan or Pentecostals is a different matter.

I am sympathetic to certain aspects of Chan's ecclesiology. However, I find three clear problems for Chan's closed pneumatology that lead me to prefer an open pneumatology like the one I defend in this chapter. First, Chan's ecclesiology is incoherent for Pentecostals. Chan defends a standard that a Pentecostal ecclesiology must be recognizable to Pentecostal experience. This is not to say that Pentecostal experience will not be changed, but that a Pentecostal ecclesiology must map onto the core of Pentecostal spirituality.³⁵ Chan's ecclesiology does not meet this standard. Consider that Chan's attachment of the Holy Spirit to the institutional church's work of the liturgy would, if nothing else, takes the Spirit as present and active in the climax of the liturgy: the celebration of the Eucharist. Within those hierarchical churches claiming an "unbroken succession" from the apostles, neither Chan nor other Pentecostals can participate in the celebration.³⁶ Put more simply, Chan's ecclesiology risks writing Pentecostals out of the church and legitimate participation in the Eucharistic meal. A Pentecostal ecclesiology should account for the realities that the church is fractured and that there is not a single church hierarchy. I sympathize with Chan's desire to connect the institutional church with a theological notion of the church, but for Pentecostals that connection cannot be so strong as to either too strongly affirm a single church at the expense of post-Reformation church's theological coherence or affirm the historical exclusion of Pentecostals from churches.

³⁵ Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 94.

³⁶ Chan is an Assemblies of God minister. The aesthetics of Catholicism and Orthodoxy are certainly appealing, while others find the hierarchical forms of power appealing. Without psychologizing Chan's attraction to Orthodox ecclesiologies, one must note that relying on Orthodox ecclesiology while institutionally located within the Assemblies of God can appear less as reflection on ecclesial commitment or experience and more as theological cosplay.

The second problem for Chan's closed pneumatology is that he overemphasizes the particular at the cost of God's sovereignty. Chan's particular ecclesiological pneumatology stems from an anxiety, held by others, that the Spirit or the church would become "watered down" or "generic." Stanley Hauerwas in one way and Robert Jenson in another have made strong cases for the importance of linguistic and theological particularity.³⁷ However, a theological case for the universality or sovereignty of the Spirit does not equate to a genericism of the Spirit. While the story of Israel and Christ's coming in first century Palestine is essential for the Christian tradition and ought to remain present in encounters with other traditions, overemphasizing the particularity of that story can leave the rest of the world or other traditions as independent spheres untouched by the sovereign Spirit of Christ. An open pneumatology differs in that it assumes the sovereignty of God over all things and interprets all things as if they are not independent from the Spirit who rose Jesus from the dead.

For Chan, the practices of the church and the ontological reality of the church have effects on the ethical output of the church. Here, the holiness of the church sets it apart from the world: "The holiness of the community of the Spirit makes the church stand out in sharp contrast to the world and its ways which elicits the world's opposition."³⁸ But what of those quite common moments when the church is a driver of evil?³⁹ When the world is more holy than the church? The third problem for Chan's closed pneumatology is its inability to account for ecclesial sin. Often accounts of the Spirit's relationship to the church that Chan would deem

³⁷ I only name Jenson in passing, but it is important to note his significant influence among Pentecostals. See: Chris E.W. Green, *The End is Music: A Companion to Robert W. Jenson's Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018).

³⁸ Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 87.

³⁹ Chan has periodic moments where he gestures toward the potential problem of baptizing all ecclesial actions in hopes of not "domesticating the Spirit's indwelling and using the Spirit to justify the institutional status quo." (Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 76.) However, he has no theological justification for backing off his pneumatological ecclesiology as articulated throughout the rest of his work. Naming a potential problem is not the same as accounting for that problem.

“generic” or “docetic” are doing work to account for theological problems, one of which is accounting for sin in Christian churches. This is more than accounting for gossip in church hallways, but a way to think theologically about the ways Christian churches have been drivers of the enslavement of African peoples, genocides of indigenous peoples, colonialism, eugenics, and anti-Jewish contempt that ultimately led to the holocaust. Questions of whether or not and if so in what manner Christian churches doing evil are the body of Christ have inspired many to create more nuanced explanations for the Spirit’s relationship to Christian churches. Chan’s ecclesiology very well could lead to a conclusion that the Spirit blessed colonialism because it was a decision of Christian churches or that the Spirit related to the German national church the same way the Spirit related to the confessing church. I do not believe Chan would hold to either of these conclusions, but his ecclesiology does not begin to consider them as theological problems.

That Chan does not account for or show concern for the evil perpetrated by Christian churches is a theological deficiency. Chan rightly invites Pentecostals to think more seriously about the identity of the church, but his failure to think more seriously about the church’s relationship to the world cause him to miss larger systems which form the scaffolding of an interdependent relationship between the church and the world. Consider that Chan, himself weary of individualism in the church, limits his consideration of those things “wrong” with the church or world to problems of individual behavior. He deploys the word “consumerism” to describe Christian behavior that mirrors the markets without ever considering capitalism’s effects in shaping Christians or vice versa. HIV/AIDS, Chan insists, must be taken as a problem of human sin and personal responsibility, and not a “natural evil,” a public health crisis, the result of

false sexual education, or the result of exclusion and marginalization of queer people.⁴⁰ Chan disparages and questions what he calls “issue-related spiritual movements,” which include feminist theologies, liberation theologies, and egalitarianism more generally.⁴¹ At times he is right to question the universalization of Western notions of egalitarianism and feminism, including a note that feminist theologies must be contextualized if they are to be successful. With this in mind, however, the ecclesial-centric theology Chan constructs leaves him unable to truly encounter those voices, even those voices within the church, who would criticize the hierarchical institutions of the church and further unconcerned with domination and oppression as they manifest in the world or the church. Such is not a collapse of theology into ethics, but a charge that Chan’s theology creates perils for those seeking to follow Jesus. But what alternatively does a viable open pneumatology look like?

§4.2 – The Cosmic Spirit

Unlike Chan’s closed pneumatology, an open pneumatology is not forced to choose between the Spirit’s role in the church and the Spirit’s role in creation. As such, my account of an open pneumatology insists that the Spirit of Christ is at once the cosmic Spirit of the of the Triune God. Put differently, a properly trinitarian understanding of the Spirit has an account of the Spirit in creation, redemption, and consummation. There is not an activity of God in which one or two of the three persons act while the third sits out. In fact, the creative and redemptive are so intertwined that Steven Studebaker, a Pentecostal theologian, goes as far as to say, “The

⁴⁰ Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998), 42-3.

⁴¹ Chan, *Spiritual Theology*, 30-32.

Spirit never acts but to facilitate the participation of creation in the trinitarian life of God.”⁴² The Spirit is both creative and redemptive through the manners in which she wraps the world into the trinitarian life. Many, but not all, Pentecostal theologians have articulated similar visions that place the Spirit within a cosmological story of God’s creative and redemptive acts. As such, this section offers a pneumatological account of creation that integrates the acts of creation with redemption to demonstrate that no matter how narrow one understands the class of the redeemed to be, there is no part of creation outside of the potential activity and presence of the Holy Spirit. It is that Spirit who sustains the very essence of life, connecting all created things to the love which stirs Trinitarian life.⁴³ Later sections will engage what this means for the identity of the church, but for now I will affirm that while the Spirit undoubtedly does gather the church and relates to the church in a distinct manner, that distinct relationship does not exclude the Spirit’s other modes of relating nor the Spirit’s activity outside of the church.

Open pneumatologies better account for the Spirit’s activity in creation, as an open pneumatology does not limit the creative redemptive act of the Spirit to the church. The Spirit is consistently a creative force in both the Hebrew Bible and the Christian New Testament. The Spirit appears as a “wind from God” that “swept over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2) and the “breath of life” (Gen. 2:7) which God breaths into “man.”⁴⁴ Each time bringing form to the deep

⁴² Steven M. Studebaker, *A Pentecostal Political Theology for American Renewal: Spirit of the Kingdoms, Citizens of the Cities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 151.

⁴³ Certain Reformed circles might call what I name an open pneumatology as “common grace.” I do not find the language of “common grace” necessarily objectionable, though I do find it limited. Common grace does not give an account of the Spirit and therefore cannot shape the conversation around how Pentecostals relate to and anticipate the presence of the Spirit. Further, common grace is typically a mere observation that non-Christians seem to experience good things, but rarely takes the theological step to consider what that means for how Christians understand God.

⁴⁴ There are varying interpretations of “wind” in these passages, with some opting to interpret the Hebrew *ruach* as a natural wind rather than the Spirit of God. I am not as interested in finding a singular meaning for such a word as I am in the traditions of Trinitarian thought that identify the winds of creation with the creative act of the Spirit. For a Christian comparative approach to *ruach*, see: Rubén Rosario-Rodríguez, *Dogmatics After Babel: Beyond Theologies of Word and Culture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John-Knox Press, 2018), 148-156.

and life to matter through creative generation which sustains life. So close is the relationship between the Spirit and life itself that the Psalmist writes: “When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground...” (Ps. 104:30). This creative identity does not end with the initial creative act, rather creation continues through the sustaining and redemptive power of God. Foreshadowing Christ’s resurrection and the resurrection of all those in Christ, Ezekiel testifies to the Spirit leading him through a valley of dry bones. Here, death has overtaken the bones of an army and the Spirit asks “Mortal, can these bones live?” (Ezek. 37:3). Those things such as healing or resurrection of the dead, both assumed among Pentecostals to be ongoing activities of the Spirit, are themselves the ongoing activity of creation in which the Spirit brings forth life where there was death.

As an agent of creation, the Spirit plays an intimate role in the redemption of the world and the new creation. The words of the prophet Joel are some of the more important for Pentecostal communities, as they are the point of reference for interpreting the Spirit in Acts. In fact, the Pentecostal historian Cecil M. Robeck goes as far as to say that Pentecostal ecclesiologies “will be compatible with the prophetic promise of Joel.”⁴⁵ For Joel, the Spirit is an agent of restoration to Israel and it is alongside that promise of restoration that the prophet says “I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.” (Joel 2:28-9). While Pentecostals often focus on the charismatic aspects of Joel’s prophecy, Studebaker points to the worldly nature of the Spirit’s restoration. In the preceding verses, “the Spirit restores the barren fields to fertility. The vines

⁴⁵ Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., “Pentecostal Ecclesiologies,” in *T&T Clark Companion to Ecclesiology*, ed. Kimlyn J. Bender and D. Stephen Long (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020), *passim*. As cited in Frank Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church: A Dogmatic Inquiry* (New York: T&T Clark, 2020), 1.

yield vats brimming with wine. The orchards abound with fruit. ... Joel's vision of redemption is not otherworldly. The Spirit renews life in this world."⁴⁶ Redemption is itself a creative act in which the Spirit provides the people of God with the things that bring life. Redemption through the power of the Spirit brings resurrection to that which has decayed, offering new life where there is death.

Redemption and creation are made complete in Christ, through the power of the Spirit. The Spirit hovers over the waters of Mary's womb forming the new creation, making a way for the Word to enter the world. As prophesied by John the Baptist, Jesus would become one who is both baptized and baptizes in the Spirit.⁴⁷ Frank Macchia connects Jesus's baptism and the descent of a dove in Luke's baptism scene to a "new creation motif" where Luke "hark[ens] back to the brooding of the Spirit upon the deep at creation, or the sign of new creation at the time of Noah."⁴⁸ For Macchia, this baptism is "both an event and a journey that will find fulfillment in his resurrection."⁴⁹ As the Spirit raises Jesus from the dead, his resurrection becomes the first

⁴⁶ Stuebaker, *A Pentecostal Political Theology*, 148. Luke Bretherton takes issue with Stuebaker's use of "restoration" and continuity between creation and new creation, rather than emphasizing the "newness" of creation. Bretherton argues that this "lack of sense of the need for the conversion of cultural and political processes generates an at-times too quick identification of large-scale, state-centric projects of beneficence—notably 'American global leadership'—as works of the Spirit." [see: Luke Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), 131 n. 37.] Bretherton is right to take issue with Stuebaker's political conclusions, though, I see Stuebaker's misidentification as a product of lackluster scholarship on US state action and a failure to consider US state action from a perspective other than his own. In this way, Stuebaker's identification of American global leadership as a work of the Spirit is a problem of whiteness more akin to those Pentecostals comparing policing activity to the activity of Christ cited in chapter three. Stuebaker's insistence on continuity between creation and new-creation as well as the theme of restoration are apt corrections to Pentecostal eschatologies that wait for a coming rapture and see no value in political action or bettering the world; here Stuebaker departs from those White Pentecostals in chapter three who saw no value in bettering the world.

⁴⁷ Frank Macchia has more than any other Pentecostal developed the theological metaphor of baptism in the Holy Spirit. His earlier *Baptized in the Spirit* speculated on categories of systematic theology and he has later developed those categories into book length projects. For Macchia's early work, see: Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006). For a book length treatment of Christology through the lens of Spirit baptism, see: Frank Macchia, *Christ the Spirit Baptizer: Christology in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans's Publishing Co., 2018).

⁴⁸ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 23-4.

⁴⁹ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 24.

fruits of the new creation, where Christ's resurrection and ascension to sit at the right hand of the Father demonstrate the eschatological nature of Spirit baptism. Pentecost, where Christ pours out his Spirit on all flesh, then, becomes not merely an instrumental power for evangelism nor merely a new identity as church, but an eschatological event that will be fulfilled at the resurrection of the dead and full communion between God and humanity. Notice here the continuity between the Spirit's act in creation, Christ's ministry, Spirit baptism, and the resurrection of the dead.

The Spirit forms and redeems the creation in material ways that cannot be separated from the manner in which the Spirit communicates the love of God to creation. This communication is not a one way message, but an act of uniting love that brings the creation into the life of God. Frank Macchia describes this role of the Spirit as part of the Spirit's creative activity: "At the creation, God speaks and the Spirit hovers (Gen. 1:lf). The Spirit is the divine agent who enables creation to receive the divine word, making it possible for communion between God and humanity to exist."⁵⁰ If those holding a closed pneumatology are correct, this would then mean that communion between God and humanity is limited to the church – whatever "the church" may mean to the one using it – because that is the exclusive site of the Spirit's activity. I believe this to be out of step with both many Pentecostal intuitions which are habituated to read all of reality through the lens of the Spirit's activity. Instead, I agree with Danielle Augustine who characterizes this activity of the Spirit within a "cosmopolitan" vision of humanity where "humanity is created to move in and with the Spirit and to be an in-Spirit-ed, pneumatized sanctuary of God's breath (his living and enlivening presence) within the cosmos (Gen 2:7)."⁵¹

⁵⁰ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 16.

⁵¹ Danielle Augustine, *The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), 139.

While I call Augustine’s understanding of the Spirit’s relationship to humanity writ large “cosmopolitan,” it would be wrong to characterize Augustine’s argument as a modern cosmopolitan invention. In fact, Maximus the Confessor voices a similar understanding of God’s relationship to humanity, “God, full beyond all fulness, brought creatures into being...so that they might participate in Him in proportion to their capacity and that He Himself might rejoice in His works...through seeing them joyful and ever filled to overflowing with His inexhaustible gifts.”⁵² Life itself is a gift of God and there does not exist life in the creation that is not sustained by the Spirit of Christ. Such life, then, is sustained in freedom to participate in the Spirit of God who is the love that draws the creation into God.

A pneumatology that accounts for the Spirit in creation and a pneumatology that accounts for the Spirit in the church are not mutually exclusive. Instead, both creative and redemptive qualities interpenetrate the Spirit’s activity as the Spirit interpenetrates the whole of the creation in creative and redemptive ways. Given that universal creative and redemptive activity, how can Pentecostals understand their relationships to the world or that which is taken as beyond the boundaries of the church? The quick answer is just like everything else: as potential objects of the Spirit’s creative redemptive activity. The next section offers a more detailed answer.

§4.3 – *The Fructifying Spirit*

In addition to the Spirit’s continuity through creation, redemption, and consummation, the Spirit also relates to the creation and nature in ways that make a closed pneumatology implausible. Consider that a closed pneumatology assumes a stagnant or ossified manner in

⁵² Maximus the Confessor, “Third Century of Love,” Trans. G. Palmer, P. Sherrard, and K. Ware, in *The Philokalia*, vol. 2 (London: Faber & Faber, 1982, section 46. As quoted in, Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity*, 36.

which the Holy Spirit relates to the world or particular people in the world. Further, this assumption undergirds a singular manner in which Pentecostals relate to “others” or those considered beyond the activity of the Spirit, namely through proselytism and moral oversight. But these ways of thinking about human relationships and the way the Spirit relates to the world create an all-too-small picture of the Spirit’s activity. Without negating the continuity of the Spirit’s activity, an open pneumatology also accounts for the ways that the Spirit acts in surprising and shocking ways, fructifying nature and bringing forth more life rather than negating it.

Luke Bretherton identifies Pentecostal political theology as including the “resignification of reality” and cultural practices under the presence and activity of the Spirit. This process of resignification, though, only occurs through the activity of the Spirit in resting on or within both cultural productions and the whole of reality, enabling “frail flesh to both be itself and become something more than itself.”⁵³ In doing so, the Spirit comes alongside reality and “fructifies” both nature and creation to “generate an unexpected excess.”⁵⁴ Nature is not erased or overcome, but revealed to be more than it seems. A tree that has ceased to bear fruit coming to bear fruit in abundance does not lose its nature but has more drawn from it. A table that once merely propped up objects can become, as a table, a meeting place or a site of peacemaking when the Spirit rests upon it. A crucified messiah can become the resurrected Lord.

Eugene Rogers points to the annunciation to demonstrate the Spirit’s activity in excess. It is in Mary’s womb that the Spirit “takes the lost cause of human flesh to be her own cause, her own resting place; the place of wastage to be the site of winning, the flesh unseated to become

⁵³ Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life*, 133.

⁵⁴ Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life*, 129.

the throne of grace.”⁵⁵ The Spirit comes alongside nature and the flesh creating an excess from that flesh; an excess that does not override nature but is drawn out of nature making it more than it was or more than it had previously been imagined. There is nothing beyond the activity of the Spirit, as drawing the excess from nature seems to be the manner in which God chooses to save: “even the leper can show God’s consummating glory.”⁵⁶

Rogers points out that this excess, or the Spirit’s working alongside and through existing nature to create an excess of salvation is the very working of the salvation of the Gentiles. In analyzing Romanos the Melodist, Rogers also sees this same point in Paul’s account of the inclusion of the Gentiles in that it is the excess that is the point. The Gentiles do not become Jews, but they are invited alongside the Jewish people to follow the activity of the Spirit. In doing so, the excess of the Spirit makes visible a different way for humans to relate. This is the very excess of God’s love coming alongside the physical, the natural, and the existing as “a companion to nature, befriending, restoring, consummating, and exceeding it.”⁵⁷ The Spirit is not an enforcer of a rigid grid of creation, but is the giver of life who draws abundance from scarcity and new life from death.

This understanding of a Spirit who surprises in the excess bears similarities to the ethical methodology of Nigerian Pentecostal Nimi Wariboko. Wariboko writes *The Pentecostal Principle* as an engagement and expansion on Paul Tillich’s “Protestant principle,” which is a drive for reformation of Catholic substance and largely a negative or critical project. *The Pentecostal Principle* builds on the reforming energy of the Protestant principle, but with an eye

⁵⁵ Eugene F. Rogers Jr., *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources outside the Modern West* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005), 103.

⁵⁶ Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 103.

⁵⁷ Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 103.

toward creative potentials.⁵⁸ The spirit of Pentecostalism is the human capacity to begin again, to create anew, and therefore assumes an oppositional stance toward social structures claiming any sense of ultimacy. Wariboko sees in the global Pentecostal movement an emphasis on natality, which he undergirds with an understanding of nature as always emergent where no thing is taken as having reached its destiny.⁵⁹ I will have much more to say about Wariboko's ethical methodology as it flows from the newness brought forth by the Spirit, but for now, suffice it to say that human relations are always potentially the object of the Spirit's new beginnings or drawing out of excess. Closed pneumatologies too firmly assume a relationship between the church and world or the Spirit and the world, whereas an open pneumatology identifies even those relations as potential objects for the Spirit to come alongside and bring forth newness not previously imagined. Built into the church's relationship to the world is an anticipation the Spirit might bring forth more from that relationship than previously imagined.

Part of the relationship between a closed pneumatology and ethical exceptionalism, which I outline in Part One, is the way a closed pneumatology makes it difficult to account for honorable behavior, virtue, or beauty outside of the church. An open pneumatology fundamentally changes that dynamic because the Spirit penetrates all things and respects no boundary as it rests on people, cultures, objects, and symbols. I now turn more directly to applying the last two sections to understanding those who might otherwise be held in contempt.

⁵⁸ Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012), 8-14.

⁵⁹ Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 131 and ch. 2. I do not necessarily follow Wariboko in the language of emergence because it can imply a procrustean model of becoming or progress built into nature. Instead, I prioritize and open ended relationship between the Spirit and creation in which the Spirit rests on the creation and brings forth life giving excess.

§4.4 – On the Fruits of the Spirit in the Other

Acts 10 describes a Roman Centurion outside of the covenant people of God as having some merit of righteousness. But, what does it mean, theologically, to account for righteousness where one might not expect it? This is the very question that my notion of ethical commonality is meant to answer. Theologies of encounter begin from the premise that “every good and perfect gift is from above.”⁶⁰ There is a givenness to creation and the goodness of the creation so given, from a Christian perspective, has a theological source. Pentecostals are more inclined to understand God’s relationship to the world via the activity and presence of the Holy Spirit, through which the whole of life is sustained and the whole of the creation is wrapped up into the loving relations of the triune God (§4.2). While simultaneously a claim about the character of God, I also hang my account of ethical commonality on the sovereignty of God. Briefly put, my position is that if we rightly understand the fruits of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, then we can also say that the only source of those fruits is the activity and/or presence of the Spirit of Christ. Luke Bretherton makes a similar argument concerning the relationship of Pentecostals to the world; he states: “even worldly forms of life contain the possibility of the Spirit’s natality—resurrection joy and the birthing of new ways of being alive.”⁶¹ The previous sections set the pneumatological foundation for this position by placing the activity of the Spirit in cosmic perspective rather than limiting that activity to existing ecclesial communities or individual experiences. So, when one

⁶⁰ James 1:17. This starting point has obvious affinities with Kathryn Tanner’s approach both by starting with an understanding of God as the giver of all good gifts. Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 1. While seeking to make my case most directly from Pentecostal sources, and therefore not directly engaging Tanner, I also hold strong affinities with Tanner’s understanding of God’s transcendence and the resulting non-competitive relations between humans and God. See: Kathryn Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1988).

⁶¹ Luke Bretherton, *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), 119.

sees goodness in the world, it is a limited fruit of the Spirit born out of participation in the Spirit of the Triune God.

Such a position, so far, may well seem obvious. However, when cast against the pervasiveness of Pentecostal contempt, the reach of ethical commonality becomes more clear. Ethical exceptionalism seeks to demonstrate the reception of the Spirit through both the distinctive nature of a community who receives the Spirit and the depravity of those outside of the community and thus marked only by the absence of the Spirit. Often demonstrations of the depravity of those outside of the community come in the form of stereotypes or demonization as seen in among White suburban Pentecostals in chapter three. Additionally, ethical exceptionalism can shape the encounter with difference by facilitating an apologetic lens through which all difference must be filtered. This lens takes that which is good or beautiful on its face and deems it *actually* sinful, because though appearing to be good it is not oriented to or in reference to the glory of God.⁶² As an alternative, ethical commonality begins the encounter with difference from a curiosity and openness to the activity of God.

Encounters with Muslims are a good example of the different posture that an ethical commonality facilitates.⁶³ Often Pentecostals enter encounters with Muslims in a cloud of suspicion based on inherited islamophobia, social competition, and/or anxieties about comparative proselytism. As a result, Muslims are often received with distrust if not outright contempt. Ethical commonality offers an avenue for Christians to understand Muslim actions as

⁶² John Milbank, a renowned contemnor, famously interprets Augustine to say this of non-Christian politics, stating: “The realm of the merely practical, cut off from the ecclesial, is quite simply a realm of sin.” [John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* 2nd ed. (Maldan, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 411.] This view was corrected by later Augustinians. See: Robert A. Markus, *Christianity and the Secular* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006) and Eric Gregory, *Politics and the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

⁶³ I choose Muslims as a brief example because as a non-Christian religious group often held in contempt by Pentecostals, encounters with Muslims force questions of exclusivity or “closedness” that will not often be admitted when asking forms of difference that are not understood as religious difference.

limited and genuine fruits of the Spirit. This means encounter occurs on Christian terms for the Christian, but does not bend Muslim neighbors into something they are not nor predicate legitimate encounter on eventual conversion. So, when my Muslim friends who do not profess a belief in the resurrection of Christ, demonstrate love, joy, peace, or any of the other fruits of the Spirit, ethical commonality undergirded by an open pneumatology would understand them as participating in the Spirit of Christ. This is not a generic “spirit” or “neutral” ground from which to understand the ethical, rather this is a reference to the Christian notion of the Holy Spirit that raised Jesus Christ, the first-century Jew from Nazareth, from the dead. My claim is not a soteriological one, rather my claim is an insistence on the sovereignty of the Triune God that orders the whole of the cosmos. Certainly, my Muslim friends, who themselves do not hold to the resurrection of Christ, will disagree with this characterization of their kindness, but the characterization is not for them. Instead, the characterization is intended for Christian communities seeking to navigate encounters with difference given the particularity of their traditions and the insistence on a sovereign God therein.

This position will, for many, bring to mind Karl Rahner’s “anonymous Christians.”⁶⁴ My position shares a spirit of inclusivism with Rahner’s, but I see key differences. In naming others as “anonymous Christians” Rahner still has a subtle proselytizing energy; others must be more proximate to Christianity in order to be understood theologically. Of course, Rahner is answering a soteriological question that I am not taking up directly, rather my inquiry concerns how Christians might receive others during the world. My position holds that non-Christians are just

⁶⁴ Karl Rahner, “Anonymous Christians,” *Theological Investigations*, tr. David Bourke (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 396. Of course there is a much larger body of literature concerning religious pluralism. For two contrasting collection of essays on this question, see: John Hick and Paul Knitter, eds., *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), and Gavin D’Costa ed. *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990). Additionally, see: S. Mark Heim, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995); Jacques Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Pluralism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001).

that: not Christian. My Muslim friend is Muslim, a participant in a different tradition. Perhaps they will one day be gathered before the Lord, wrapped into the love of the Triune God, and in that eschatological sense be part of the *ecclesia*. But during the world, as I encounter them now, they are not part of my church. As such, ethical commonality insists that my friends outside of the church produce truth, goodness, beauty, and joy. Stated differently, my friends outside of the church participate in truth, goodness, beauty, and joy; they participate in the Spirit of Christ and remain not Christian.⁶⁵

If the Spirit of God is active throughout the whole of creation, then there exists a question of the manner of that activity. There is one scenario where one might take the Holy Spirit as universally active, though active in one way among certain groups and active another for those outside of that group. One common way this occurs is to see the Spirit's role outside of particular communities as preparing the way for eventual conversion. Such a view sees difference as a site for encountering God in the work of proselytism, but not necessarily in difference itself. Ethical commonality holds difference *qua* difference as a potential site of encountering God with no necessary connection to proselytism. Wolfgang Vondey sees this potential for encounter as an extension of the act of creation and the sustaining of that creation (Ps. 33:6; Job 27:3; 33:4; 34:14-15).⁶⁶ Sustaining the creation, though, is not mere maintenance but instead is intimately connected to the sanctification of the cosmos, where the whole of the creation is wrapped into Triune life. Vondey expands Pentecostal emphasis on holiness into a cosmological and metaphysical concern, where "creation [is] to be perceived as a unity created and sustained by

⁶⁵ This position raises the question as to whether those outside of the church should come into the church? To this, my answer is that one should only come into the church if God calls them to do so.

⁶⁶ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 158.

the Holy Spirit and intended for the participation of the whole cosmos in the glory and holiness of God.”⁶⁷

In expanding the categories of holiness and sanctification to a cosmological scale, Vondey fundamentally alters the manner in which humans participate in the Spirit and experience sanctification. Rather than a series of changes to human dispositions or volitional outcomes, humans are only part of a larger story in which God creates, sustains, rescues, and makes whole the entire creation. Vondey states it well, “Human beings participate in God’s sanctifying work not merely as human (anthropocentrically) but synergistically as spiritual, physical, social, and cultural embodied creatures who exist in interdependence with the materiality of creation.”⁶⁸ Pentecost is an essential moment in this story of redemption, where the Spirit is poured out on all flesh and the whole of the cosmos is baptized in the Spirit marking “the increase of the mutual participation of creation in the Spirit and of the Spirit in creation for the purposes of cosmic redemption.”⁶⁹ This is not to say that all of creation participates with the same “intensity” at any given time, but to say that no group or activity is de facto beyond the sanctifying activity of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁰

Chapter Two demonstrated how theological ideas can inform a politics of separation and anxieties of otherness. The theology I articulate here makes a different form of politics rooted in encounter and cooperation possible without also limiting that to proselytism. Christians ought to look for where the Spirit is active in the world and then join in that activity. Steven Jack Land sees this activity of the Spirit “in all creation” as grounds for then working “to make structures

⁶⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 161.

⁶⁸ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 161.

⁶⁹ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 164.

⁷⁰ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 165.

more adequate to the life as righteously ordered and intended by God.”⁷¹ Meaning, “discerning action of the church can bear witness to and participate in those activities which more nearly embody righteousness, dignity, and love for people.”⁷² Eldin Villafañe makes a similar claim in calling the church to see and participate in the work of the Spirit in the world. He states:

We are called to discern the Spirit’s work not only in the church, the community of the Spirit, but in the world. Beyond the Spirit’s work in the world of convicting of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-11), we must see the Spirit’s role as *To Katechon* and *Parakletos* wherever we see goodness, love, peace and justice exercised in God’s creation - genuine sighs and signs of the Reign of God.⁷³

Certainly, Christians may well find ourselves with a message of liberation that puts us in opposition to the world. What can be almost certain, though, is that such a liberating message will also put Christians in opposition to other Christians and therefore in need of a more nuanced understanding of the Spirit’s activity. Frank Macchia echoes Villafañe’s desire to read “goodness, love, peace, and justice” in the world as the “sighs and signs of the Reign of God.” For Macchia, this means that the church ought to adopt a listening posture because, “God is involved by the liberating Spirit in the world beyond the ministry of the church too. And there are times when the church may prove to be less enlightened than movements in the world may be with regard to issues of mutual regard and social justice.”⁷⁴ This openness to the Spirit’s activity in the world coupled with the humility to admit when Christians do not participate in the liberating Spirit with the same intensity as other movements or groups beyond one’s community is the very substance of an ethical commonality which can drive a Pentecostal politics of encounter.

⁷¹ Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), 206.

⁷² Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 206.

⁷³ Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1992), 191.

⁷⁴ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 208-9.

Ethical commonality extends to other religions, yes.⁷⁵ But collapsing a Pentecostal politics of encounter to a category such as “inter-religious dialogue” would seriously diminish the scope of the argument I am making. Rather, ethical commonality extends to those whom one finds dangerous, grotesque, disgusting, and even sinful. Perhaps most directly, ethical commonality means taking seriously the obligation of encountering those who are excluded and potentially the objects of contempt. But what does all of this mean for Christian life and Christian identity? How do Christians understand ourselves as a tradition of particularity with such universal claims? The next section considers the shape of Christian life and mission when a desire for encounter is prioritized as the primary approach to difference.

§5 – Mission as Encounter

One potential charge against the theology of encounter I articulate here, is that such a universalization of the Spirit risks erasing the particularity of the Gospel. Put differently, a universal Spirit might risk erasing the identity of the church and the particular practices of the church as efficacious means of encountering God. If I can encounter the Spirit of God in my neighbor, who does not receive the eucharist or confess their sins, then why would I continue in my own Christian practices? Why would I continue in my own missionary work (here conceived as proselytism)? Such a charge is often deeply felt and ought to be taken seriously. Here, I offer a brief account of the church as a witnessing, confessing, and encountering community of those called by God to follow Christ. The word “missionary” itself does not appear in Christian scripture, so I am comfortable taking license to reconceive it beyond mere proselytism. These

⁷⁵ Macchia makes this claim in reference to Amos Yong’s work in *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 209. Amos Yong makes this argument throughout multiple works. For one example, see: Amos Yong, *Hospitality & the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 159.

three descriptions of the church do not exhaust the church's mission, but they offer clear evidence for understanding what it might mean to take Christian life as mission within a theology of encounter.

§5.1 – The Witnessing Church

The church is a community of those called to witness to the resurrection of the Son of God and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but that call to witness does not encompass the extent of resurrection or baptism in the Holy Spirit. Put differently, the church is a community of those called to point to a reality larger than themselves. I agree with Simon Chan that the church is not an instrumental phenomenon, but an ontological reality. The elect, called by God, are marked by the Spirit of Christ and experience a unique relationship to the Holy Spirit; “unique” here should be understood as distinct from an exclusive relationship. Drawing this distinction sets the Spirit's relationship to the church within a larger frame, which I have characterized as the cosmological role of the Spirit. Many Pentecostals have articulated a larger frame for the Spirit's activity into which the Spirit's activity within the church fits. Frank Macchia is one such theologian who identifies baptism in the Holy Spirit as the organizing principle for Christian theology, where baptism in the Holy Spirit is an eschatological reality into which charismatic and missiological elements of the church are integrated.⁷⁶

Doctrinal debates over the baptism in the Holy Spirit have focused on questions of Christian initiation, with evangelicals holding that the baptism occurs at Christian initiation, and questions of separation and subsequence, with classical Pentecostal denominations, such as the Assemblies of God, holding that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience separate and

⁷⁶ Christopher A. Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 69-70.

subsequent to salvation. For classical Pentecostals, baptism in the Holy Spirit, while not immediately connected to salvation, was an experience initially evidenced by speaking in tongues with effects of empowerment for missions. Macchia rightly finds these formulations woefully anemic. For Macchia, the metaphor of Spirit baptism is the “crown jewel” of Pentecostal theology and serves as the organizing principle for systematic theology as a whole.

Unlike traditional doctrinal debates over baptism in the Holy Spirit, Macchia insists that Spirit baptism be seen in eschatological perspective. Which is to say, that Christ as the model of the one who is baptized in the Spirit and the one who baptizes in the Spirit shows the eschatological end of Spirit baptism: the defeat of death in resurrection, “when mortality is “swallowed up by life” in the coming fullness of the kingdom of God (2 Cor. 5:4).”⁷⁷ Spirit baptism is the larger “more encompassing reality” into which initiation, water baptism, and faith all occur.⁷⁸ With this in mind, then, the identity of the church happens within a larger reality of Spirit baptism, which is neither fulfilled nor complete in the gathering of the church. Rather, the church exists within the activity of the Spirit and lives as those who are marked by the Spirit of Christ to bear witness to the resurrection of the Son of God. Bearing witness does not imply an instrumental understanding of the church where bearing witness is mere proselytism, in fact, bearing witness, hopefully, may never reflect the commercialized forms of proselytism that are common among Pentecostals. Rather, the witnessing church is an ontological statement, where the mission of the church “is not just something we do; it is what we are.”⁷⁹

If the church is comprised of those who witness to the resurrection of Christ, through both word and deed, then one might ask what then we are to make of the claim that the church is

⁷⁷ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 12. For Macchia’s articulation of a Spirit Christology, see: Frank Macchia, *Jesus the Spirit Baptizer: Christology in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2018).

⁷⁸ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 12.

⁷⁹ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 205.

Christ's body on earth. Remember, Chan deems those ecclesiologies which separate the institutional church from the body of Christ as "docetic." Macchia is helpful here, again.

Baptized in the Spirit, Christ is the faithful witness for all time but his witness is integral to the drama of redemption, the living gospel that represents the very substance of the church's faith. Our witness is not integral to the Word of the Father and the witness of the Spirit in this way. The Spirit of prophecy thus "bears testimony to Jesus" and not to us. His mediation is internal or essential to the gospel, ours is external and nonessential. He brings atonement, we don't; he imparts the Spirit, we can't. As St. Augustine wrote of Christ the Spirit Baptizer, "None of his disciples ever gave the Holy Spirit; they prayed that he might come upon those on whom they laid hands." Though Jesus received the Spirit as a man, Augustine adds, "he poured it out as God." The only way to God is through God. Christ's mediation is integral or essential to the divine self-giving, ours isn't. Christ's incarnation is unique in part because it identifies him with the divine Son and makes him alone essential to the impartation of the Spirit. It is thus misleading to speak of the church as the extension of the incarnation, perhaps only as analogous to it.⁸⁰

There exists an essential distinction between the church's participation in the Spirit and Christ's participation in the Spirit in that the Spirit bears witness to Christ and not the church. Scripture testifies to no apostle giving the Spirit, but only praying that the Spirit would come. While the church participates in the life of the Spirit and bears an analogical relationship to the body of Christ, it is more appropriate to see the church as an extension of Christ's anointing than the incarnation.⁸¹ To make the error of over associating the church with the body of Christ would be to create a form of adoptionism, where the church is adopted into the eternal word.⁸²

The practices of the church, then, become a site for participation in the activity of the Spirit, not because of some necessary relationship between the Spirit and every ecclesial institution that dispenses sacraments, but because "God freely dwells among us and acts through

⁸⁰ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 166.

⁸¹ Macchia quotes Clark Pinnock on this point, "Pinnock has it right again: 'The church is an extension, not so much of the incarnation as of the anointing of Jesus. Jesus is the prototype of the church, which now receives its own baptism in the Spirit.' in Macchia, *Jesus the Spirit-Baptizer*, 166.

⁸² Participation or incorporation would be distinct from adoption here, because they are better able to maintain a distinction between the incarnate Logos and those wrapped into triune life by the Spirit. Certainly, adoption is a metaphor in Scripture to understand a relationship to God, but this does not then imply that Christ was adopted into the Godhead, nor that the church as the body of Christ is adopted as the Logos.

our ‘institutions’ of proclamation, sacraments, and gifted ministries.”⁸³ More properly, then, the church exists in the larger reality of Spirit baptism, and thus bears continuity within that reality. As a body bearing witness to the resurrection of the Son of God, there exists continuity of confession and practices through which the Spirit encounters the church.⁸⁴ As a community, then, that participates in the activity of the Spirit and is therefore caught up proleptically in the life of the Triune God, the church seeks to embrace and encounter others in a way that wraps them into the reality of love that defines the church, even when those others are not fully incorporated into the church.⁸⁵

§5.2 – The Confessing Church

Theologies of encounter better equip the church to live into its identity as a confessing community, rather than a community that postures its distinctiveness or holiness. While ethical commonality begins to take seriously the potential for encountering the activity of the Spirit in that which is beyond ecclesial communities or even that which is strange within those communities, the other side of ethical commonality marks a more serious posture toward sin and absence of the Spirit within ecclesial communities or ourselves. That a group is Christian does not then necessarily mean that the group is correct or participating in the liberating activity of the Spirit. At times, Christian churches do participate in the activity of the Spirit in limited ways. At other times, Christian churches are sites of great sin and abuse that is then camouflaged by claims of the Spirit’s activity within a community and resulting authority of leaders within the community. Ethical commonality while facilitating an encounter with difference also facilitates a

⁸³ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 163.

⁸⁴ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 163.

⁸⁵ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 13.

more honest encounter with one's own communities and even the self. In doing so, those seeking to walk with the Spirit can walk the road of repentance and come to know God as one who dwells among the marginalized rather than the powerful.

Theologies of encounter better equip the church to confess sin rather than defend or avoid it. It is uncontroversial to claim that Christians sin. It is similarly uncontroversial to claim that ecclesial hierarchies are often complicit in sin or perpetrate sin more directly. However, the type of pneumatological reflection I am suggesting begs the question as to how Christians can best understand the presence and activity of the Spirit in those moments.

Consider, as an example, the case of the colonial encounter from the perspective of American Indian scholar George Tinker. For Native Americans, the coming of Christianity also meant the coming of White violence in the form of deceit, theft, and genocide. In reflecting on this horror, it is worth considering how to think of God in relation to Christian violence. A closed pneumatology would attach the activity of the Spirit to those agents working on behalf of the institutional church. The Spirit's attachment to the institutional church could include the Spirit moving to convict genocidal Christians of their sins or the Spirit empowering their violence—many Christians have believed the latter for centuries. In either case, Tinker identifies the shared absurdity of both claims as central to American Indian reckoning with the gospel message and characterizes the grotesque theology behind the assertion: “God’s love (in the Jesus event) was denied Indian peoples until God, in God’s graciousness, sent White people to kill us, lie to us, steal our land, and proclaim the saving gospel to us.”⁸⁶

Some might respond that a closed pneumatology can account for because those committing the violence act outside of the church when they sin. This response commits a “no

⁸⁶ George E. “Tink” Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 132. As quoted in Medina, *Christianity, Empire and the Spirit*, 322.

true Scotsman” fallacy in its understanding of the church. Whether it be genocidal colonizers, Nazis, or the Klan, this response would hold to a closed pneumatology, but redefine the boundaries of the community to exclude the sinful: no *true* Christian would execute these horrific actions. Such an approach is convenient and certainly makes reckoning with the presence of ecclesial sin far easier because one can merely condemn the sin and claim it as a departure from the church rather than a product of the church. The convenience of this answer should trouble those interested in a life of confession and repentance, because it never asks how or why the church regularly creates anti-Semites, White supremacists, or sex abusers. I too hold that colonizers are not participating in the Spirit, but they were certainly participating in the church and produced by the church. The Christian tradition is much broader than just those moments of participation in the Spirit of Christ.⁸⁷ Iberian Catholicism was particularly blood thirsty and certainly distinct from, say, Coptic Christianity, but it was and is still one branch of the same tradition. Relying on a no true Scotsman fallacy both abdicates the Christian task of discerning the presence of the Spirit in our own traditions and abandons the Christian life of confession.

Ethical commonality, here, opens different possibilities for understanding God in the colonial encounter. Taking seriously the colonial encounter as a site of grave evil perpetrated by Christians who do not cease to be Christians when they sin, opens the possibility to then ask whom does the Comforter comfort? To whom does the Spirit minister when Christians slaughter others? An open pneumatology better allows for the Spirit’s activity beyond the church prior to and during colonial violence. Ethical commonality, then, creates the possibility to both name evil as evil and see resistance to evil as a genuine participation in the activity of the Spirit, even with

⁸⁷ One example of a thinker both identifying the Christian roots of racialized thinking and drawing on the Christian tradition in other ways to correct that thought is J. Kameron Carter’s *Race: A Theological Account* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

others are resisting evil done by Christians. Néstor Medina sees the activity of the Spirit as both sustaining and empowering those cultural forces that defend life. He states,

The same divine commitment to life that we see in Jesus is also embodied in the Spirit. It is the Spirit that empowers and animates cultural groups to resist colonizing forces that seek to eradicate them. [...] It is the force that engenders and defends life as well as passionately seeks the full realization of all of humanity's (and creation's) virtues and potentialities.⁸⁸

This is not to say that American Indians were somehow anonymous Christians all along. Rather, it is to say that the Spirit of the sovereign God is a universal reality into which all people may participate. Beginning from that assumption better equips the church to take seriously the depth of sin created by Christian traditions. Confessing is uncomfortable, but it is a particularly Christian identity that requires acknowledging the ways Christian tradition can both participate in and refuse to participate in the Spirit.

§5.3 – *The Encountering Church*

A church on mission from God is, within a theology of encounter, an encountering church. But what it means to “encounter” is not always obvious. Let us return to Acts 10 to reflect on an example of what it might mean to encounter.⁸⁹ One way to read Luke's depiction of Peter and Cornelius is as the boundaries of the gospel community expanding to include the gentiles and that inclusion being authorized by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Such a reading would not be incorrect, though it would prioritize the conversion of Cornelius. Focusing on the conversion of Cornelius also potentially misses that Cornelius remained a gentile and therefore

⁸⁸ Medina, *Christianity, Empire and the Spirit*, 339.

⁸⁹ For one account of what it might mean to encounter religions within the field of religious studies, see: Tyler Roberts, *Encountering Religion: Responsibility and Criticism After Secularism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

still beyond Peter's understanding, at that time, of who should be included.⁹⁰ But, what if Cornelius is not the only one being converted? Certainly, Peter is changed as well.

In Luke's depiction of the narrative there exist connections between Peter's mission to the house of Cornelius and Jonah's mission to Nineveh.⁹¹ Both Jonah and Peter are called to go from Joppa to bring a message to non-Jews; both messengers show hesitance only to be persuaded after three days in the belly of a whale and a vision told three times; after the conversion of their Gentile audiences, there were hostile responses to which God responded.⁹² Wall's interpretation of this comparison is that Luke seeks to show "that Jonah's God is Peter's God," and there is therefore a continuity between the two messengers. "As such, [God] is free to save the repentant non-Jew even though his messengers might want to restrict the true Israel only to the Jews."⁹³ Steven Studebaker notes that Peter is the narrative focus of Acts 10 and the Spirit leads Peter through a conversion to accept the inclusion of the gentiles and see that the grace of Christ is extended to all.⁹⁴ To say that Peter is converted does not imply that he is converted from his Jewishness, but to say that he experiences a change in how he relates to those considered beyond the activity of the Spirit.

Consider that both Jonah and Peter, reluctant messengers as they may have been, were both confronted by God in their resistance to the inclusion of Gentiles. God's response to this resistance was not only to transgress the boundary created, but also to bring forth a messenger to encounter those he might otherwise exclude. In these encounters, God not only brings a message of inclusion to Gentiles but also sends a reluctant messenger to watch as God saves those they

⁹⁰ On the manner in which Gentiles are included that sustains their difference with Jews, see: Matthew Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁹¹ See: Robert W. Wall, "Peter, 'Son' of Jonah: The Conversion of Cornelius in the Context of Canon," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 28 (1987), 79-90.

⁹² Wall, "Peter, 'Son' of Jonah," 80.

⁹³ Wall, "Peter, 'Son' of Jonah," 80.

⁹⁴ Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*, 32-3.

would otherwise exclude. In transgressing an existing customary boundary and encountering the house of Cornelius, Peter encounters God. Note that it is the very strangeness of difference and the ways difference confronts as something outside of the self that gives it an anticipatory charge, not its potential to soon become sameness. In that encounter Peter sees that it is the nature of his own salvation that others will be saved alongside him.

If the church is to hold this identity as a community of messengers who witness to the resurrection of God, then doing so will lead Christians into encounters with those we may exclude only to encounter God as God includes them. This encounter with God active beyond and even in contradiction to the church creates an anticipation that Christians may encounter God in many places beyond the immediate activity of the church. This opens possibilities beyond contempt and potentially facilitates a sort of anticipation towards the world as a site of encountering God. The New Testament over and over again admonishes Christians to show this hospitality to strangers, even suggesting that in doing so “some have entertained angels without knowing it.”⁹⁵ Frank Macchia rightly holds that Christians will have a message of liberation to extend to the world, but that, at times, the church will do better to listen and receive the fruits of the Spirit where they manifest.

There is nothing wrong (and everything right) about a church that extends its gospel message to include pointing that out. The kingdom of God in its coming will set the captives free (Lk. 4:18). The church needs to make that point clear and in a way that contextualizes it for our time and place. On the other hand, God is involved by the liberating Spirit in the world beyond the ministry of the church too. And there are times when the church may prove to be less enlightened than movements in the world may be with regard to issues of mutual regard and social justice. Walter Hollenweger noted that church should in this case humbly listen, just like Peter had to listen to what God was telling him through the piety and yearnings of Cornelius. Note what Peter learned when seeing Cornelius through God’s eyes: “I now realize how true it is that God does not

⁹⁵ Heb. 13:2. See: Amos Yong, *Hospitality & the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 115

show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right” (Acts 10:34-35).⁹⁶

Such is the listening that a theology of encounter makes possible. Rather than mere other, the encounter with otherness becomes a site for the activity of God and potential participation in the Spirit of God. In both speaking the gospel and listening for the Spirit of Christ, Christians can bear witness by encountering difference, without erasing it. Jews and Gentiles never stopped being Jews or Gentiles, but that difference became a site to join with others and see God. Jennings puts this well, “Gentiles may now see the world as God desires Israel to see the world—as specific and particular sites of love—where the Spirit would send us to go, announcing in and through life together with people God’s desire for joining and communion.”⁹⁷

The nature of the Spirit is to draw people together into encounter in the transgressive form seen at Azusa Street. Keri Day describes this type of encounter as a political project in which those in power commit to “being taught by the unredeemed.”⁹⁸ For Day this means “gravely attend[ing] to the vulnerable, mourn[ing] with those who suffer under racial capitalism, and fight[ing] for a more compassionate way of seeing those who are disenfranchised.”⁹⁹ To put this in my terms, encounter makes objects of contempt or potential contempt persons of great concern. This does not mean inviting others to encounter on one’s own terms. Rather, this “suggests cultivating a way of listening and living, in a way of encountering and embracing those who suffer *on their terms*, allowing these encounters to transform what we politically value and work toward.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Macchia, *The Spirit-Baptized Church*, 208-9.

⁹⁷ Jennings, *Acts*, 114.

⁹⁸ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 167.

⁹⁹ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 167.

¹⁰⁰ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 167. Emphasis in original.

The receptivity Day describes is exactly the type of political relationship for which I seek to offer theological motivation. If the Spirit is present beyond where one might expect it, then encountering the Spirit's activity in those places is key to radically disrupting expectations about to whom God relates and how. Day points out that this way of cultivating relationships in which one is willing to be taught by those they hold in contempt is the process "in which we allow our own assumptions, ideas, and projections about alienated groups to be up-tilled, reshaped, and differently plotted as we seek to live into contexts of justice and embrace."¹⁰¹ This hope for coming to know our neighbor is a great hope to strive towards. But it is this encounter in which our perceptions of those held in contempt are challenged that our perceptions of God are also challenged and God is revealed as free to save and redeem those even, or perhaps especially, those we might exclude.

§6 - Conclusion

While Pentecostal contempt draws Pentecostals away from others, Pentecostal encounter seeks to move towards others for the sake of encountering God. This is not to instrumentalize others as mere paths to ecstatic experience, but to make the larger theological point that the Holy Spirit is potentially active and present in all things. This open pneumatology better accounts for the Holy Spirit in the acts of creation, redemption, and consummation by prioritizing the trinitarian character of God and the freedom of the Spirit to blow wherever the Spirit pleases. While some would charge that such a vision of the Spirit washes away the identity of the church, such a charge would conflate uniqueness with exclusivity. The Spirit's work in the world and the eschatological baptism in the Spirit is cosmological in scale, and the church is wrapped into that

¹⁰¹ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 167.

reality. Put differently, the church is called out to bear witness to the resurrection of Christ and join alongside the work that the Spirit is doing.

In addition to making the case for an open pneumatology, I also make an argument about the manner in which the Spirit is present in the church. The Spirit is present in the church in a way that opens up the church to others and draws followers of Christ into vulnerable relationship with others. One marker of the Spirit's activity among Christians is that the Spirit transgresses boundaries between people. The miracle of Peter's encounter with the Spirit that led him to the household of Cornelius was both that new life was breathed into dead human relationships and that Peter was converted from his own insistence on the separation of persons. The Spirit calls the church to encounter others by crossing existing boundaries and creating unexpected places of contact.

This chapter remained attentive to what these particular theological arguments mean for the church and how the church should conceive its mission. There may well be a role for proselytism, but that cannot be the only way the church interacts with those outside of the church. Bearing witness to the resurrection need not be a work of proselytism, especially the strategic forms of proselytism that have come to dominate among Pentecostals. Instead, bearing witness to the resurrection is a way of joining in the work of the Spirit that cannot be reduced to someone else's conversion. When all neighbors are seen as potentially participating in the Spirit of Christ, what I call ethical commonality, different types of neighbor relationships become possible. Contempt makes less sense as a way of being faithful. Participating with others, Christian and non-Christian, become ways of participating in the activity of the Spirit. A sense of ethical commonality further renders others beyond the church as legitimate voices to be heard. Rather than defending the legitimacy of the church and the church's assumed exclusive

relationship with the Spirit, Pentecostals can actively listen and confess sin with a nondefensive posture. Perhaps such a changed view might better equip Pentecostals to see all good things as coming from God and to achieve a posture towards all things as anticipating the presence of God.

The explicitly theological approach I take in this chapter serves a specific limited purpose. Throughout Part One of this dissertation, I made the case that understanding Pentecostalism required more attention to nonhuman actors and the theological. How Pentecostals are imagining God and as a result relating to God very much influences how they act in the world. Moving beyond the mere descriptive, this chapter offered normative theological reflection that can help reframe how Pentecostals conceive of God's activity and specifically the activity of the Holy Spirit. The reflection done here should both raise doubts about the plausibility of contempt as a faithful Pentecostal response to difference and open up new potentials for relating to difference without appealing to the recourse of contempt. Further, this mode of reflection can offer coherence to ways of living that may currently seem incoherent.

It is important to name, though, that this reflection does not itself offer a normative political proposal that Pentecostals can follow. Left alone, this reflection is too abstracted from the lived tensions Pentecostals experience. Given the theological insights I elucidate here, how then can Pentecostals implement them politically? How can Pentecostals think about Political life under the terms of Pentecostal encounter? Theology can offer motivations and make political action salient, but what are the habits that might compliment this sort of theology? What ways of relating to difference might raise the questions that make such a theology necessary? I turn to these more particular political habits in the next two chapters.

Chapter 5: Using Democracy I - Theology, Politics, and Political Equality

§1 - Introduction

Part One demonstrated a co-constitutive relationship between social arrangements and theological thought. One does not necessarily drive the other, but each has the capacity to affect the other. The type of theological reflection in which I engage can help to offer coherence to Pentecostal beliefs and make sense of given social situations. That same type of reflection can also draw on Pentecostal belief to critique existing arrangements and make new arrangements more theologically salient. Put differently, theological reflection can make sense of a situation or point out the ways a situation fails to make sense theologically.

Chapter Four made an explicitly theological argument, though, if left alone it will replicate a trend in theological thinking of evading the more explicitly political. This may strike some as an odd statement, given the ways I blur the lines between the theological and the political throughout this project. However, I am here suggesting that theological reflection more self-consciously tend to the ways political and social arrangements both form and reflect theological thinking. As such, the political side of theology needs to be made explicit. Chapters Five and Six do just that.

This chapter argues that committing to a shared life among political equals can help Pentecostals move away from Pentecostal contempt. Such a political commitment towards others has the effect of overcoming the distance and separation that sustain Pentecostal contempt while also orienting Pentecostal politics towards anticipation rather than an avoidance. Section Two argues that encounters are not necessarily good and demonstrates the importance of specific types of encounters. Existing social scientific research around the “contact hypothesis” shows

strong evidence for certain kinds of contact, specifically contact under conditions of equality, to overcome prejudice and contempt. Given this evidence, the rest of the chapter elucidates what relations of political equality entail on Pentecostal terms. Given the value I place on difference throughout this project, my account of political equality will have to avoid recreating contempt for social arrangements not explicitly predicated on political equality. Recreating contempt is a particularly potent risk given the totalizing and ossifying manners in which theology often informs politics. Therefore, Section Three articulates the manner in which my argument moves from the theological to the political in contrast to other such approaches. In Section Four I offer a Pentecostal vision for relational political equality, drawing on existing accounts of political equality and modifying them to incorporate theological arguments articulated in Chapter Four. Ultimately, a commitment to relations of political equality renders a different way of relating to others possible and this section brings the resulting public focused commitment to the common good into view.

If Chapter Four makes a theological case for encounter, this chapter and the next make a political case for those encounters. Part One demonstrated in multiple ways that political habits not only shape the things people do, but they shape perceptions of God and others. What do we know about habits of encounter and how they might affect existing forms of contempt? What types of encounters are useful for Pentecostals seeking to move past contempt? Not just any encounter will do, but, as I show in the next section, there is reason to be optimistic about particular types of encounters.

§2 – Conditions of Encounter

Pentecostal ethicist Danielle Augustine makes a powerful theological case for encountering difference in the face of the other. By leveraging the work of Emanuel Levinas in

conjunction with Eastern Orthodox theology, D. Augustine creates a theology of the human other as an icon of the Triune God. As such, to know God one must encounter the face of the other. D. Augustine is one of several Pentecostal ethicists who are making more self-conscious efforts to articulate a theological politics. In fact, *The Spirit and the Common Good* connects a Pentecostal theology to more explicitly political traditions of thought, such as that of Hannah Arendt or larger cosmopolitan traditions. In a powerful statement on the cosmopolitan necessity of encountering the other, D. Augustine draws on Kant to articulate a humanity that is ultimately connected and must live into that connection.

In the words of Immanuel Kant, the fact that the earth is a globe means that we cannot be “infinitely scattered, and must at the end reconcile ourselves to existence side by side” with the other. Even when we turn our back to others and their need, the curve of the globe takes us on a journey back face to face with them, denying the possibility for infinite distance. The saving grace of God leads humanity back to the beginning, to the encounter of the face—the image of God facing itself in the other until a person sees him or herself in the fellow human as in a mirror and thus is capable to love the other as oneself (Lev 19:18; Matt 19:19). The human journey back to God becomes pedagogy' of discerning him in the other. Apart from seeing God's image in the other, one cannot see God.¹

Rather than a mere allusion or tip of the hat, D. Augustine appeals to Kantian cosmopolitanism as the political outcome of her theological vision. Encounter is the appropriate Christian response to the presence of difference. With regards to encounter, I agree and have made a similar argument up to this point.

However, not every cosmopolitan encounter is good or equal. Consider the example Keri Day gives of the cosmopolitanism of racial capitalism embodied in world's fairs hosted in the United States, specifically at the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893. Day points out that people from all over the world were invited to display their cultures and among them were a

¹ Daniela Augustine, *The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), 138.

group of Dahomeyans. Like other cultural delegations, the Dahomeyans set up an “ethnological village” that visitors to the fair could tour with the intent of experiencing other cultures.² Such was certainly a type of encounter. However, given the context of the fairs these villages became a place for White people to air out their negative perceptions of Africans and form “intimate bonds among each other over the question of African-American humanity.”³ Dahomeyans were characterized with the same stereotypes that were used to characterize African-Americans in the US. Day highlights one White woman’s experience:

One liberal Boston woman who decided to visit the Dahomeyan village at the fair left a written record of her response. She expressed regret at encountering these Africans, as it forced her to reflect on the "gulf between them and Emerson. Not all whites attending saw African people as animals or inherently debased. Some imagined themselves embracing a more liberal position in relation to blacks. The position went something like this: African people were not evil or animals but childlike and in need of civilizing. They had intellectual and moral potential, not on par with whites, but enough to be contributing members of American society. It seems that this Boston woman had imagined herself as a white liberal until she encountered this village.⁴

Here, existing social structures of racial capitalism and the conditions of a world’s fair putting difference on display for the consumption of others determined the shape of encounter.

Encounter always occurs within a larger context and there are conditions that are more suited for the types of encounters D. Augustine hopes to facilitate toward the theological end of encountering God in the face of the other. This is a function of a theologically informed politics that makes normative claims about the theological value of social arrangements.

One often-referenced characteristic of the Azusa Street Revival concerns its “transgressive” relationship to existing social hierarchies. Black and White people, men and women, worshiped God in freedom with one another. Without removing divine agency from the

² Keri Day, *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022), 108.

³ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 109.

⁴ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 110.

revival, consider that Azusa's new theological possibilities concerning God's relationship to the marginalized of society—the poor, women, those racialized other than White—bore some relationship to the social and political practices of Azusa. People treated one another as equals, as if they were all there to wait on the same outpouring of the Holy Spirit regardless of class, race, or gender. I am not suggesting that social and political actions somehow determined theological thinking, but I am pointing out that the theological claims of radical equality and access to personal experience with God both had to be observed in the world and had to make sense with what people were seeing. People do not typically adopt theological views that have no correspondence to their observed reality. Even the most fraudulent of Pentecostal evangelists knows that a cooked-up claim about divine healing needs some sort of observable “evidence” if anyone is going to take the bait. Azusa was hardly cooked-up and Seymour was no fraud. What people saw and how they treated one another (politics) was connected to what they believed (theology).

Not every human encounter facilitates the type of vulnerability and mutuality that can overcome contempt. Both case studies in Part One of this dissertation drew on encounters that ended in deepened contempt among Pentecostals. But, those encounters were limited and occurred under the terms of Pentecostal contempt. This section draws on a large body of social scientific literature to demonstrate that particular conditions between people are more likely to facilitate encounters that move beyond contempt. Contempt reinforces distance between people, but creating certain types of contact can help to overcome contempt and the prejudices that often inform that contempt. As it pertains to the theological, certain conditions render the theological scaffolding of Pentecostal contempt salient and then reinforce political life based on that contempt. Experiencing different political conditions, especially in relation to out-groups or

those whom Pentecostals might condemn, create new theological questions and possibilities for theological articulations that do not rely on contempt. Put differently, new political practices can make Pentecostal contempt incoherent or less useful. But, what are these conditions that can begin to undo Pentecostal contempt and even contempt more generally?

There exists a wide body of literature in the areas of social and political psychology considering the value of intergroup contact for reliably changing perceptions of others. As a field of inquiry, the literature on intergroup contact has exploded with a wealth of studies using diverse methods confirming the benefits of contact under certain circumstances. The intuitions driving these inquiries also drove political practices following the Second World War in which intergroup contact was seen as a way to improve intergroup relations and prevent war. The UNESCO constitution, adopted first in 1945, states as much: “That ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war.”⁵ The document continues, recognizing the necessity of both contact and communication to overcome the problems of suspicion and mistrust, calling on members to “increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other’s lives.”⁶

Within the area of social psychology, Gordon Allport is perhaps the most famous to theorize the potential for intergroup contact to overcome prejudice. Allport’s *The Nature of*

⁵ UNESCO, “Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,” June 24, 2022. Available at: https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution?TSPD_101_R0=080713870fab200063a349d07c1926c825478f0b60a5193e386f21b860afaaa88e5d7f20e88065030845fcc1bd1430007866ad9c8b0757f356c24310f570e19c2305d2820f40134dd18a6638f5f1d91ed985c4b629e6ce0ff45a55a32356a60f.

⁶ UNESCO, “Constitution.”

Prejudice, first published in 1954, reversed trends in social theory previously holding that contact between groups caused prejudice.⁷ These theories had undergirded racial segregation in the US, and Allport, as a social theorist unashamedly inspired by the capacity of social science to serve normative ends without compromising on quality research, argued that it is contact that has the capacity to overcome prejudice rather than produce it. In his wider ranging work, Allport considers how in-groups and out-groups are formed over time and how those boundaries are sustained and enforced.

Allport's hypothesis did not hold that just any contact between groups would overcome prejudice. In fact, some forms of contact have the potential to exacerbate it. Instead, contact under certain conditions can create a positive change in perceptions of others. These conditions identified by Allport and tested by others include 1) equal status, 2) cooperation, 3) common goals, and 4) institutional support.⁸ So, for instance, one study found that men and women who served in the US military in Afghanistan or Iraq alongside gay or lesbian service members, were "particularly likely to oppose the ban on open homosexuality in the military."⁹ In contrast, though, many studies of racial integration in the US post *Brown v. Board of Education* do not show positive outcomes of contact, because the conditions of contact do "not meet or even approximate the preconditions specified by Allport."¹⁰ While the field of literature on the contact

⁷ Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice Unabridged 25th Anniversary Edition* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979). See especially chapter 16 on "The Effect of Contact" and the importance of both equal status and cooperation in overcoming prejudice. For contemporary work in the area of group contact, see: Gordon Hodson and Miles Hewstone eds., *Advances in Intergroup Contact* (New York: Psychology Press, 2013).

⁸ Gordon Hodson and Miles Hewstone describe "institutional support" as ranging "from informal of implied social norms in support of contact to rules that are explicitly sanctioned or enforced by authorities to promote intergroup engagement." Gordon Hodson and Miles Hewstone, "Introduction: Advances in Intergroup Contact," in *Advances in Intergroup Contact*, eds. Gordon Hodson and Miles Hewstone (New York: Psychology Press, 2013). 6.

⁹ Hodson and Hewstone, "Introduction: Advances in Intergroup Contact," 6. Hodson and Hewstone are citing a study done by B. Moradi and L. Miller, "Attitudes of Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans Toward Gay and Lesbian Service Members," *Armed Forces & Society* 36 (2010), 397-419.

¹⁰ Hodson and Hewstone, "Introduction," 9.

hypothesis has exploded, there remains a consensus on the value of these four conditions in creating positive outcomes.¹¹

More recent studies have observed the affective rather than cognitive effects of group contact, where individuals showed more empathy and less anxiety about the outgroup after contact.¹² While there consistently is encouraging evidence for the contact hypothesis, there are also often studies that complicate the dynamics around contact. So, for example, contact can potentially exacerbate group competition.¹³ However, despite these helpful studies complicating the consensus on the benefits of contact, a large-scale meta-analysis compiling and quantifying the results of over 500 studies demonstrates that even with these complicating factors, intergroup contact still bears a significant relationship to more positive perceptions of other groups.¹⁴ In fact, this statistical significance is comparable to that held between condom use and sexually transmitted HIV.¹⁵ Interestingly, though, this meta-analysis also found that “*although increased contact itself is associated with reduced prejudice, the effect is magnified significantly under conditions characterizing equal status, cooperation, common goals, and institutional support.*”¹⁶ Even more encouraging is the finding that when a group experiences contact with another the benefits of that contact are not limited to the out group that was contacted, but individuals are likely to generalize the experience and reduce prejudice overall.¹⁷

¹¹ Lori Beaman, *Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 54. For a helpful historical review of literature in this area from which I draw significantly, see: Hodson and Hewstone, “Introduction,” 3-20.

¹² T.F. Pettigrew, “Intergroup Contact Theory,” *Annual Review of Psychology* (1998), 65-85.

¹³ H. Tajfel and J.C. Turner, “An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict,” in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, eds. W.G. Austin and S. Worchel (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1979), 33-47.

¹⁴ T.F. Pettigrew and L.R. Tropp, “A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90 (2006), 751-783.

¹⁵ An observation made by A. Al Ramiah and M. Hewstone, “Intergroup Difference and Harmony: The Role of Intergroup Contact,” in *Individual, Group and Cultural Processes in Changing Societies. Progress in Asian Social Psychology* (Delhi: University Press, 2011), 3-22.

¹⁶ Hodson and Hewstone, “Introduction,” 8. Emphasis in original.

¹⁷ Much of the literature on intergroup contact can focus on the US. However, there exist many studies with similar results in other contexts. For examples from Nigeria, see: Alexandra Scacco and Shan S. Warren, “Can Social

Knowing what this body of literature suggests about the types of contact facilitating changed views, the reduction of prejudice, and moving beyond contempt, how then can Pentecostals think about a theological politics beyond contempt? My argument is that particular types of encounters, specifically those under the above mentioned Allport conditions, can help move Pentecostals beyond contempt. This does not imply that someone can socially engineer Pentecostal relationships to others. However, the above appeal to a broad area of social scientific thought provides evidence that certain experiences can reliably have the effect of opening people toward one another. Based on the theological argument I have made in the previous chapter, then, it would seem that in being opened to others, such experiences would also have the effect of opening Pentecostals to God. This should be a promising base of evidence that can point to practices and ways of existing, or even structuring communities that do not facilitate contempt and can even overcome it.

Section Four will articulate a politics of encounter that uses relational equality as a means of overcoming contempt and receiving the activity of the Spirit in others. Social arrangements predicated on political equality, especially when theologically justified, have their own histories of facilitating contempt toward others. Does articulating a normative theological politics not also necessitate a narrow view of what it means for humans to live well? The next section considers a Pentecostal approach to the political that is theologically driven, but open to the value of encountering difference in its manifold forms. I understand “the political” in a broad sense that includes those sites, from church choirs to large democracies, where humans craft a shared life. This section may seem a departure from my argument concerning the value of relational equality,

Contact Reduce Prejudice and Discrimination? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Nigeria,” *American Political Science Review* 112.3 (2018), 654-677; and Christopher Grady, “Group Conflict and Intergroup Contact,” PhD Diss. (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2020).

but Section Three should be taken as an important question that precedes the particular shape of equality articulated in Section Four.

§3 – From the Theological to the Political

The theological and the political are always intimately connected. Few would deny this. However, much political theology fails to take seriously the bidirectional relationship of both the theological and the political, which is to say that theological reflection often does not consciously include a consideration of the social arrangements in which it is formed. Further, there exists a risk that a move from the theological developed within a particular context can create the conditions for contempt by failing to account theologically for different ways of living and organizing societies; Christian normative proposals for inclusion are not themselves capacious or inclusive of difference. After reviewing and rejecting several existing approaches to relating the theological and the political, I offer one Pentecostal account that will guide my transition from the more overtly theological Chapter Four to the more overtly political Chapters Five and Six. Note that Chapter Four does not exist in a clean theological vacuum and Chapters Five and Six do not exist in clean political vacuums; the theological and political are always related, how that relationship is understood matters for both.

§3.1 – Failed Approaches to the Theological and the Political

In this section, I name two failed approaches to the relationship between the theological and the political. The first constitutes an evasive approach and the second a unidirectional approach. The “escapist” tendency of Pentecostalism long dominated considerations of Pentecostal political engagement. The trope characterized Pentecostals as “so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly good.” Many have debunked this characterization of Pentecostal

politics, pointing to progressive Pentecostal social action and Pentecostal concern for the world despite apocalyptic eschatologies.¹⁸ However, while this form of escapism is largely a caricature of Pentecostalism, Pentecostal political thought and much Christian political thought more broadly remain evasive of the political. Amos Yong's *In the Days of Caesar* is his most direct treatment of political theology, but even there his thesis affirming the "many tongues" of political expression amounts to an evasion of politics with no normative stake in any social or political arrangement.¹⁹ Further, consider those trinitarian political theologies that rightly craft an eschatological image of the creation being wrapped into the loving life of the Trinity via the erotic and loving embrace of the Spirit. These theologies are important and can help articulate cases for hope and the limitations of politics; in fact, Chapter Four seeks to make a similar case.²⁰ When left alone, though, this form of Christian political thought only creates a mental space free from penultimate political crises. In creating an anticipation for eventual reconciliation of all things, these theologies leave Christians with no guidance for following the Spirit of Christ in a given moment. The Trinity alone is no social program at all.²¹

While some retreat to the abstractions of theology or the eschaton to evade politics, others have sought to craft the church as such a space for evasion. These "ecclesial" approaches to Christian ethics identify the unique grammar of the church and the distinct polis of the church as necessarily separate from the world and therefore requiring a distinct type of discourse. There

¹⁸ See: Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007); Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans' Publishing Co., 2010), ch. 1.

¹⁹ Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 109. Here, I agree with much of Marlon Milner's critique of Yong as prioritizing theology as a core grammar and evading the work of politics, "'Yong privileges theology as the core grammar of political theology such that the work of political thought and contemporary theory is occluded.'" Marlon Milner, "Dis/parity: Blackness and the (Im)possibility of a Pentecostal (Political) Theology," *Pneuma* 44 (2022), 421.

²⁰ See: Miroslav Volf, "'The Trinity is Our Social Program': The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement," *Modern Theology* vol. 14 no. 3 (July 1998), 403-423.

²¹ On reasons to be wary of social trinitarianism's movement to the political, see: Linn Marie Tonstad, *God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitude* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

is some truth to this, in that Christians will have different commitments and a distinct, though not separate, lexicon from which to draw while reasoning through political issues. However, overemphasis on the distinctiveness of the church and a hyperactive imagination of the world's hostility to the church—with no understanding as to why that hostility may well be justified on Christian terms—creates a different form of escapism seeking to avoid the work of penultimate political life. Mark Cartledge offers one Pentecostal example of an overemphasis on Christian distinction. Cartledge holds that “the church and its beliefs and values are in tension with the world's beliefs and values because there is a deeper conflict around fundamental assumptions to do with the nature of reality.”²² Besides assuming too coherent and stable beliefs and values in both the world and church, Cartledge takes the relationship of the church to the world as that of “critical companionship.”²³ The church is separate from the world, though it has a duty to allow the “spiritual gifts associated with the church's life” to “flow into wider society as an authentic way of blessing creation, culture, and the world.”²⁴ That the church ought to bless the world is a good intuition, but the preceding reliance on the separation of the church creates an escapism with an anti-political bent.

Cartledge rightly identifies several of the issues facing the world to which, on his view, a practical theological reading of pneumatological texts in the Scriptures can contribute. The outcome when dealing with these issues, though, turns out to be little more than proof texting and musing on topics of concern. Mining the Scriptures for wisdom on pressing issues is an important task. Doing so without simultaneously analyzing the structure of the world to which the church is supposed to speak, though, ends up imagining an escape to a world of answers

²² Mark Cartledge, *The Holy Spirit and Public Life: Empowering Ecclesial Praxis* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2022), 12-13.

²³ Cartledge, *The Holy Spirit and Public Life*, 13.

²⁴ Cartledge, *The Holy Spirit and Public Life*, 13.

outside the penultimate realities in which the church exists. As a form of evasion, though, this refusal to include social theory or social analysis in the consideration of public life ends up reinscribing the existing ideology and social arrangements that define public issues. One might characterize this as a retreat from enemy forces; forces which one has failed to locate.

The second failed approach I name is the unidirectional approach. This approach is more diverse in its political outcomes, but it shares a sense of singularity about the manner in which the theological relates to the political. The reasoning typically follows theological statement “x” is universally true, therefore corresponding political arrangement “y” is universally appropriate. Many of these approaches have an ossifying effect on social arrangements, by making a claim of divine authority for a given social arrangement.²⁵ Such an ossifying tendency can have the effect of ruling out the new and rendering the strange an unacceptable aberration from a theological truth. In other words, it risks facilitating contempt of difference.

Natural law, in several variations, is one such ossifying approach that appeals to conceptions of nature as undergirding particular social arrangements and in doing so, makes a universal claim about the value of those social arrangements. While this mode of thought has many variations and complex differences, it often moves from a teleological understanding of creation to a prescriptive understanding of human political arrangements.²⁶ As such, theories of

²⁵ Here, I have in mind new natural law theories, Dutch Reformed public theology, and Seven-Mountain Dominionism; each of which have varying academic legitimacies but similar uselessness for a rightly Pentecostal politics.

²⁶ Natural Law theories abound and do not all fall prey to the fault I name here. However, there are particularly grotesque examples of singular Christian politics based on theories of natural law. Take for example the recent articulation of a Catholic integralism, see: Thomas Crean and Alan Fimister, *Integralism: A Manual of Political Philosophy* (Havertown, PA: Eurospan, 2020). For an example of the ways US evangelical protestants have latched onto natural law in order to articulate a singular Christian politics, see: Stephen Wolfe, *The Case for Christian Nationalism* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2022). Within contemporary politics and legal jurisprudence, New Natural Law Theory has been perhaps the most influential. For a summary and critique of New Natural Law Theory see, Russell Hittinger, *A Critique of the New Natural Law Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

politics are then constructed without an openness to the potentiality and plurality of the Spirit's activity in particular times and places. Moreover, in naming certain political arrangements or political capacities as natural, there is the simultaneous designation of unnatural for those social arrangements deviating from the imagined natural form.

Dutch Reformed public theologies, particularly those derived from the work of Abraham Kuyper, are another example of the unidirectional approach. These have become popular in US evangelical circles over the past two generations.²⁷ Kuyper understood the world as divided into sovereign spheres, each of which ought to respect the sovereignty of the others. With an eye toward the flourishing of the world, Kuyper defined these spheres and thought of them as independently functioning.²⁸ Throughout the colonization of Southern Africa and into the formation of the South African apartheid state, it was Kuyper's theology, though not Kuyper himself, who inspired the stiff theological defenses of racial separation. In this view, God had created different races and out of respect for that distinction of spheres, it was up to political arrangements to ensure God's design be maintained and respected.²⁹ The Kuyperian strategy of identifying the spheres of the world and how they function independently makes the mistake of universalizing particular social arrangements as ordained by God. In doing so, the system is

²⁷ See: Richard J. Mouw, *Pluralisms and Horizons: An Essay in Christian Public Philosophy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993); Vincent Bacote, *The Spirit in Public Theology: Appropriating the Legacy of Abraham Kuyper* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010).

²⁸ Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Haddington, Scotland: Handsel Press, 1943); Abraham Kuyper, "Sphere Sovereignty," in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998)

²⁹ For applications of Kuyper's thought in defense of apartheid, see: S. du Toit, *Holy Scripture and Race Relations: with special application to South African conditions* (Potchefstroom, South Africa: Rege-pers Beperk, 1960); Russel Botman, "Is Blood Thicker Than Justice? The Legacy of Abraham Kuyper for Southern Africa," in *Religion, Pluralism, and Public Life: Abraham Kuyper's legacy for the twenty-first century*, ed. Luis E. Lugo (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000): 342-361; Gwashi Freddy Manavhela, "An Analysis of the Theological Justification of Apartheid in South Africa: A Reformed Theological Perspective," (PhD diss., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2009).

unable to receive different ways of living as legitimate because those differing ways of being or arranging society would contradict the perceived God ordained structure of the world.

Pentecostals have not latched onto Kuyper's thought with the same fervor as evangelicals; but, various prophetic movements within the New Apostolic Reformation, a Pentecostal/charismatic group of churches, innovate on Kuyper's thought to develop a Dominionist form of politics. Here, prophets identify seven mountains of society (media, government, education, economy, religion, celebration, and family) which Christians, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are to take dominion over and shape with "Christian values."³⁰ While lacking any sort of scholarly credibility, these apostolic approaches demonstrate with clarity the usefulness of carving up reality into spheres or mountains with the intention to take control of those areas of society. Here, not only is a particular understanding of society given a universal normative reach, but Pentecostals explicitly identify Christian domination of society as the key for human flourishing.³¹ Encounter under the terms of Christian domination cannot facilitate the types of receptivity nor vulnerability around which a Pentecostal politics of encounter hopes to build.

³⁰ This is the view most common among those Pentecostals active around Donald Trump and the January 6th insurrection. See: Johnny Enlow, *The Seven Mountain Prophecy: Unveiling the Coming Elijah Revolution* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2018); Lance Wallnau and Bill Johnson, *Invading Babylon: The 7 Mountain Mandate* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishing, Inc., 2013); Johnny Enlow, *The Seven Mountain Mantle: Receiving the Joseph Anointing to Reform Nations* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2009); Mario Murillo, *Vessels of Fire & Glory: Breaking Demonic Spells over America to Release a Great Awakening* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2020). These apostles would almost universally go on to prophecy Donald Trump as the fulfillment of former prophecies calling for Christians to take and reform the seven mountains. See: Lance Wallnau, *God's Chaos Code: The Shocking Blueprint that Reveals 5 Keys to the Destiny of Nations* (Keller, TX: Killer Sheep Media, Inc., 2020); Lance Wallnau, *God's Chaos Candidate: Donald J. Trump and the American Unraveling* (Keller, TX: Killer Sheep Media, Inc., 2016).

³¹ For a clear description of dominion theology, see: C. Peter Wagner, *Dominion! How Kingdom Action Can Change the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2008). Wagner's vision resembles something similar to what has taken place in Hungary under Orban, where Christians use the procedures of democracy to gain power, but with no commitments to minority rights or liberal norms. Interestingly, and I must say comically, Wagner cites his correspondence with James Davidson Hunter as justification for his approach.

One final example of a unidirectional politics comes in certain forms of Christian egalitarianism. The common route to liberal egalitarianism taken by Christians goes by way of universal human dignity (a position I affirm). The subsequent move, though, assumes that an affirmation of universal human dignity then translates into an affirmation of a regime of rights or other forms of liberal governance. Critical work in various areas of religious studies have demonstrated the particularity of liberal egalitarianism as well as the danger of universalizing its claims. Unidirectional moves from the theological to the political have underwritten colonial projects that “bring rights” to others through violent disruptions to existing ways of living that have their own conceptions of and ways of recognizing human dignity.³² Further, the imagined position of the liberal overseer enforcing liberal norms the world over prevents those encounters with difference that might reveal coherent yet different ways of living.³³

§3.2 – *A Pentecostal Approach: The Theological and Political as Co-Constituting*

Having rejected several existing approaches, it is time to offer a positive account. The positive account needs to be engaged in politics so as to avoid evasion and it needs to be conscious of the mutually constituting relationship between theology and politics so as to avoid a unidirectional application of the theological to the political. This manner of holding political positions is normatively committed but open to other possibilities, be those possibilities other existing ways of living or a change of course based on new information or a move of the Spirit. This theological politics begins from the dynamic activity of the Spirit, which always occurs

³² See: R. Panikkar, “Is the Notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?” *Diogenes* 120 (Winter 1982), 75-102.

³³ One powerful example of this inability to recognize coherent ways of living external to a liberal cosmology comes in Wole Soyinka’s *Death and the King’s Horseman: A Play* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2002), which depicts British colonizers’ insistence on the universality of their understood moral principles as resulting in desecration of Yoruba custom and intervention into important Yoruba ritual. Additionally, see: Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), which articulates forms of subjectivity that challenge liberal narratives by prioritizing piety rather than liberation.

within a given sociocultural setting, and leaves open possibilities for the Spirit to create something new. Or, slightly differently, this theological politics leaves open the possibility of encountering something the Spirit has done somewhere else. In this approach, the work of politics is always done with an eye towards the types of theologies a political arrangement is creating or rendering salient. The work of theological reflection, then, is done with an eye towards the types of politics a given theology justifies or makes salient in a given time.

Remember, Pentecostal contempt functions by building pneumatological meaning and apocalyptic fervor into existing social fractures, reifying existing cosmologies and activating contemptuous political action. A Pentecostal politics of encounter seeks to overcome such ossifying politics by creating an approach to politics that is not predicated on a singular acceptable social arrangement, but instead seeks to participate in the Spirit in a given time and place. This does not give up on theological ends, but instead asks how Pentecostals might use penultimate politics for the sake of encounter. Rather than adhering to a natural scheme, I am of the view that humans create the political world in which they live. Which is to say, humans create the customs, categories, and legal structures through which we share life with one another; the world does not have to be as it is nor as it was. This is not to say there is no value in the way the world is or has been, but that there is not an exact blueprint for political life from which to draw. Customs, categories, and laws can participate more or less in the activity of the Spirit and Pentecostals ought to discern the Spirit(s) active in each. For instance, while rights may not themselves be natural, they can, despite troubled genealogies, serve as helpful political tools for making commitments between people sharing life with one another. But espousing a commitment to rights or other political commitments requires a level of clarity on the manner in

which one holds those commitments and the manner in which such commitment serve theological ends.

Nimi Wariboko's social ethics, namely his "Pentecostal Principle," fits nicely with what I outline above. As Pentecostal theologians, such as Frank Macchia, start trinitarian reflection from the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit, so Wariboko begins his social ethics grounded in "transformation of life, new beginning, newness of enspirited life."³⁴ For Wariboko, this transformation of life and new beginnings flow from the Spirit of Pentecost who, as described in Chapter Four, brings forth new and more life from what exists. Nature itself does not bound potentiality, rather, the Spirit of Pentecost fructifies nature bringing forth different forms of life giving possibilities not previously imagined. Social ethics informed by this intuition is grounded on a refusal to "limit the freedom of God" and thus leave open the potential for the Holy Spirit to always "rework and advance the structures of sociality and to re-create personal lives."³⁵ While a statement of potential for God to act, this is also a statement of the limitations of any ethical code or social arrangement because those codes and arrangements are always predicated on incomplete knowledge.

It may seem odd to ground a social ethics on contingency and indeterminacy or, to put it more Pentecostally, the potential that God may well be up to something we do not yet understand. However, this is the grounding principle of Wariboko's social ethics and it is the same assumption I take as chastening the manner in which a Pentecostal politics of encounter takes up penultimate political positions. While a Pentecostal politics of encounter does firmly hold to penultimate political positions, I also preserve space for the assumption "that social

³⁴ Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2012), 14.

³⁵ Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 68.

systems and practices are experimental, reversible, contingent, and provisional, rather than necessary or permanent.”³⁶ This conclusion of indeterminacy is not entirely unique to Pentecostals, as other political theorists, such as Chantal Mouffe, make similar cases for a preservation of the political where social arrangements are always the outcome of “a given hegemonic configuration of power” and is therefore always “political” and “contestable.” For Mouffe, a social arrangement “should never be justified as dictated by a higher order and presented as the only legitimate one.”³⁷

Wariboko’s Pentecostal Principle is not merely a recognition of limitations. Rather, Wariboko sees human creativity and the actualization of potentialities as the telos of his social ethics.³⁸ Similarly, the Pentecostal politics I articulate here seeks to maximize human encounter and sociality in such a way that facilitates an openness toward difference. Here, creativity and potential are important components, because for a social arrangement to adequately facilitate genuine encounter, that arrangement must also create the conditions where different people can, roughly put, be themselves. This is not to signal a merely individualistic politics prioritizing authenticity, but also a politics that allows communities and groups to live out creative practices. Often those in positions of power, sometimes the position to dominate others, seek to craft a homogeneity by enforcing assimilation into a given culture. While encounter will inevitably spur cultural sharing and change over time, it is the ability for a person or group to embody and practice what makes them different or strange that creates the potential for encounter. Genuine creativity, be that faithfulness to a tradition or reinventing one, is essential for humans to encounter one another in their many different particularities. Encounter here is not the same as

³⁶ Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 71.

³⁷ Chantal Mouffe, *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically* (London: Verso, 2013), 17.

³⁸ Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 76.

moving through a zoo of difference, similar to that which Day describes at the Chicago World's Fair. Rather, encounter requires the living alongside and day-to-day interaction that cultivates a sense of open self-assuredness in the face of other options and ways of living.

This prioritization of open-endedness raises questions of limits, or whether or not the Pentecostal politics for which I am advocating has any non-negotiables. Political liberalism often jumps to identifying backstops that will stop politics from turning violent or minority groups from experiencing domination. Such a move is often appropriate. I have taken a different approach throughout this dissertation in that I seek to offer a positive theological value for maintaining and encountering difference. This is distinct from, but not opposed to, those negative proposals deploying political rights as tools to name those basic things owed to other people about which a community will not negotiate.³⁹ The key is that those political rights are tools and the result of political struggle rather than naturally existing facts. The approach I take is not as easily codified into law, but remains vitally important for Pentecostals.

To sum up, the Pentecostal approach to understanding the relationship between the theological and the political is open-ended, where the Spirit can rest on and fructify multiple human forms of sociality. There does not exist a theological grid that one can lay atop the political. At the same time, theology cannot become so detached from the shape of the political so as to evade difficult political questions, or consider how theological discourse is constituting those questions and being constituted by those questions. Articulating this relationship between the theological and the political is an important step in my argument, but it does not articulate a form of politics based on encounter. The next section undertakes this task.

³⁹ I find negative liberal approaches to politics largely compatible with the type of Pentecostal politics I articulate here. For one such account, see: Judith N. Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear," in *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 21-38.

§4 – A Politics of Encounter

Having considered the theological quality of encounter and the quality of meaningful contact as theorized in social scientific thought, I am now in a position to better describe the substance of a Pentecostal politics of encounter. As a politics invested in moving Pentecostal communities beyond contempt, this political agenda is organized around the egalitarian principle that individuals ought to live in relations of political equality. For Pentecostals, this means that Pentecostals ought to take others as political equals and begin interactions with difference by considering what that relationship requires. While some accounts of equality begin from an ontological statement about humanity or the distribution of material goods, I take political equality to be a refusal to hold others as inferior.⁴⁰ As such, this politics, while guiding individual interactions, also informs larger political agendas about what it means to organize a society or share a life. Assuming relations of political equality matters for interpersonal, intercommunal, and statist politics. In each case, political equality opens potentials for a shared life and encountering one another at those sites of sharing, publicness, or cooperation. Keep in mind the goal here, which is to offer a plausible alternative to contempt for Pentecostals to begin navigating conditions of substantial pluralism.

§4.1 – Relational Political Equality

One way of reading my use of social scientific studies around the contact hypothesis is in advocacy of a top-down solution to manage the discomforts of a plural society—this is a path I do not take. Lori Beaman’s *Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity* demonstrates the

⁴⁰ This definition of equality prioritizes egalitarian relationships as a political commitment and is often referred to as relational, social, or democratic equality. I will use “relational equality” to characterize this commitment to maintaining equal status among persons. For one account in support of this definition, see: Anne Phillips, *Unconditional Equals* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021).

ways modern anxieties about difference and diversity often start from incorrect assumptions that diversity is a problem requiring management.⁴¹ Beaman points out that these views rely on rigid identity categories, especially religious identity categories, that do not map onto the ways people experience those identities or navigate differences. Solutions to the “problem” of difference often draw up schemes for dialogue or the hashing out of differences. Beaman, conversely, sees people in everyday life working through difference in a way that does not require an event in order to do so, in fact she refers to these interactions across lines of difference as “non-events.” It is the non-event that draws Beaman’s focus, where people are typically able to find points of similarity that help to navigate experiences of difference.⁴² Ultimately, as is Beaman’s hope, these encounters have the potential to create “deep equality” that moves beyond mere tolerance or legal equality. Deep equality is the type of equality developed over time where people recognize difference, but have developed the skills and conceptual schemes to navigate difference. Rather than developing stereotypes or prejudice as tools to navigate difference, people who encounter one another under particular circumstances are able to draw on similarities in order to craft a deeper sort of equality.⁴³

Beaman’s assumption, though, is both that people enter into these interactions with difference already sharing a level of equality with one another—perhaps formal equality—but that small interactions build up to create a deeper sense of equality. This “deep equality” is what egalitarians often refer to as “relational equality,” or the egalitarian requirement that individuals hold one another in equal status. Certainly, as Beaman recognizes, this is not entirely separated

⁴¹ Lori Beaman, *Deep Equality*, 40-45.

⁴² Note that, for Beaman, similarity does not necessitate any sort of sameness or actual similarity. Rather, identified similarity is a tool she observes people using in order to navigate the felt presence of difference. People look for and find sites of similarity as ways to relate to others who would otherwise seem completely alien.

⁴³ Beaman, *Deep Equality*, 54.

from the sorts of institutional equality offered by legal rights as the formation of relational equality depends on the that type of institutional support. My purpose here, though, is to articulate a case for relational equality that serves as a plausible Pentecostal alternative to contempt, while tapping into the theological arguments in Chapter Four as motivation for taking others as political equals.

Typically, as Iris Marion Young points out, democratic political theory does not work from a conception of what “the good life” entails.⁴⁴ As a theological politics, though, this dissertation is more immediately invested in what the good life entails: encountering the Spirit of God. However, my account of encountering that Spirit relies on the infinite diversity of human cultural expression as potential sites of the Spirit’s presence and activity—a theological proposition which I defend in Chapter Four. Which is to say, that while I am explicit with the theological ends of human life, those ends are only facilitated through a diverse setting in which individuals and groups can live out their own conceptions of the good life. Therefore, the notion of relational equality I name here both requires a consciousness of the theological ends of life as well as an openness to the manifold ways in which that might be achieved.

In Section Three I rejected those Christian approaches that move from the theological to the political in too singular a manner, explicitly naming the *Imago Dei* as insufficient justification for a theologically grounded egalitarianism, at least of the sort I am articulating here. In addition to its propensity to overreach and miss ways that non-liberal traditions and regimes recognize human dignity in different ways, this theological approach to equality is vulnerable to contemptuous rejoinders. Consider that one might ground their “pastoral oversight” of another in how much they value that person’s dignity. Gay men should be chemically castrated because

⁴⁴ Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 36.

their depraved sexual proclivities devalue their inherent dignity and threaten their souls. People should be flogged in the streets for missing mass because temporal pain is only a limited redirection that better respects a person's dignity as an image bearer of God who is made to worship God.⁴⁵ My position is not opposed to notions of human dignity, but it does not ground political equality in a recognition of dignity and is therefore not vulnerable criticism seeking to craft a politics in light of conservative notions of dignity.

Despite the weaknesses of the *Imago Dei* justification of political equality, the alternative I articulate is open to the charge that relational egalitarianism is merely political and lacks moral substance or more specifically theological substance. Egalitarian political theorists typically ground their justifications of equality in human moral capacities. Elizabeth Anderson characterizes equal respect for others as moral agents well:

Egalitarian political movements oppose such hierarchies. They assert the equal moral worth of persons. This assertion does not mean that all have equal virtue or talent. Negatively, the claim repudiates distinctions of moral worth based on birth or social identity—on family membership, inherited social status, race, ethnicity, gender, or genes. There are no natural slaves, plebeians, or aristocrats. Positively, the claim asserts that all competent adults are equally moral agents: everyone equally has the power to develop and exercise moral responsibility, to cooperate with others according to principles of justice, to shape and fulfill a conception of their good.⁴⁶

My position is similar though I identify this moral capacity “to shape and fulfill a conception of their good” as a potential to participate in the Spirit of Christ. Holding others in relations of political equality is one way to recognize this potentiality or to anticipate the encounter with God in encounters with others. To be sure, my argument assumes and depends on an understanding of

⁴⁵ Of course, this was the fight John Locke and Jonas Proast had over the merits of toleration and the use of state force in regard to religious practice. See: John Locke, *Locke on Toleration*, ed. Richard Vernon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁴⁶ Elizabeth Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality?” *Ethics* 109 (1999), 312. Similarly, see: Danielle Allen, “A New Theory of Justice: Difference without Domination,” in *Difference without Domination: Pursuing Justice in Diverse Democracies*, Danielle Allen and Rohini Somanathan eds. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 36.

human dignity, but it also draws on the human capacity to participate in the Spirit.⁴⁷ As such, there is a priority placed on the free exercise of human capacities to participate in the Spirit. So, Pentecostals should hold others in relations of equality because of the potential that in encountering others one may encounter the Spirit's activity in new ways. This is not a singular approach to the political, but it is one normative proposal allowing for potentiality and the development of new forms of life. Rather than closing down possibilities by relying on singular and reductive interpretive tools—or to put it in Pentecostal terms, quenching the Spirit—this form of encountering others as political equals seeks to open interpretive possibilities to resignify the encounter with difference as an opportunity to see the Spirit at work.

By naming a commitment to relational equality, I am following a move away from a distributionist paradigm among egalitarians.⁴⁸ I agree with those concerns that distributionists do not bring into view the problems of inequality in social status and are, as Elizabeth Anderson notes, disconnected from egalitarian political movements. Issues of status, public shame, the ability to move freely in public without risks of violence, and representation are not easily captured by a distributionist paradigm. When distributionists do consider social dynamics, they take them as static and not as dynamic products of human relationships.⁴⁹ So, for instance, Anderson is concerned that unequal relations between employers and employees allow

⁴⁷ I frame this conversation in terms of human relationships, but I do not see my argument as necessitating an exclusive focus on human relationships. One might consider the ways the Spirit moves throughout the whole of the creation or how the creation participates in the Spirit of the Triune God as a way of considering relations with the whole of creation. Additionally, grounding political equality in one's moral capacities can raise questions of the extent to which the mentally disabled are taken as political equals. My account avoids this issue by affirming the potential for the mentally disabled to participate in the Spirit of God. For one Pentecostal consideration of the Spirit and Down syndrome, see: Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2020).

⁴⁸ See: Anderson, "What Is the Point of Equality?" 287-337; Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, ch. 1.

⁴⁹ Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 15-6.

employers to unjustly interfere in employees' lives.⁵⁰ But, a distributionist frame would prioritize wages and the distribution of goods between employers and employees, rather than the standing of each party in the relationship.

So, if I have moved away from the distributive paradigm then what does holding another as a political equal actually entail? There is reason to think that relational equality will not look uniform but could be manifest in multiple forms where “a range of different and incompatible models can each be seen as exemplifying social equality.”⁵¹ One version of relational equality is what Elizabeth Anderson refers to as “democratic equality.” This view has both a negative and a positive aspect; I will outline the positive aspect first.

Positively, egalitarians seek a social order in which persons stand in relations of equality. They seek to live together in a democratic community, as opposed to a hierarchical one. Democracy is here understood as collective self-determination by means of open discussion among equals, in accordance with rules acceptable to all. To stand as an equal before others in discussion means that one is entitled to participate, that others recognize an obligation to listen respectfully and respond to one's arguments, that no one need bow and scrape before others or represent themselves as inferior to others as a condition of having their claim heard.⁵²

The positive aspect of democratic equality holds that all, as equals, hold standing to have “their claim heard.” As such, the practice of holding another as a political equal requires accepting “the obligation to justify [one's] actions by principles acceptable to the other, and in which they take mutual consultation, reciprocation, and recognition for granted.”⁵³ Political equals hear one another out and no party has to grovel or beg in order to be heard or taken seriously. This is in

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It)*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 37-41.

⁵¹ Jonathan Wolff, “Social Equality and Social Inequality,” in *Social Equality: On What It Means to Be Equals*, eds. Carina Fourie, Fabian Schuppert, and Ivo Wallimann-Helmer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 221. As quoted by Kristin Voigt, “Relational Egalitarianism,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (30 Jun. 2020) <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-1387>.

⁵² Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality,” 313.

⁵³ Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality,” 313.

direct opposition to the stuff of contempt, which excludes others from consideration and draws on things like stereotype to explain the group that has not been and should not be consulted.

This account of democratic equality, admittedly, prioritizes cognitive concerns, such as hearing one another out and sharing of reasons. What, then, of affective considerations? First, the principles of democratic equality do not rule affective considerations out of bounds for exchanges between individuals. When an affective concern or a feeling about another is active, democratic equality does not require setting the affective aside. Instead, democratic equality would require that in encounters with others when an affective element is at play, then one offers up an account of how they feel rather than considering another as unworthy of an account. So, if one becomes the object of moral scorn under relations of equality, then those holding another in scorn would offer an account of that scorn. Second, as I demonstrated in the previous section, affective considerations, especially as it pertains to contempt, are downstream from encounters between political equals. My account of political equality does not disregard affective concerns for living with others; rather, they are at the center of my inquiry. What I argue here, though, is that assuming relations of political equality often engages affective dimensions even when they are not immediately on the table. In doing so, new theological questions and accounts of difference can potential become salient.

One might begin to hear at this point a risk that the sorts of relationships for which I am advocating will pose a risk to the less powerful. One might see a call for Pentecostals to chase after objects of contempt in order to air out stereotypes and misconceptions. There is reason to be sensitive to dynamics of power and the limits of sharing a life; the next chapter makes this case more explicitly.⁵⁴ The point I make here is that assumptions about others should not be taken as

⁵⁴ In certain relationships, there is good reason as to why objects of contempt may be unwilling to enter into those conversations. See, for instance: Amir R.A. Jaima, “Don’t Talk to White People: On the Epistemological and

natural or necessary and that Pentecostals ought to do the work to explore and articulate, if even to themselves, the content of those assumptions. This does not require that an account is offered to another, but holds that when another desires such an account Pentecostals should not dismiss the person as beyond the activity of the Spirit, morally inferior, or a threat.

Of course, the other side of these relationships is that Pentecostals should assume a posture of listening and receptivity. Anyone who has attended a Pentecostal prayer meeting knows that Pentecostals talk a great deal, but listening is a skill that must be cultivated. This can mean that when another desires to offer an account of themselves, Pentecostals take that less as a threat and more as a gift to hear and possibly learn from another's testimony or experience. Many times others will not offer accounts of themselves to Pentecostals, especially if they are held as objects of contempt. In these cases, relations of political equality would call Pentecostals to seek out those accounts in places where they are otherwise available. The explosion of media availability in the form of podcasts, poetry, online essays, movies, books, and social media create material from which Pentecostals can begin to learn and explore others' accounts of themselves. The point is that relations of political equality require a willingness to be transparent and receptive, along with the wisdom and care to know when it is best to do so.

Nimi Wariboko names the desire to remain invisible to the other or opaque in relationship as a way of exercising power over another. Speaking of Nigerian Pentecostals generating knowledge about others in unaccountable ways, Wariboko says "If the Other cannot see them, then they cannot accuse or condition them even if the powerful leaders exercise dominating, unquestionable authority over them."⁵⁵ Wariboko's concern is the creation of political

Rhetorical Limitations of Conversations With White People for Anti-Racist Purposes: An Essay," *Journal of Black Studies* vol. 52 no. 1 (2021), 77-97.

⁵⁵ Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 297.

sovereignty whereby power is exercised over others, but his eventual call is that these sites of invisibility in Nigeria be overcome. He ends his book with a call to see others and become visible to others, “Religion, politics, academia, and business must begin to take their responsibility to the other seriously. The other must become truly visible to all of us and we must be visible to the other.”⁵⁶ Invisibility can take the form of political corruption or opaque knowledge produced under conditions of Pentecostal contempt. I see adopting relations of political equality as embodying the process of rendering oneself visible and seeking to see others.

With the positive aspect of democratic equality named, the negative account concerns the abolition of domination and oppression.⁵⁷ Iris Marion Young names five types of oppression, all of which would be excluded on this view: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.⁵⁸ Anderson identifies oppression as “forms of social relationship by which some people dominate, exploit, marginalize, demean, and inflict violence upon others.”⁵⁹ Removing relations of domination or oppression from society is at the core of egalitarian concern and on this account the central issue is the unequal relationships and statuses they create.

As previously stated, my reliance on relational egalitarianism makes a move away from distributionist paradigms, though relational egalitarians are still very much concerned with the distribution of goods. One critique of egalitarian thinking is that it takes political equality and lays individuals bare before the forces of an unequal market. Consider that earlier understandings of equality paved the way for corporate domination that still shapes the outcomes of human encounters. In this form of egalitarian thought, equality is protected first and foremost through a

⁵⁶ Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism*, 297.

⁵⁷ Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality,” 313.

⁵⁸ Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 48-63.

⁵⁹ Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality,” 313.

dogmatic adherence to a regime of property rights and equal access to the market. This equal access, though, leaves some humans with the means to dominate others because some collect large sums of wealth and leave others dependent on that wealth to meet material needs. Certainly, this market-based strain of the liberal tradition is still active today, but it is not the sum of egalitarian thinking. Industrialization fundamentally changed the terms of human sociality through the sudden and massive accumulation of wealth among very few and the alienation of labor from the accumulation of that wealth. This has heightened the risks for individuals and corporations beyond the state to exercise power over others by virtue of their outsized control over material resources.⁶⁰

Relational egalitarians are concerned with the distribution of goods insofar as that distribution affects one's standing in relation to others. Equal social relations require that parties to the relationship have provision for basic material needs. Put differently, one needs the capabilities to function as a political equal if they are to share that status.⁶¹ Anderson effectively details those capabilities necessary for functioning as free and equal parties to a social relationship. The relationship between one with conditions to actualize their capabilities and one without is typically one of pity rather than respect or reciprocity. Under these conditions, another's status is always lower and they therefore do not bear the respect for equal consideration, which is to say, another is not encountered on their own terms when they are pitied. One can be comfortably held as an object of contempt even while being pitied.

⁶⁰ See, for instance, L.T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism and Other Writings*, ed. James Meadowcroft (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁶¹ Anderson, "What Is the Point of Equality?" 316-320.

Anderson offers the example of the deaf community, who on her account would be ensured access to participate in civil society but not “compensated for the loss of pleasure of hearing,” the latter of the options constituting a form of pity.⁶²

It is useful to ask what the deaf demand on their own account, in the name of justice. Do they bemoan the misery of not being able to hear, and demand compensation for this lack? On the contrary: like the disabled more generally, they resent being cast as poster children for the abled to pity, because they do not want to have to cast their claims as appeals to the condescending benevolence of kindly patrons. Many deaf people identify as part of a separate Deaf community that repudiates the intrinsic choiceworthiness of hearing itself. They insist that sign language is just as valuable a form of communication as is speech and that the other goods obtainable through hearing, such as appreciation of music, are dispensable parts of any conception of good. One needn't pass judgment on the intrinsic choiceworthiness of hearing to appreciate the rhetorical uses of denying it: the Deaf want to cut the hearing down to size, to purge the arrogant assumption of the hearing that the lives of the Deaf are somehow less worth living. They want to make claims on the hearing in a manner that expresses the dignity they see in their lives and community, rather than in a manner that appeals to pity for their condition. They do this by denying that their condition, considered in itself, is anything to be pitied.⁶³

On the Pentecostal view I offer, relations of pity leave those in positions of power unable to recognize the goods within the position being pitied. So, for instance, pitying those living outside of a largely consumerist society might also miss the goods of societies less defined by consumerism. In Anderson's example, by pitying the deaf, hearing people would miss the distinct and manifold ways a particular way of existing in the world has participated in the Spirit of Christ. Interestingly, Anderson places pity alongside contempt as it, unlike compassion which seeks to relieve another's suffering, ranks the suffering of another in relation: they are less fortunate *than me*. Like contempt, pity is a failure to encounter a neighbor.

So, relational equality requires a distribution of material goods that meets everyone's basic needs by equipping their capabilities to function in equal standing. A failure to meet these needs or equip another's capabilities constitutes a form of domination. Domination is a problem

⁶² Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality?” 333.

⁶³ Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality?” 333.

on its own, but it is a particular problem for Pentecostals seeking to overcome contempt.

Domination creates conditions where those in power do not have to encounter or be affected by the dominated classes, whether that be because one group has the resources to live at a distance or because one group is deprived of the resources to participate fully in society. These conditions of distance, as demonstrated in Part One, facilitate social closure and contempt towards others.

One reason relations of pity do not create the same type of mutuality and vulnerability as relational equality is because those in the position to pity others always have the power to rescind their pity and remove material provision from another group. Danielle Allen, while working more closely within a distributionist paradigm, names the threat of accumulation of wealth in her account of domination. Allen builds on Rawls' account of equality by modifying his difference principle, which holds that disparities in a society ought to be to the benefit of those receiving less. For Allen the difference principle ought to become "difference without domination."⁶⁴ Instead of an exclusive focus on the distribution of goods, Allen argues that policies ought to be put up to "strict scrutiny" to consider how the resulting distribution of goods might affect basic liberties and political equality. Which is to say, that one's private pursuits of wealth have the capacity to affect another's basic rights or even access to basic needs of existence. While groups may have the freedom to pursue their lives as they see fit, there simultaneously can exist a capacity for other groups to hold "reserve control," or the ability to end or hamper that freedom. Allen compares this to giving a horse free rein while still reserving for the rider the ability to "reassert constraint at any point."⁶⁵ For Allen, coming to share control over institutions erodes reserve control and creates a more durable sense of public and private equality.

⁶⁴ Allen, "A New Theory of Justice," 45-8.

⁶⁵ Allen, "A New Theory of Justice," 38.

Relational egalitarians would also reject this potential for reserve control because of the resulting unequal social relationships. If publicly naming a grievance is discouraged because of the potential for economic retribution from an employer or a local billionaire, then one does not have equal standing in a society. Anderson names this concern explicitly when she details the economic power employers have to control employees sexual or political lives beyond the contractual agreement held in the workplace.⁶⁶ Such a capacity for reserve control, even in conditions of legal equality, creates unequal relationships. One result of these unequal relationships is that those in power are shielded from hearing those with less power. Such a condition is likely an economically desirable position for employers, but for Pentecostals, such a position alienates Pentecostals from the Spirit and reinscribes contempt towards others.

Pentecostals should take others as political equals because of their potential as participants in the Spirit of Christ, or the potential that in them the Spirit of Christ might be active. Assuming these forms of political relationships surely comes with challenges, which I address in Chapter Six, but it also makes a form of life possible where Pentecostals can curiously seek God in otherness rather than hold difference in contempt. I have demonstrated the theological motivation for moving beyond contempt and the contours of what relations of political equality entail, the next section offers more concrete examples of the potential for sharing life in a way that seeks to encounter difference without seeking to overcome that difference.

⁶⁶ Anderson, *Private Government*, 49.

§4.2 – Preserving a Shared Life

A commitment to relational equality can guide how Pentecostals take others in their pursuit of the Spirit. That commitment, though, is more than an abstract concept laid atop human relations. Instead, that commitment is a gateway to integrating the shared life into a Pentecostal vision for seeking after the Spirit of God. Political equality opens the doors to a full character of life in which difference is sustained and is often a point of tension, but is not something to be feared or held in contempt. Instead, difference is something to be anticipated and encountered. Tensions with difference are the places where God invites us to reconsider ourselves. I suggest that this potential is the great opportunity of democratic politics for Pentecostal life. This section sketches the character of a Pentecostal life unafraid of encountering difference and instead curiously seeking and anticipating the presence of the Spirit in all things.

Chapter Four outlined a theology of encounter that inverted the three dynamics of Pentecostal contempt. Taking others as political equals can on the one hand come as a result of adopting an open pneumatology and a sense of ethical commonality, where all things are potential participants in the Spirit of Christ. On the other hand, the habits of egalitarian political relationships can create a need for the theology of encounter articulated in Chapter Four. As demonstrated in Section Two of this chapter, encounters between equals have the result of eroding contempt and prejudice. As theological reflection offers coherence to new political practices, the achievement is the inversion of threatened postures found in Pentecostal contempt into anticipatory postures that seek out God in all things. This posture of anticipation towards God is one that Pentecostals bring to the altar in prayer and egalitarian relationships can help to facilitate that same posture of anticipation towards the world.

One way to think about the encounter with difference and the life that anticipates difference is by considering the city—an object of Pentecostal contempt in Chapter Three. Iris Marion Young takes city life as a normative ideal.⁶⁷ Idealizing urban life risks alienating people from other walks of life, but with this in mind, consider the way Young describes the erotic character of encountering difference.

City life also instantiates difference as the erotic, in the wide sense of an attraction to the other, the pleasure and excitement of being drawn out of one's secure routine to encounter the novel, strange, and surprising (cf. Barthes, 1986). The erotic dimension of the city has always been an aspect of its fearfulness, for it holds out the possibility that one will lose one's identity, will fall. But we also take pleasure in being open to and interested in people we experience as different. We spend a Sunday afternoon walking through Chinatown, or checking out this week's eccentric players in the park. We look for restaurants, stores, and clubs with something new for us, a new ethnic food, a different atmosphere, a different crowd of people. We walk through sections of the city that we experience as having unique characters which are not ours, where people from diverse places mingle and then go home.⁶⁸

This is the sort of relationship that a Pentecostal commitment to political equality can foster. By assuming the confidence in a Pentecostal narrative as potentially including all walks of life and other narratives, one can encounter difference in a way that is exciting and attractive and an opportunity to encounter the Spirit in new strange ways. This type of exposure has the potential to facilitate a sort of self-reflexiveness whereby “being drawn out of oneself to understand that there are other meanings, practices, perspectives” one can also see themselves in a new light or to detach the given from the necessary.⁶⁹

Compare how Young describes the erotic life of difference to how Keri Day describes the erotic life of Azusa Street. In the sense that Day sees Azusa Street as “a set of erotic events and

⁶⁷ On the unique psychological effects of city life, see: Georg Simmel “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, K.H. Wolff ed., (New York: The Free Press, 1950), 409-424. On the development of the city and the use of order to make life with strangers possible, see: Lyn Lofland, *A World of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press Inc., 1985).

⁶⁸ Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 239.

⁶⁹ Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 240.

encounters that open one up to the other, a welcoming and desire for intimacy and connection not grounded in the erotic worlds of White racial bonding and belonging.”⁷⁰ These encounters were a vulnerable act where one opens themselves up to the other to encounter where one risks “oneself in an encounter that transforms their very self through the other.”⁷¹ In a similar way to Day’s Azusa, Young’s vision for city life facilitates a similar openness whereby one is affected by others and is “drawn out of oneself.” Day describes this dynamic at Azusa as “*one’s route to the other and back to one’s self.*”⁷² The intersubjective experience of this erotic life that Day describes is always an embodied enfolded experience that “demonstrates that human discernment, moral judgement, and agency mature fully through intersubjective experiences that are nonobjectifying.”⁷³ While not encompassing it and certainly not achieving it, these are the types of experiences that a commitment to relations of political equality can make possible.

Young’s understanding of difference and what it means to encounter difference allows for the complexity of city life where people genuinely pursue distinct patterns of life. Encounter, though, does not create a sort of transparency whereby people come to understand one another in their fullness. That type of transparency does not exist even between a person and themselves.⁷⁴ Young sees the ideal of community as avoiding politics because it assumes a sort of unity and glosses over the inevitable differences that exist between subjects.⁷⁵ Even in light of misunderstanding and competing interpretations, it is the possibility of receiving a subject beyond the self that makes encounters with difference both inevitable and attractive. For

⁷⁰ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 116.

⁷¹ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 125.

⁷² Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 125.

⁷³ Day, *Azusa Reimagined*, 125.

⁷⁴ Young’s description of this non-existent transparency is distinct from the type of visibility or transparency for which Wariboko advocates. Young is concerned with claims to know others or the self completely, Wariboko is concerned with unaccountable power and untransparent claims to knowledge that undergird that power.

⁷⁵ Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 231.

Pentecostals, it is preserving this difference, or better put creating communities that allow for difference to flourish, that creates the conditions in which one understands themselves as not the sole bearer of the Spirit, but one unique participant in that Spirit among a multitude of others.

Cooperation under these terms, in which many are understood to participate in the Spirit of Christ facilitates a politics of joining rather than separation or contempt. Others beyond the Christian tradition or those whom I may find strange or even grotesque have the potential to work toward shared outcomes and shared goods. Luke Bretherton has detailed the value of broad-based community organizing to facilitate the types of social relations in which there is not a flattening of difference beneath a homogenizing unity, for Bretherton this is a Hobbesian notion of sovereignty. Instead, Bretherton prefers a “consociational” conceptions of democracy in which individuals pursue their own ends and gain public recognition by their contribution to a larger public good.⁷⁶ Through democratic politics, diverse people can form a common life in which a “civic and penultimate” story is forged, not in place of religious stories but in the midst of many stories overlapping in a time and place.⁷⁷ If contempt constitutes a form of anti-politics that refuses to work out a shared life with others, then encounter is the embrace of politics and the sharing of life with others.

Bretherton’s conception of a common life is a fundamentally public one. People pursuing their own stories come together and forge a unique story together. Forging this shared story is not a way of replacing a Pentecostal account of the Spirit, for Pentecostals a shared story with anyone will always be drenched in the fructifying potential of the Spirit’s work. If Pentecostals take encounter as the same opportunity for holy Spirit-filled living as they historically found in

⁷⁶ See: Luke Bretherton, *Resurrecting Democracy: Faith, Citizenship, and the Politics of a Common Life* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), ch. 7.

⁷⁷ Bretherton, *Resurrecting Democracy*, 91.

contempt, then Pentecostals will become invested in the forging of that story and the preservation of a public. Public things, be they parks, public buses, schools, swimming pools, monuments, or sports leagues, all “furnish the world in which we encounter others, share the experience of being part of something that is larger than ourselves, and work with others, acting in concert, to share it, to democratize it, to better it, to desegregate it, to maintain it.”⁷⁸

Bonnie Honig is right that public things, the things humans share, in one sense constitute the substance of a shared life. What would it mean if Pentecostal fervor were applied not only to moral issues that spark feelings of contempt, but to those issues that would separate people and prevent those encounters between humans? The case I have made here calls for a political agenda in which Pentecostals take serious issue with those social and political factors that keep them from encountering God in their neighbors. In this political agenda, Pentecostals might become ardent advocates of desegregation, public services, the maintenance of civil society, the basic provision of goods, and the protection of minority groups. Certainly, many Pentecostal groups have been involved in movements for each of these issues, but those are typically Pentecostals who experience the contempt of others or the underside of hierarchies. Perhaps taking political relationships as I have described them here can raise new theological questions that similarly inspire other Pentecostals to commit to a politics beyond contempt.

§5 - Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that committing to a shared life among political equals can help Pentecostals move away from Pentecostal contempt. The chapter made three distinct types of arguments that fit together to build an overall picture of one form of political life

⁷⁸ Bonnie Honig, *Public Things: Democracy in Disrepair* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 36.

that can help to overcome Pentecostal contempt. The first of these arguments drew on powerful and consistent findings in existing social scientific thought. These findings, confirming what is often referred to as the Allport thesis, demonstrate that contact between groups under particular conditions reduces prejudice and relations of contempt. Given the power of this evidence, the conditions of contact—1) equal status, 2) cooperation, 3) common goals, and 4) institutional support—necessary for overcoming contempt can shape a Pentecostal politics of encounter.

I gave direct attention to the manner in which the theological arguments made in Chapter Four related to the more explicitly political argument made in this chapter. Rather than an evasive approach that avoids normative political positions, or a unidirectional approach that moves from the theological to the political on a one-to-one basis, I put forth a Pentecostal approach that does not take political or social arrangements as natural or necessary. Instead, this Pentecostal approach preserves space for the Spirit to radically alter a social arrangement, perhaps to resurrect relationships that had been dead or to fructify what had already been. This prioritization of contingency and revisability is normatively engaged and seeks to form social arrangements that transform life and anticipate God's free action.

As such, my appeal to political equality does not rely on an appeal to natural rights or human dignity. Instead, political equality is a human commitment where humans refuse to hold others as inferiors. Such a commitment takes the diverse forms of human creativity as potentially participating in the Spirit and therefore anticipates encounters with God in the encounter with neighbors. Taking others as political equals makes possible a form of life where groups can pursue distinct patterns of life while cooperating in those areas of life that are shared. Through cooperation, sharing, and daily encounter one can begin to acknowledge more fully and consistently the full lives others lead beyond one's own community. Eventually, and with the

right eyes to see, one might see and begin to anticipate the ways others participate in the Spirit of Christ, demonstrating the many ways and places the Spirit of Christ is active beyond our own communities.

This chapter focused primarily on the potential for democratic life to facilitate a Pentecostal reception of difference distinct from Pentecostal contempt. But, what of the many problems and discomforts that come along with that life? Here I characterize those tensions as a type of theological opportunity. But, the questions of moral disagreement are always more complicated than an opportunity to reconsider oneself. The next chapter takes this question head on and considers the benefits and limitations of maintaining political equality when there is substantial moral disagreement.

Chapter 6: Using Democracy II - Disagreement, Deliberation, and Exclusion

§1 – Introduction

At the end of his biography of William Seymour, Gastón Espinosa argues that there exists a relationship between Pentecostalism's explosive growth and its propensity for fracture. It was the historian of American religions, Grant Wacker, who argued that Pentecostalism had captured lightning in a bottle by balancing primitive and pragmatic impulses. This balance, as Wacker argued, allowed for the maintenance of direct experiences with God and the longer-term formation of institutions. In response, though, Espinosa acknowledges that while Pentecostals may have caught lightning in a bottle at Azusa Street, the bottle cracked soon after as those Pentecostals seeking to “work off” their direct experience with God sought out to found their own ministries and denominations loosed from the restrictions of external denominational authority.¹ In fact, this propensity to break off from authority and found new ministries and denominations is “part of the spiritual DNA of global Pentecostalism.”² Fracture is so much so part of Pentecostalism's DNA that there were, as of 2014, 23,000 Pentecostal denominations globally.³

Certainly, the tensions of direct experience of God and the formation of denominational authority are at play in Pentecostalism's many fractures. Espinosa sees the propensity for fracture as a positive element in the growth of Pentecostalism and perhaps even an inevitable outcome of

¹ Gastón Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 154.

² Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 154.

³ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 154. On the dynamic nature of religious change, see: Thomas Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008). On the nature of human community to religious structure, see: Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

a Pentecostal spirituality.⁴ Each of these fractures, though, has its own story and controversy that resulted in a decision to separate from another. Of course, separation in times of controversy or disagreement is sometimes necessary, but when it is the only or primary way of navigating significant difference then there is an indication that what Espinosa is characterizing as “fracture” is perhaps the result of an overactive sense of contempt for difference. How, though, can Pentecostals think about significant disagreement beyond contempt? This chapter undertakes this engagement.

The previous chapter articulated a vision for a Pentecostal politics of encounter that moves from a theological vision of encounter with God in the face of the other to a political egalitarianism. Political equality, as relational status between persons, is one way to organize a life where persons are able to exercise their own moral capacities while respecting others’ freedom to do so as political equals. Ultimately, this type of political arrangement can create conditions in which people can encounter one another in their differences by taking those differences as opportunities rather than risks. The habits of democracy help to move beyond contempt and its resulting fear. All of this might seem a bit rosy or naive, though, given the deep social divides that are a part of a life shared by political equals. What of the ferocious political contests and vehement criticisms of moral and political opponents? What of the struggles for influence and power needed to implement a vision for a better society? What of my enemies?

One way to frame these questions is under the challenge of moral disagreement. In a society of political equals seeking to share life with one another there inevitably exist deep moral disagreements that just do not seem to be going away. Even when certain moral issues drift to the background, new moral issues or old but revived moral issues have a way of replacing moral

⁴ Thank you to Erica Ramirez for directing me to this element in Espinosa’s thought.

questions in the foreground. I will have more to say in later sections about what constitutes a moral issue worthy of deliberation, but suffice it now to say, that there will always be difficult moral challenges to sharing life under conditions of substantial pluralism. What's more, Pentecostal ways of understanding the world would seem to make these rifts even deeper and these chasms even harder to bridge. As always charged with the activity of Spirit(s), be they the Holy Spirit anointing a given leader or demonic forces empowering an enemy, Pentecostals have a way of supercharging existing divides. This is certainly true under the conditions of Pentecostal contempt as those coded as opponents or even those who would offer contrary information are taken as beyond the activity of the Holy Spirit, ethically dubious, and a threat to Pentecostal futures. So, what to do?

Throughout this chapter I defend a simple answer to a complex problem: talk to people. Put differently, this chapter defends that assuming a burden of reciprocity is a helpful but limited tool for navigating moral disagreement. A "burden of reciprocity" might seem an odd way to characterize merely talking to those with whom one might disagree, but it helps to connect my argument to larger traditions of thought around democratic equality and deliberative democracy. At times I will rely on the language of "deliberation," because it has the connotation of talking about specific issues and naming points of disagreement; but one should not read too rigid notion of deliberation or deliberative democracy. I readily admit many shortcomings in deliberation for engaging the substantial pluralisms Pentecostals already face. As I describe the utility and limitations of democratic habits in later sections, it should become clear which features I take as useful. As was the case with political equality, the purpose of deliberation is not some sort of consensus or compromise—though both of those can, at times, be achieved and can even be

good—but an encounter with those with whom one may significantly disagree or even see as participating in the demonic.

At this time it will be helpful to comment on my use of the “demonic” and how it fits into my larger argument. Make no mistake, gauging the potential for deliberation to help Pentecostals navigate moral disagreement by no means signals that I have aspirations for Pentecostals to abandon Pentecostal ways of speaking. The purpose of this chapter is not to correct a teaching of the demonic or to shame Pentecostals for drawing on the category. In fact, while this chapter does not attempt to offer a full account of the demonic, it does suggest that accusations that another may be participating in the demonic come with burdens owed to those against whom such a charge is leveled. When Pentecostals draw on the language of the demonic, they are not drawing on official teachings, per se, but drawing on a salient category for understanding evil. As such, there do not exist uniform conceptions of the demonic as the salient use of that language is typically an outgrowth of local cosmologies and inherited Christian traditions. I hope to maintain the demonic as a way of understanding persistent evil in the world and I offer contributions to this form of reasoning below. Some Pentecostals will draw on the demonic in order to understand moral opponents and others may not; either way, there is no clean break between moral and spiritual discernment because, for Pentecostals, God or the demonic are connected to the moral or immoral life. Offering a plausible account of deliberation’s usefulness will need to accommodate and even enhance, though not necessitate, these Pentecostal ways of speaking politically. As such, this chapter concerns not whether demons exist, but what do we owe to those we take to be participating in the demonic? How long can we sustain life with them?

As a helpful tool for navigating moral disagreement, deliberation becomes a means of sustaining difference rather than overcoming it. However, there will exist times when the sources of moral disagreement are “beyond the pale” or in opposition to the norms that make sustained moral disagreement possible.⁵ White supremacist racial hierarchies are one example of this sort of argument; Nazism is another. When encounter reaches its limits, how can Pentecostals then think about exclusion in a way avoids ultimacy and sustains room for hope that the Spirit might bring life from death?

This chapter is divided into five sections. Following this introduction, Section Two next considers the challenge of persisting moral disagreement. Many ways of characterizing political opponents, especially in areas of moral disagreement, utilize language and concepts that can quickly slide into or draw from Pentecostal contempt. The challenge of persistent moral disagreement, while acute for Pentecostals, is not unique for Pentecostals. As such, my struggles with persistent moral disagreement, and contempt more broadly, can serve as a guide for others experiencing similar tensions. With this challenge in view, Section Three then considers the potential for democratic habits, particularly the burden of reciprocity, as way Pentecostals might navigate this challenge. While certain accounts of democratic life and reciprocity in particular are not useful for Pentecostals, more chastened and inclusive versions can be; rather than excluding Pentecostals, I demonstrate that the burdens of reciprocity not only accommodate but *enhance* many Pentecostal ways of speaking about Spirit(s). Next, Section Four reflects on the fact that while deliberation is a useful tool under certain circumstances, deliberation has its

⁵ I take the language of “beyond the pale” Robert B. Talisse, *Sustaining Democracy: What We Owe to the Other Side* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 58. Others, including Talisse, have referred to this sort of difference as being “unreasonable.” Both are intended to designate what is outside the boundaries of a society of equals. For Rawls’ account of reasonability and unreasonableness, an account on which I do not necessarily rely, see: John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 49-51; 64. For a critical engagement with Rawls’ exclusion of the unreasonable person, see: Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), ch. 8.

limits. This section considers the limits of deliberation with a return to Azusa Street. At Azusa William Seymour oversaw a radically inclusive community that also had to reckon with forces seeking to use that inclusion in order to undo it. Maintaining the conditions that allow for vulnerable encounter with difference require a clear-eyed understanding of the ongoing threats to encounter. Various critics of egalitarianism have pointed out that tolerance and inclusion require certain forms of intolerance and exclusion. This section bites that bullet and names the necessity of a limited exclusion for sustaining encounter. Exclusion is never ultimate and must be undergirded by a hope in the Spirit's power to bring forth life and resurrect social relationships in states beyond human repair. The chapter concludes by considering the limits of politics and the value of Pentecostal hope.

§2 – The Challenge of Moral Disagreement

The challenge of moral disagreement I confront here is unique to democratic societies with commitments to some sort of political equality. For those societies without commitments to political equality, moral disagreement certainly poses a problem, but that problem is perhaps better stated as a challenge of moral deviation. This is because elites or those in positions of power opt for choosing—or assuming—moral ends and then implementing or enforcing those ends with little to no consultation.⁶ Catholic integralists might take significant moral disagreement as a threat to the souls of a community and leverage a “pastoral” coercion to exclude those forms of moral practice or views from a society, be they queer people,

⁶ “Elites” is often an overused strawman bearing little meaning. Here, I use the term to signal those in positions of decision-making power rather than a pejorative for political opponents. For a similar use of “elites” also demonstrating the epistemic shortcomings of elite segregation, see: Elizabeth Anderson, “Fair Opportunity in Education: A Democratic Equality Perspective,” *Ethics* 117 (July 2007), 595-622.

communists, or Calvinists.⁷ The key difference is that a strong commitment to political equality allows for moral disagreement to flourish in a way that allows for a particular form of politics. In this context, moral disagreement becomes a persisting reality requiring particular habits and impulses to navigate that reality without sliding into contempt. This section takes stock of the persisting challenge of moral disagreement and the allure of Pentecostal contempt as a means of confronting that reality.

§2.1 – Persisting Moral Disagreement

Chapter One outlined many of the larger trends and conditions that render the presence of difference more visible, arguing that the felt presence of difference is endemic to modernity and therefore demands a reckoning from those who inhabit the modern world. However, one does not need a detailed description of the modern epoch to know that there exists widespread difference in moral views. Issues of sexuality, the distribution of material goods, the massive expansion of prisons and policing, the tensions between individual freedoms and duties to larger collectives, and a near endless list of other issues make up the substance of moral disagreement. While this list is more proximate to a North Atlantic world, the issues represented there often show up in multiple contexts in addition to manifold other issues of moral concern. Certainly, the shape of these disagreements shift and change over time. For instance, the grammar of debates over racial segregation have shifted from moral claims concerning the necessity of racial separation to concerns over property rights and individual freedoms. But the presence of moral disagreement remains consistent and there is good reason to believe that moral disagreement will continue to persist.

⁷ See, Thomas Crean and Alan Fimister, *Integralism: A Manual for Political Philosophy* (Havertown, PA: Eurospan, 2020).

It is not necessarily the content of each moral disagreement that guarantee the persistence of those disagreements, but rather several limiting factors that make moral disagreement an inevitable part of life. Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson consider both “the lure of self-interest” and “the human condition” as contributing factors to human disagreement.⁸ The first of these factors is relatively straight forward, referring to the reality that humans seem to often advocate for what is in their own self-interest. While self-interest is often a factor in human decision making, it is not a necessary factor nor are human decisions reducible to self-interest as existing moral factors also contribute to decision making.⁹ Further, reducing disagreement to competing self-interests risks distorting what is actually at stake for many involved. Those opposing abortion rights may have some self-interest in their opposition, but they are more self-consciously acting on perceived moral commitments.¹⁰

Instead of characterizing moral disagreement as a competition of self-interests, Gutmann and Thompson see multiple factors contributing to the persistence of moral disagreement. Scarcity and limited generosity offer one layer of moral disagreement, though they alone neither create nor necessitate that disagreement. In fact, it is often differing values that guide understandings of how resources should be distributed. If one holds a value that only “hard work” should be rewarded, that value will guide their understanding of to whom goods should be distributed or withheld. In contrast, one might hold a differing view that all humans, by virtue of being human, are due a certain basic distribution of goods. Imagine, further, a moral conflict over access to abortion. A concern for resource distribution does not capture all of the issues at

⁸ Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement: Why Moral Conflict Cannot be Avoided in Politics, and What Should be Done About It* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 18-26.

⁹ Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, 25.

¹⁰ For one important study confirming this thesis with regards to abortion in the United States, see: Kristen Lucker, *Abortion & the Politics of Motherhood* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

stake in this conversation, though for some, market mobility for one bearing a child is at stake. Instead, there is a larger conflict over values such as autonomy, choice, life, and personhood, all of which are variously defined. Perhaps it is the case that differing values could be negotiated and the larger disputes find resolution, but a final factor makes such resolution to moral conflicts unlikely. Gutmann and Thompson name “incomplete understanding” as the final factor justifying their claim that persistent moral disagreement is inevitable.¹¹ Lacking perfect or complete understanding makes the resolution of deeply divided conflicts over incongruent values unlikely. Further, even with congruent values, a lack of understanding will create differing views on how to best achieve those values. As such, the reality of persistent moral disagreement ought to be taken as a fact not to be overcome, but as a reality under conditions of substantial pluralism.

Gutmann and Thompson offer a philosophical defense of something that will seem obvious to most anyone who has lived through a news cycle. People will continue to disagree on moral grounds. If moral disagreement will not be overcome and if, as I have argued, there is good reason to maintain a commitment to political equality, then the question for Pentecostals is how best to inhabit or navigate those disagreements. Section Three will point to deliberation as one helpful tool for navigating disagreement. But for deliberation to be helpful for Pentecostals, it will need to enhance Pentecostal discernment of Spirit(s) in the context of moral disagreement. Making that case requires that I first demonstrate the felt tension moral disagreement creates for Pentecostals and the detrimental effects Pentecostal contempt has on discernment, I do that in the following section.

¹¹ Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, 25.

§2.2 – *Moral Disagreement’s Challenge for Pentecostals*

The previous section discussed moral disagreement in relatively abstract terms, simply to show that it is a reality that will persist. This section sharpens the last by demonstrating the unique challenge moral disagreement poses for Pentecostals.¹² Perhaps the most immediate challenge that moral disagreement creates for Pentecostals is that it makes Pentecostal contempt seem attractive. What’s more, the contemptuous approach to moral disagreement makes moral and spiritual discernment, which are for Pentecostals not clearly delineated, less reliable and subject to the effects of group polarization. Remember that both case studies of Pentecostal contempt in Part One showed a reliance on mischaracterization and stereotype formed at a distance from objects of contempt. Here, I am making a measured judgement that reliance on less and wrong information does not make for better moral or spiritual discernment. All in all, Pentecostal contempt is unreliable for Pentecostals seeking to discern and participate in the activity of the Spirit.

Given the account of Pentecostal contempt I have offered throughout this project, why would contempt seem an attractive option in the face of moral disagreement? Consider that conditions of political equality require a level of tolerance for those holding views that may seem reprehensible. Tolerance does not necessarily mean cooperation with a reprehensible view, but it can certainly feel like it. Certainly, banning those books or educational offerings would seem the more faithful approach if one *truly* believes the views held therein to be evil. Is one not complicit with the very evil they oppose if they tolerate its existence? This dynamic is not at all unique to

¹² This is not to say that only Pentecostals feel these challenges, but that I am going to consider these challenges as they manifest uniquely for Pentecostals.

Pentecostals, and political philosopher Robert Talisse refers to it as “the democrat’s dilemma.”¹³

Talisse characterizes the dilemma well:

When it comes to the political issues that we regard as most urgent, we place correspondingly high value on achieving justice. This means that in such cases we assign a high moral importance to our political success. In a democracy, our political success is a matter of prevailing over our opponents. Under such circumstances, then, upholding the democratic ethos seems perverse. Engaging civilly with those on the other side *credits* them in some way. It therefore *empowers* them. In many other contexts we would call this behavior *complicity*.¹⁴

Talisse’s account is not unique to Pentecostals; it represents a larger dilemma in democratic life.

However, considering the coherent answer Pentecostal contempt offers to the democrat’s dilemma can show the unique theological challenge moral disagreement poses for Pentecostal public life.

Start in the middle of Pentecostal contempt. Here, moral disagreement sparks a sense of ethical exceptionalism in the face of a seemingly reprehensible opponent. Consider how obvious the moral correctness of one’s position often seems for the one holding it. Abortion *clearly* takes a life. Same-sex marriage is *clearly* a distortion of God’s design. Pentecostals often enter conversations around these moral questions with an already high confidence in their capacity to discern where the Spirit of God is active. As an experientially driven movement, there is also a high confidence of God’s activity and attachment to our own lives. Contentious moral disagreements are moments where the Spirit empowers Pentecostals to make the hard choice and do what is right, to be salt and light in an otherwise lost world. So, breaking away from others in a strong fashion and refusing to consider any points of view or positions that may be taken as the voice of the enemy, is a sign of faithfulness.

¹³ Robert B. Talisse, *Sustaining Democracy: What We Owe to the Other Side* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 4.

¹⁴ Talisse, *Sustaining Democracy*, 66.

There exists coherent theological payoff for clear and decisive action that breaks or separates from moral opponents. But the additional layer that makes Pentecostal contempt attractive in moments of moral disagreement is that there does not exist a parallel obvious theological payoff for tolerating or maintaining conversation with moral opponents. How could hearing the enemy's case or considering that which I know to be sin ever demonstrate faithfulness to God coherently in a Pentecostal frame? Moral disagreement makes the allure of Pentecostal contempt quite compelling.

But, for all its expressive decisiveness, does Pentecostal contempt offer a reliable guide to moral and Spiritual discernment? There is good reason to doubt that it does. In fact, there is good reason to suspect that Pentecostal contempt can severely cloud an individual or community's perceptions of God and neighbor. Contempt stigmatizes some other and as a result forms an insider group of those who are by virtue of their proximity to the activity of the Spirit more trustworthy and worthy of consultation. Those held as objects of contempt are, as a feature of contempt, not included in a discernment or consultation process.¹⁵

Recall the case of White Pentecostals in Chapter Three, where racial segregation and conditions of White supremacist oppression created perceived material inequalities that required an explanation. Due to the lack of significant interaction or meaningful contact between White and Black people, White people then had little information to draw on when creating explanations for perceived material inequalities. This avoidant ignorance of others itself constitutes a form of contempt. Ultimately, White understandings of Black people are made out of ignorance and material investment in distributive inequalities and therefore draw on

¹⁵ My use of "discernment process" here denotes those local processes whereby a community or individual considers a moral position. These processes vary at different times and places. In this chapter I make the case that habits of deliberation that take opponents as political equals will enhance those discernment processes.

stereotypes and limited social scripts. The result in Chapter Three was not merely racist stereotyping from White people, but an understanding of God's activity that was informed by the same faulty reasoning and limited information that perpetuate racist stereotypes. Conditions of contempt limit the pool of available information and render worse moral decisions and worse discernment of the Spirit's activity. It may seem odd to group White perceptions of Black people into a conversation on the challenge of moral disagreement. But those anti-Black perceptions that were perpetuated through stereotype were typically moral evaluations of Black communities. Moral evaluations made at a distance without consultation are poorly informed.

Now, I have made the case at length in Part One of this dissertation that Pentecostal contempt distorts perceptions of God and neighbor. The case has demonstrated that contempt-driven social closure cuts Pentecostal communities off from relevant information, information that would be learned through the experience of encounter. However, there is additional reason to find discernment under conditions of contempt wanting. Closed or homogenous communities are more susceptible to the effects of group polarization.

Group polarization, or belief polarization, concerns a well-documented social phenomenon in which after consulting with others sharing similar views, individuals express more extreme versions of those views than they held prior to consultation.¹⁶ So, if an individual holding a belief, say, that critical race theory is a problem in schools enters into a conversation with a group of like-minded people, individuals will leave the conversation with more extreme versions of their views. Speaking of the ubiquity of this phenomenon, Talisse says,

Belief polarization is surprisingly common. It has been extensively studied for more than six decades and found to be operative within groups of all kinds, formal and informal. Importantly, belief polarization does not discriminate between different kinds of belief. Like-minded groups polarize regardless of whether they agree upon banal matters of fact,

¹⁶ For a detailed description of this phenomenon, see: Cass R. Sunstein, "Deliberative Trouble? Why Groups Go to Extremes," *The Yale Law Journal* vol. 110 no. 1 (October, 2000), 71-119.

matters of personal taste, or deep questions about value. What's more, the phenomenon operates regardless of the explicit *point* of the group's interaction. Like minded groups polarize when they are trying to decide on an action that the group will take, but they polarize also when there is no specific decision to be reached. Finally, the phenomenon is prevalent regardless of group member's nationality, race, gender, religion, economic status, and level of education.¹⁷

When group polarization occurs, research finds that groups are more likely to misrepresent opponents, even listening less and interrupting more in later conversations.¹⁸ So, when a group of like-minded individuals gather and discuss an ideological position, about which they all agreed to varying degrees prior to speaking, those individuals will typically leave with more confidence and holding to stronger versions of the position.

This social dynamic is not limited to ideological conversations, but also occurs in relation to remembered and apparently ideologically neutral facts. Talisse cites a case of subjects who “agree that a particular city is notably high above sea level” who after discussion with one another “adopt increasingly exaggerated assessments of its elevation.”¹⁹ The same study demonstrates the phenomenon with relation to how attractive a group finds a certain celebrity. After speaking with others who enter a conversation finding celebrity x attractive, individuals found that celebrity even more attractive.²⁰ Group polarization names this well-documented phenomenon: when people talk to others sharing assumptions, their views move further in that direction, they leave more confident, and more willing to take risky action in relation to those newly hardened views.

¹⁷ Talisse, *Sustaining Democracy*, 80.

¹⁸ Jacob Westfall, Leaf Van Boven, John R. Chambers, and Charles M. Judd, “Perceiving Political Polarization in the United States: Party Identity Strength and Attitude Extremity Exacerbate the Perceived Partisan Divide,” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 10 (2015), 145-158.

¹⁹ Talisse, *Sustaining Democracy*, 83. Citing: John C. Turner *et al.* *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 153.

²⁰ Turner *et al.*, *Rediscovering the Social Group*, 153.

The mechanisms driving group polarization are debated with varying weight often given to dynamics such as social pressure or conformity. However, one intuitive mechanism concerns the available arguments within a community. Given that those in a homogenous community enter conversation already finding certain arguments persuasive, arguments moving further in that direction are more salient to the given community. Further, the character of the epistemic ecosystem better represents one sort of argument than another. As such, individuals will be more familiar with and therefore offer more and better arguments in favor of the views they already held. This “limited argument pool” will favor drift in one direction and not others.²¹

The concern over group polarization is not intended to suggest that there is some preferable “marketplace of ideas” where all positions should be equally relevant. Instead, it is better to place this social phenomenon within the context of Pentecostal receptions of difference, or in this chapter, Pentecostal receptions of those with whom they disagree over moral issues. Conditions of contempt that rule others as undeserving of consideration make moral and spiritual discernment worse because Pentecostals are unable to consider the substance of the disagreement. Pentecostals, then, end up relying on stereotype and faulty information to characterize moral and political opponents as objects of moral scorn. In fact, this is one of the values the ethicist Carina Fourie assigns to relational equality: finding oneself in a position of superiority causes cognitive distortion. She states:

Being treated as superior could lead to self-deception as it may be necessary to develop a false notion of reality and a distorted conception of self and others in order to maintain belief in the ‘justice’ of the social system and to help to maintain a good conscience in the face of the humiliation and degradation of others.²²

²¹ Sunstein, “Deliberative Trouble?” 89.

²² Carina Fourie, “What is Social Equality? An Analysis of Status Equality as a Strongly Egalitarian Ideal,” *Res Publica* 18 (2012), 120.

Contempt and the resulting self-aggrandizement may be a therapeutic tool for navigating the discomforts of modern life, but they are not reliable guides to moral discernment.

Consider one example of the phenomenon from personal experience. A Pentecostal church at which I had previously worked had a rise in young people interested in more apparently “political” conversations. I was no longer working at the church at this time, but this occurred around the 2016 presidential election and as the demographic trends would suggest, these young people trended progressive. One consistent area of conversation concerned different feminist issues and the status of women. Younger women voiced concern for preserving safe access to abortion, though, this was a complicated issue for many of them as young Pentecostals. During a visit of mine back to this church, I heard stories recounted from multiple perspectives, one of which was from a woman probably in her fifties who was married to the lead pastor of the church. In her recounting, the “political turn” (my phrase) of the young people was all fine and good. She also saw no problem with the fact that they were repulsed by soon to be President Trump. However, there were certain things the young women were saying that were on her account “just not Christian.” The boundaries of what was harmless political conversation and what political conversation became “just not Christian” were never clearly stated, but when one crossed that line they were faced with a strong response.

After voicing this conclusion to the group of younger women, it became obvious that such conversations about the status of women would not be met with the same tolerance as other issues. Older generations of Pentecostals were not going to entertain the slow drift away from what they perceived as “Christian” perspectives in the younger Pentecostals’ conversations. These young women were met with contempt and took this experience as a cue that they could not have these conversations in this community, nor even comfortably hold these views in this

community. The overwhelming majority of these young people eventually left the community or learned to bite their tongues while directly participating in that community.

The issue here, which I am calling group polarization, is not that a community discerned a conservative conclusion on a moral issue. The issue is that no process of discernment occurred. The previous consensus was guarded from reckoning with a newly present form of difference and certain forms of dissent were made unwelcome. Homogeneity won the day by refusing to engage with difference and as such ensured even more homogeneity in future times of moral and spiritual discernment.

To sum up the argument thus far, treating others as political equals is a nice sentiment, but it comes with significant challenges. Not least among these challenges is the persistent reality of moral disagreement. Tolerating moral disagreement can feel like complicity by allowing the reprehensible to continue. Pentecostal contempt, though, does not offer a reliable guide for moral and Spiritual discernment. By failing to hear and respond to the views of those with whom one might disagree, Pentecostal contempt is vulnerable to dynamics of group polarization and therefore less able to recognize or even listen to dissenting voices. If contempt is an unreliable approach to moral disagreement, then, what would offer a more reliable guide to such an uncomfortable reality?

§3 – The Potential for Democratic Communication

Democratic theorists have considered at length what it means for equal citizens to share a common civic life in the midst of significant moral disagreement. This may seem an odd resource for Pentecostals given many of these theorist's historic propensity to privilege

rationalistic voices and exclude explicitly religious reasons.²³ However, the habits of democratic life, or what is often called deliberation, have promise for helping Pentecostals navigate issues of moral disagreement. Further, given the problems moral disagreement might pose for Pentecostal discernment, these same habits bear potential for enhancing Pentecostal moral discernment and better equipping Pentecostals to navigate difference beyond contempt. While the particularities of these habits can take many forms, what I have in mind is the taking on of a burden of reciprocity. Put differently, giving an account of oneself and hearing another's account of themselves on issues of moral disagreement has the potential to help people see how to engage with and live with these differences without appealing to the recourse of contempt.²⁴

§3.1 – *Changing Notions of Democratic Communication*

Say the words “civil discourse” in a graduate school seminar room, and the resulting groans will demonstrate the shallow restrictive legacies of “civility” and “deliberation.” The earliest theorists to consciously theorize the potential for deliberation as a solution to disagreement in democratic settings prioritized synthesis of ideas as a goal for deliberation. These goals typically imagined a process whereby competing interests could gather and share reasons without the use of coercive power. Such a process imagined a literal exchange of reasons over policy goals whereby the process could render some sort of mutually agreeable conclusion, whether that be a compromise or a consensus around one position. The first generations of deliberative democrats had a narrower conception of what types of reasons and ways of

²³ For a critique of deliberative democracy's privileging of particular, often male, rationalistic ways of deliberating, see: Lynn Sanders, “Against Deliberation,” *Political Theory* vol. 25 no. 3 (1997), 347-376.

²⁴ The language of “giving an account of oneself” is taken from Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005). For a compelling application of this practice to a religious studies context experiencing substantial pluralism, see: Paul Dafydd Jones, “Cheerful Unease: Theology and Religious Studies,” in *Religious Studies and Rabbis: A Conversation*, ed. Elizabeth Shanks Alexander and Beth A. Berkowitz (New York: Routledge, 2017), 69-81.

communicating could work in deliberative settings. It could often seem that anyone who felt strongly about an issue and might raise their voice would be ill-suited for the type of communication the early deliberative democrats imagined. The understanding of what practices counted as deliberation and the goals of that deliberation were so narrow and rationalistically driven, that most religious modes of thinking and communicating were taken as little more than pollutants to the imagined “pure” deliberative environment.²⁵

Since the first generation of deliberative democrats, a second generation of thinkers have complicated many of the previous standards, goals, and assumptions of deliberation in favor of a more capacious notion of deliberation.²⁶ The imagination for the goals of deliberation as well as what counts as deliberation have shifted significantly. These later thinkers maintain continuity with the first generation of thinkers, particularly in the value of respect and non-coercion, but differ over the goals of deliberation, with less immediate focus on consensus building and compromise and more focus on clarifying conflict and maintaining open lines of communication.²⁷ Further, while earlier deliberative democrats, such as Habermas, were concerned with the manipulative or strategic effects that affective or emotional engagement would have on rational deliberation, later thinkers recognize the necessity of including these capacities for motivating people and including more traditions of communication.²⁸ Further, while there still exist powerful cases for maintaining difficult conversations on issues of moral

²⁵ On the development of Habermas’s thought with regards to religion, see: Phillippe Portier, “Religion and Democracy in the Thought of Jürgen Habermas,” *Culture and Society* 48 (2011), 426-432.

²⁶ For a narrative complicating the characterization of deliberative democrats as generations, see: J.S. Dryzek, “Reflections on the Theory of Deliberative Systems,” *Critical Policy Studies* 10 (2016), 209. For an overview of the developments in deliberative theory, see: Andre Bächtiger, John S. Dryzek, Jane Mansbridge, and Mark Warren, “Deliberative Democracy: An Introduction,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, ed. Andre Bächtiger *et al* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1-32.

²⁷ Bächtiger, Dryzek, Mansbridge, and Warren, “Deliberative Democracy,” 4.

²⁸ See Danielle Allen’s critique of Habermas in *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), ch. 5.

disagreement, there now exist convincing reasons to consider expressions of rage or grief as contributing to democratic life.²⁹

The use of deliberation, as I name it here, is apt for Pentecostals and does not rule out other models of agonistic politics. Certain critiques, such as that leveled by Chantal Mouffe, point to the hopes for deliberation as not only overly restrictive and out of touch but also naïve about the role of power in politics. For Mouffe, politics is always about the construction of a “we,” which necessarily results in the construction of an identity and the simultaneous construction of a “they.”³⁰ The difficulty is preserving a space for agonistic politics without creating antagonistic politics, of the transformation of a we/they into a friend/enemy relationship in the Schmittian sense.³¹ Agonistic politics requires channeling these adversarial relationships, which are a struggle between differing irreconcilable hegemonic projects into agreed up on democratic procedures.

Mouffe’s model of agonistic politics is not significantly different than a proceduralist approach to democratic life nor does it offer helpful tools for Pentecostal politics, especially when Pentecostals are experiencing the conditions of Pentecostal contempt. As I have demonstrated, Pentecostal contempt creates distorted pictures of neighbors and God leaving Pentecostals hamstrung in their quest to follow the Spirit. It is unlikely that Mouffe very often thinks about Pentecostals if at all, but the agonistic model might take Pentecostal contempt as an inevitable outcome of competing hegemonic projects which no “rational” solution can overcome. However, this would assume a too stagnant view of identities and would dismiss the internal Pentecostal concern with discerning the Spirit well. Rationalistic liberals do not have a monopoly

²⁹ See: Myisha Cherry, *The Case for Rage: Why Anger is Essential to Anti-Racist Struggle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

³⁰ Chantal Mouffe, *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically* (New York: Verso, 2013), 5.

³¹ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 33.

on talking to other people. The type of deliberation I am proposing here is not concerned with locating singular rational solutions to moral problems, but with hearing and encountering others. Of course, this process of listening might render new creative solutions, but that is not the sole purpose of the encounter.

To gain the value of deliberation, one need not adopt the same restrictive postures as early deliberative democrats. Further, deliberation need not imply a reduction of politics to mere “talking it out” and finding a solution. There will be moments of intense disagreement to be sure. But, perhaps there is still some value in preserving democratic communication as a tool, even if it does not solve every political problem. With this in mind, though, what has made that difficult for Pentecostals, or what are the potential roadblocks going into those conversations?

§3.2 – Democratic Communication as a Particular Problem for Pentecostals

Much of the literature in this chapter is oriented toward democratic politics more generally, so it is important to keep in mind the particular tensions for Pentecostals navigating moral disagreement. This is not to say that Pentecostals necessarily have a worse time entering into democratic communication, but to say that there is often a tension between the full account of Pentecostal faith and practice and the demands of democratic life. Consider first that Pentecostalism relies on a high level of interiority and that this can be difficult to communicate to others in a way they might easily understand. Even worse, this can be a difficult thing to have a conversation about with others. So, when interior perceptions of the Spirit’s activity are driving Pentecostal action, be they generated from prayer, spiritual perceptions, or words of prophecy, introducing that reason into democratic communication will prove difficult.

Second, consider that along with interiority, there exist for Pentecostals a high value placed on authority. This is not to say that Pentecostals unreflectively accept authority, though

sometimes they might, but to say that over time different individuals develop a level of authority as trusted sources for both interpreting the Scriptures but also for hearing the Spirit. So, even if someone does not rely on their own sense of interiority as a motivator for action, there can be external authorities relying on interiority. Perhaps a prophet making a claim to exclusive religious knowledge where the prophet's authority is internal to the prophet, but the prophet's authority is external to the follower of the prophet. The rub for democratic politics, is that these spiritual authorities do not have the same processes for legitimation as democratic authorities and therefore are not widely accepted. This is not to say that Pentecostal processes of legitimating authority are somehow illegitimate, but to say that they are not processes that generate widely recognized legitimacy. Other people often do not care what our prophets have to say.

The third unique tension for Pentecostals entering into political life is that there is a particular metaphysics at work. As I have stated, the shape of this metaphysics changes from place to place, but for Pentecostals there is often more “ontological furniture” in the room.³² The existence of these actors, be they angels, demons, or God, is not a problem for Pentecostals, but it creates a tension for offering an account of Pentecostal moral and political views to others who might not agree on the existence of those actors.

That each of these categories—an interior spiritual life, the existence of spiritual authorities, or the recognition of non-human actors—might strike others as odd is not the substance of the tension. The tension comes at the point that each of these factors can create a wall where there is nothing else to talk about. If you do not recognize this, then we cannot continue speaking. Such an effect, without assigning fault, makes contempt a more salient tool for navigating disagreement and conditions of group polarization more likely. How, then, can

³² Of course other Christians and religious groups experience this tension, but the extent to which it exists likely signals that those Christians would fit under the banner of what I am calling “Pentecostal.”

Pentecostals think about democratic communication in a way that does not demand leaving their Pentecostalism at the door while also maintaining significant forms of religious and epistemic difference throughout the conversation?

§3.3 – *The Potential for Pentecostal Reciprocity*

Accepting the burdens of reciprocity has the potential to open conversation where it might otherwise be shut down. Reciprocity among a community of political equals requires that people take seriously the concerns of others in building a shared life, which is to say that all members of the community have standing to be heard and considered. As such, reciprocity entails that no one group consistently sacrifices so that others may have more.³³ Beneath this is an assumption that all citizens work from limited knowledge. Therefore, hearing and responding to the concerns and interests of others allows a community of equals to make adjustments based on feedback.³⁴ Danielle Allen characterizes this as “recalibration to undo, or redress, or fix encroachments” on freedom.³⁵ Habits of reciprocity, then, have at their core the intuition that people ought to be responsive to other people; that we can share reasons in order to collectively solve problems. This commitment to mutual responsiveness can take the form of “redress for grievances” in judicial settings, or it can look more like “deliberative practices that recognize and reciprocate sacrifices that some members of the polity bear on behalf of others.”³⁶

³³ See: Danielle Allen, *Talking to Strangers*, chs. 8-9.

³⁴ See: Elizabeth Anderson, “The Epistemology of Democracy,” *Episteme* (2006), 8-22.

³⁵ Danielle Allen, “A New Theory of Justice: Difference without Domination,” in *Difference without Domination: Pursuing Justice in Diverse Democracies*, Danielle Allen and Rohini Somanathan eds. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 41.

³⁶ Allen, “A New Theory of Justice,” 41. For a larger account that includes judicial review as the substance of democratic participation, see: Cristina Lafont, *Democracy Without Shortcuts: A Participatory Conception of Deliberative Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), esp. ch. 8.

As a burden for those assuming the habits of democratic life, reciprocity requires that each one responds to another's given reasons on issues of moral concern.³⁷ This requires a level of listening and investing in understanding another's reasons, which could be reasons in favor of something or criticisms of a given view. Consider the case of abortion. Reciprocity would require that one holding a pro-life view take seriously by becoming familiar with and speaking to the claims of another who holds a pro-choice view or is skeptical of the pro-life view, rather than responding by questioning whether an opponent is acting in good faith or theorizing the *real* reasons a person holds their view. Elizabeth Anderson points out that much of politics has the potential to collapse into "positional esteem competition," where critiques are taken as "hostile and cynical attacks on the status of those to whom they are addressed."³⁸ When the conversation becomes about status and not the first order issue at hand, then responses to criticism are made in the form of dismissals and slander.³⁹ This assumption of good faith does not require that one avoid criticism or another's arguments or require that one merely play nice. Especially on closely held issues of moral concern, debates and conversations are likely to be heated with other's motivations questioned.⁴⁰ However, recognizing that one has made an argument and responding to that argument in kind is essential for giving equal hearing to concerns.

If the first habit taken on with the burden of reciprocity is offering a rejoinder to opponents, what is the big payoff for Pentecostal discernment? Engaging with another's point of

³⁷ "Responds," here, should not be taken in any formal or restrictive sense. To respond to another implies that I answer the concerns that someone brings to me.

³⁸ Elizabeth Anderson, "Can We Talk? Communicating Moral Concern in an Era of Polarized Politics," *Journal of Practical Ethics* vol. 10 no. 1 (2022), 69.

³⁹ Anderson, "Can We Talk?" 69.

⁴⁰ Nor does this imply that all of politics is collapsed down to a deliberative process where realities of power and hegemony are ignored. Chantal Mouffe is right that politics involves more than idealistic deliberation of rational ideas. My position does not deny the agonistic struggle of politics, though consider that one way to prevent agonism from turning into antagonism – a concern Mouffe shares – is by responding to the reasons given by opponents. See: Mouffe, *Agonistics*.

view and especially the details of their position has the potential to reverse the tide of group polarization and even move beyond contempt. Talisse takes a modest approach to the burden of rejoinder, arguing that the point is not necessarily to change the minds of opponents, but to sharpen a given group's position.⁴¹ This does not necessarily even require some sort of planned summit where individuals exchange views face to face, rather even familiarity with opposing reasons can reduce the effects of group polarization.⁴² Interestingly, this same study finding that hearing opposing views need not happen face to face also finds a relationship between familiarity with reasons in favor of an opponent's views and perception of opponents. Coming to understand opponents' views, distinct from agreeing with those views, is an important step in finding ways to relate to opponents that do not draw on contempt.

Naming a burden of rejoinder might also imply to some a practice of providing reasons to those with whom one disagrees. At times this may be a wise action, especially when others request a reason or when Pentecostal actions affect others. However, there will also be times when the burden of rejoinder merely implies a curiosity about the motivations and reasons for another's actions. Consider that rejoinder for a Pentecostal encountering trans people, where the Pentecostal in question takes issue with the inclusion of transgender experiences in larger society, does not necessarily mean the sharing of reasons or offering a verbal account of oneself. Rather, the implication here is that one's own views are made vulnerable to the experiences and views of others. The posture here does not need to be one of debate, but one of interest in how another person experiences a moral question. There may be reason that trans people do not wish to describe their experience or offer accounts of themselves to this hypothetical Pentecostal.

⁴¹ Talisse, *Sustaining Democracy*, 121.

⁴² Matthew L. Stanley, Peter S. Whitehead, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, and Paul Seli, "Exposure to opposing reasons reduces negative impressions of ideological opponents," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 91 (2000) 104030.

Taking others as political equals and making oneself vulnerable to others' experiences and understandings, then, will build a curiosity to pursue information elsewhere.⁴³

Often reciprocity has implied a concern over what reasons are and are not appropriate for public conversation. As mentioned above, earlier forms of this debate began from a suspicion of religious reasons because of their perceived capacity to distort and derail democratic conversation.⁴⁴ Further, there often exists ambiguity over what constitutes appropriate reasons for private citizens versus an elected official, because of their responsibility to all citizens and potential to use state coercion. I do agree that, as the level of coercion increases, so do the burdens of offering reasons to those against whom that coercion may be used. However, appropriate speech for elected officials is not here my immediate concern.⁴⁵ My concern here is with how private Pentecostal citizens imagine their responsibilities to their opponents. In this context, I consider whether reciprocity must be characterized in terms of restrictions on speech. Or might reciprocity better be imagined as giving more to another when there is a gap in understanding? I have characterized reciprocity as involving burdens at different times, but does taking on a burden for the sake of another necessarily imply that one become less of themselves at all times? Even the most restrictive conceptions of public reason have at their heart a concern that individuals ought to communicate to one another in terms that respect the limitations and differences in both our own experiences and the other's ability to understand those experiences.⁴⁶

⁴³ Thank you to Lucila Crena for helping me clarify these concerns.

⁴⁴ One famous and strongly worded version of this argument which the author eventually walks back is Richard Rorty, "Religion as a Conversation-stopper," in *Philosophy and Social Hope* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 168-74.

⁴⁵ Andrew F. March and Alicia Steinmetz offer the most comprehensive account of existing literature on the use of religious reasons as well as the position that the use of religious reasons ought to be considered on a sliding scale in relation to the level of coercion being used, see: Andrew F. March and Alicia Steinmetz, "Religious Reasons in Public Deliberation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, ed. Andre Bächtiger *et al* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 203-217.

⁴⁶ Richard Miller articulates a similar conception of assuming burdens of reciprocity, for Miller in terms of Rawlsian public reason, for the purposes of empathy. See: Richard B. Miller, *Friends and Other Strangers: Studies in*

As such, the manner of communication that reciprocity requires is one that considers to whom one is speaking.

With this in mind, one can think about the “standards” or “limits” of public reason as tools for communicating to those who do not share Pentecostal experiences. One such tool that I find rather effective is considering the *accessibility* of reasons offered. Speaking of a state’s justifications to its citizens, Cecile Laborde describes accessibility of public reasons as, “reserve[ing] the term “public reason” (*stricto sensu*) to refer to a thin epistemic filter, rather than a thick substantive condition, of political deliberation. [...] state-proffered *reasons* for laws must be articulated in a language that members of the public can understand and engage with.”⁴⁷ For Laborde, states ought not give inaccessible reasons for the use of coercion, but she sees additional value in accessible reasons as the “currency of democratic debate.”⁴⁸ Accessibility allows people to continue talking to one another.

Accessibility is more lax than other potential standards for limiting religious reasons. Within this view, Pentecostals should not limit out the use of religious reasons when speaking to others, but those reasons should be attached to some form of accessible content. So, for instance, an appeal to Christian scripture allows another to engage in conversation over a given text; there is a thing that anyone can look at and have a conversation about. However, appeals to Christian scripture that require an assumption of the text’s authority or a manner in which the Spirit speaks through that text do not allow the same type of conversation if one does not share the assumption of authority or the Spirit’s activity. Further, appeals to the demonic or the activity of God do not

Religion, Ethics, and Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 294. For a critique of Rawls’s notion of public reason as too restrictive, see: Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), ch. 3.

⁴⁷ Cécile Laborde, *Liberalism’s Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 119.

⁴⁸ Laborde, *Liberalism’s Religion*, 122.

allow conversation to one who does not share the metaphysical assumption, but appeals to the demonic or divine activity attached to observed or material consequences of that activity allow someone to enter the conversation even if they do not share all metaphysical assumptions. In these situations, where Pentecostal reasons do appeal to sources of authority that are not accessible to others, the “accessibility” would mean that Pentecostals should help others to see where they are speaking from even if others will not adopt that position.

Continuing conversation with moral opponents is important for a host of reasons. But how can conversing with moral opponents enhance discernment among Pentecostals? If part of the problem of group polarization is that the argument pool is limited to a particular set of homogeneous reasons, then conversations exposing new reasons and criticisms open possibilities for imagining moral problems differently. Elizabeth Anderson characterizes this benefit:

Precisely because discussion that follows the democratic ethos involves serious listening to and active engagement with diverse points of view, from people who have different experiences, it enables the creative articulation of new possibilities that would not have been imagined from more parochial points of view. As John Dewey argued (1988), this is the promise of democracy. Yet, the realization of this promise requires that one be prepared to recognize one’s own point of view as only partial, contingent, and subject to revision. It requires that one listen to and address others with respect and concern.⁴⁹

So, accessibility can help facilitate conversations, especially conversations based on reasons, between Pentecostals and those who do not share Pentecostal assumptions. This is of value for democratic life, but more proximate to my concerns, this enhances the discernment process as Pentecostals hear and reckon with new points of view. Should others refuse to engage Pentecostals or should they be too lazy, afraid, stubborn, or contemptuous to continue conversation with Pentecostals, that will certainly be a loss for democratic life, but the work

⁴⁹ Anderson, “Can We Talk?” 86.

done by Pentecostals to speak to others and familiarize themselves with others' lives and reasons will still have benefits.

Up to this point, my discussion of reciprocity has assumed a largely rationalistic picture of conversation. I have demonstrated that engaging in such conversations has value for Pentecostal discernment. However, those conversations do not necessarily need to be characterized by rationalistic reasons. In fact, on my view the exchange of other forms of relevant considerations can serve the ends of democratic conversation as well. Pentecostals are very much at home when giving testimony or offering accounts of other affective motivators. Reciprocity does not require an exchange of reasons per se, but can also entail an exchange of attention where Pentecostals are willing to share honest accounts of their own experiences and then offer the same attention to others' concerns by listening and entering with a willingness to be affected by those concerns. Sharing personal experiences and stories and then devoting time to listen to, read, or watch the stories and experiences of others can have the effect of communicating concerns and motivations with which one might have any familiarity before hearing them. In so doing, one undertakes the process of encounter in uncomfortable conditions of disagreement as an opportunity to encounter an opponent and encounter God so as to be converted from contempt.

§4 – The Limits of Deliberation

Naming potential for reciprocity in cases of moral disagreement does not imply its universal utility. Those habits and the environments facilitating reciprocity assume that parties there are taken as political equals. However, there exist areas of moral disagreement that put the very equality of persons up as an issue of disagreement. There are also larger contexts of domination that leave individuals unequal in a moral disagreement, no matter the issue and no

matter the intentions of those involved. While I still have faith in the habits of democratic communication to effectively navigate moral disagreement, those same tools have incredible limitations. This section returns to the Azusa Street Mission to consider those limitations in the context of racial domination in the United States. More specifically, considering the White attacks against the Black leadership of the Azusa Street mission and William Seymour's response, as a Black religious leader under attack from White voices, of excluding White Pentecostals from leadership at the mission. Here, Seymour discovered the limits of democratic communication and had to balance his vision for a transgressive social space with the realities of White domination.

§4.1 – William Seymour and the Challenge of White Supremacy

The earliest years of Azusa are still remembered as a transgressive social space, where there were no recognized divisions of race, class, or sex. In many ways, this space was so transgressive, as Keri Day argues, because of its setting within a larger system of racial capitalism.⁵⁰ Transgression, though, only lasts so long before others notice, and only so much longer before others take issue. Of course, the mission weathered slander from beyond its walls from the earliest days. But, internal controversies would come to erode at the transgressive space Seymour had overseen, pushing him to consider what steps he had to take to protect the Mission as a site of encounter.

Now, these internal controversies each have their own stories and I will leave it to historians to tell those in detail. But, as Gastón Espinosa argues, both the backdrop of White supremacy in the US and the outright racist nature of many of the attacks against Seymour

⁵⁰ Keri Day, *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022), 11.

shaped the controversies and their outcomes. As time passed, Parham became increasingly vocal in his White supremacist attacks against Seymour, likely because Seymour had begun to publicly defend himself by repudiating Parham's racialized theology and other theological views.⁵¹ After his failed takeover of the Azusa Street Mission and his subsequent failure at starting a ministry that would compete with Azusa Street, Parham turned to prayer "calling on his newspaper readers to fight a spiritual war against 'these forces' and 'counterfeit Pentecost' and pray 'that this blight be removed.'"⁵² But, Parham, as loud as he was, was not the only existential threat to Seymour's ministry coming from a White person.

One theological controversy initiated by a White minister, William Durham, concerned the "finished work" view of sanctification, holding that the work of sanctification was completed at conversion, which was pit against Seymour's Wesleyan progressive view of sanctification. This theological controversy would go on to divide Pentecostals and it resulted in Durham attempting to take over the Azusa Street Mission in Seymour's absence and Seymour eventually having the doors of the Mission chained shut. Durham would go onto found a competing mission in Los Angeles that would undermine Seymour's ministry.⁵³

Another example concerned Clara Lum, a White woman who was incredibly close with (and rumored to be in love with) Seymour who helped published the *Apostolic Faith* newspaper, which had a worldwide readership.⁵⁴ After Seymour announced his marriage to the younger Jennie Moore Evans, Lum left Azusa Street and took with her the *Apostolic Faith* and the only copies of the mailing lists for distributing to national and international audiences. This was Seymour's largest platform and primary way of defending himself against attacks, particularly

⁵¹ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 98.

⁵² Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 100.

⁵³ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 122-3.

⁵⁴ On the controversy between Seymour and Lum, see: Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 113-116.

racist attacks from Parham. Seymour was never able to recover his platform. As Espinosa points out Seymour believed legal recourse to be out of the question, and “Although he might win a legal battle on merit of ownership, he also recognized the racial calculus of a frail White woman defending herself against a big black man in an all-White courtroom.”⁵⁵

Each controversy had its own story, but those particularities always occurred within the context of a larger White supremacist society where White people, sometimes joined by Black people, sought to undermine Seymour’s ministry. Despite his vision for an egalitarian community where White and Black people shared power, these controversies forced “Seymour to realize that his dream of a racially unified church wherein blacks and whites shared power on an equal basis could not completely overcome four centuries of white privilege.” As a result of this realistic appraisal of White supremacy and the danger that White access to power posed to his ministry, Seymour revised the bylaws of the Azusa Street Mission so as to exclude White people from the top three leadership posts. Doing so would prevent the sorts of legal takeovers in which White ministers sought to vote in entirely new leadership to oust Seymour in his absence. This was certainly a pastoral concern, because it was the potential for White people to enter leadership that caused division and fanaticism. Seymour stated his rationale as “‘not for discrimination,’ but to promote ‘peace’ and racial harmony and ‘to keep down race war’ and ‘friction in the churches.’”⁵⁶

These pastoral concerns were real for Seymour, but, as with his controversy with Clara Lum, Seymour also considered the practical realities of White supremacy in the US. Espinosa characterizes this dynamic well:

In addition to these practical pastoral concerns, Seymour made the decision for a legal reason: to thwart any legal white takeovers. He became increasingly legal minded due to

⁵⁵ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 115.

⁵⁶ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 129.

a number of events: Parham's attempt to take over the mission in 1906; Seymour's decision to purchase the mission; Lum's flight with the newspaper to Portland; Carpenter's interrogation of Seymour about the mission's finances; Seymour's incorporation of a new Azusa daughter mission in 1909 in Portland, Oregon; Durham's attempted takeover of the mission in 1911; and the decision of 352 white clergy to leave Charles Mason's interracial COGIC in 1913 to legally incorporate the Assemblies of God (AG) in 1914. The fact that Parham 'spent a great deal of time' in southern California during some of Seymour's greatest crises (1908, 1911, 1912, 1913) and attempted in January 1908 to start a new mission at the same WCTU building he used in 1906 may have also contributed to his decision. Seymour knew that a black southerner with a limited education and his small interracial congregation would be hard pressed to fund and win a major legal battle against white clergy and their allies in a white-controlled court-room. He also knew blacks had no real legal power in an American system that legally rationalized segregation and enforced separate schooling, dining, and housing facilities and that did little to stop the lynching of blacks across the nation. Race mattered. Seymour knew it and acted accordingly. That he did so in a preemptive manner in the best interests of his family, mission, and movement reveals that he was a wise and calculating leader.⁵⁷

In the end, what had started as the place where "the color line had been washed away in the blood," came under attack from outside sources opposed to "race-mixing." Further, even those invested in forming an interracial community could not alone undo the systematic conditions of domination that both distributed more power to White people and conditioned White people to expect disproportionate amounts of power.

Given the argument of this chapter, though, should one take Seymour's actions as a failure to encounter? Does his exclusion of White people from leadership constitute a failure to use the tools of democratic communication effectively? Are the projects of inclusion, tolerance, and encounter only masks for a more insidious and hidden exclusivity? *Of course not.*

⁵⁷ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 130.

§4.2 – *On Exclusion and Resistance*

Espinosa is concerned with exonerating Seymour from charges of “reverse discrimination.”⁵⁸ While this charge of reverse discrimination may have been repeated often, it is not itself serious. Another way of considering Seymour’s struggles with White supremacy is by asking what reciprocity might require of Seymour under those conditions of domination.⁵⁹ Considering this question reveals the conditions under which political equals can show one another reciprocity are a positive good and a fragile one at that.

There is a genre of literature generally targeted at earlier accounts of liberal political theory that points to an irony over a desire for inclusion necessitating a level of exclusion.⁶⁰ These charges often stem from an attempt to render the “inclusive” or “open” society as another normative proposal that competes with rather than merely includes other visions of the good life. For the sake of my own argument, I am ready to bite the bullet and defend a necessity of limited exclusion in order to preserve the goods of inclusion, encounter, and transgressive social spaces. On the one hand, domination risks frankly excluding others and precluding the types of relations an inclusive society offers. On the other hand, conditions of domination distort the perceptions of those in positions of power. Overall, domination is acidic to the benefits of inclusive social relations built on political equality.⁶¹

Consider the threat domination posed to the inclusive community at Azusa Street. Seymour had articulated and enacted a vision for a community that would transgress existing

⁵⁸ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour*, 138.

⁵⁹ Tommie Shelby gives a larger account of this question in *Dark Ghettos: Injustice, Dissent, and Reform* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2016).

⁶⁰ For example, see: Stanley Fish, *The Trouble with Principle* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

⁶¹ Consider one group of studies finding a relationship between positions of dominance and less empathy towards others: Corinne Gilad and Michael R. Maniaci, “The push and pull of dominance and power: When dominance hurts, when power helps, and the potential role of other-focus,” *Personality and Individual Differences* 184 (2022), 111159.

social hierarchies. That community was threatened explicitly when White ministers such as Parham attempted time and time again to remove him from his position as overseer of the Mission and install a White minister. Remember that it was the “race mixing” that spurred outrage from Parham and the larger society. Beyond the immediate attacks from White people, that community was threatened by the larger context of domination in which it found itself. Seymour nor the community, by virtue of its transgressive character, held equal standing in the larger society. There was no guarantee of recourse in existing channels of procedural justice because of the unequal standing Seymour would have held in an all-White court room.

As Seymour’s experience demonstrates, communities that commit to encounter or the taking on of burdens of reciprocity are vulnerable to attacks from the outside and larger contexts that render them vulnerable. Of course, the ideal of perfectly equal social relations are never achieved, but even the striving after those types of relations can be thwarted by others seeking to reinstate hierarchies and deny equal standing to minority groups. So, is striving for a community of equals a fool’s errand? Is exclusion legitimate within such a community?

These communities are far from impossible and, even when severely challenged, Seymour’s actions would indicate that they are worth striving towards. Instead of yielding to those who would end the transgressive community at Azusa, Seymour opted to learn from his experience and his knowledge of his standing in the larger society and implement a realistic strategy to defend his community.⁶² Communities founded on equality and the encounter of different people require a level of defense against those who would seek to overtake them. For the Azusa Street Mission it meant putting chains on the doors at one point and regulating who could hold positions of leadership at another. In some cases, defending the ideal of encounter

⁶² While I would not place Seymour within the Black radical tradition, he shares an intuition that communities experiencing conditions of injustice ought to pursue strategies of defense external to unjust institutions.

will require defensive force to prevent outright takeovers or the destruction of communities. At other times, though, this may look more like moderation of discourse or limits on language, which many successful studies of deliberation build into the model as a requirement for success.⁶³

The language of necessary exclusion, though, also assumes a position of power that is often not the case when confronting domination. In those cases, while there may well be exclusion in communal settings, the more appropriate language is that of resistance.⁶⁴ When it is the state itself that is enforcing conditions of domination, the tools of resistance, be they civil disobedience, political opposition, or even non-participation all serve a role in insisting that people be encountered without the tools of domination.

Determining the sorts of things from which a community of equals may need protecting requires a process of discernment. John Rawls characterizes the sorts of positions acceptable to such a community as “reasonable” and “unreasonable,” with reasonable citizens taking on the burdens of reciprocity especially as it pertains to issues of basic justice and equality, where a society must manage the presence of unreasonable citizens like it must disease or war. Rawls’s distinction is helpful, but his categories can be hard to clearly define. Determining too early that one’s community needs defending from rather than reciprocity with a political opponent risks the same sorts of group polarization I outline above. It is only through encounter that a community can determine if the burdens of unreciprocated reciprocity are too much to bear. Setting certain positions as outside the boundaries of a community of encounter does not then mean that those

⁶³ For example, excluding disparaging discourse from conversation was an important part of successful deliberations over climate change among a politically diverse group in Florida. See: Dan Kahan, “Climate-Science Communication and the *Measurement Problem*,” *Advances in Political Psychology* 36 (2015), 1-43.

⁶⁴ On the conditions of domination changing interactions between those in power and those experiencing domination, see: James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

people are outside the boundaries of that community. Consider that Seymour insisted that White people still be able to hold any leadership post other than the top three posts. Further consider that Seymour admonished his congregation against showing any discrimination towards White members. No relationship of opposition is final or an ultimately bifurcated relation of friend and enemy.

As should be clear by now, the commitment to relations of reciprocity and political equality that I have outlined in the last two chapters are more than a negative sentimental appeal to inclusion or getting along. They are a positive good that must be defended if Pentecostals are to avoid the political conditions that render contempt a salient theological option. By taking the longer road and embracing the discomforts of democratic life, especially as they manifest in disagreement and political opposition, Pentecostals may have the experience of being vexed repeatedly. Charles Mathewes describes the pedagogical value of political frustration in coming to learn “not that history can be finally solved, like a cryptogram, but that it must be endured, inhabited as a mystery which we cannot fully understand from the inside, but which we cannot escape of our own powers.”⁶⁵ Politics does not offer final solutions in and of itself. Rather, politics becomes the means by which Pentecostals can endure the world while pursuing the Spirit of Christ. Entering into politics in particular ways, though, can shape how Pentecostals then pursue the Spirit.

§5 – Conclusion: A Pentecostal Hope and the Limits of Politics

It may strike some as odd to return to the place at Azusa Street where the Pentecostal revival and all of its transgressive practices began to break down. Why build up a potential for a

⁶⁵ Charles Mathewes, *A Theology of Public Life* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 40.

Pentecostal politics of encounter only to end with a recognition that such a politics may well fail and require vigilant protection from other forces? Further, does ending this project with a consideration of opponents and enemies not go contrary to the Christian story of ultimate reconciliation?

Often a desire for the Spirit to move or a desire for ultimate reconciliation can facilitate a naivete that refuses to look sin and death in the face. We imagine and declare healing and build so much faith in our own communities as the sites of healing and reconciliation that we miss our own involvement in that sin and death. This is what I have referred to as a sense of ethical exceptionalism throughout this dissertation. We miss the pervasiveness of brokenness and how far beyond our own control or imagination that brokenness actually is. Bodies are broken. Societies are broken. Social relationships themselves are often dead. Recognizing this fact and the limits of politics or any political project to bring about ultimate reconciliation is necessary to even begin desiring the Spirit of God in the world.

Closing with the limitations of politics makes clear what the strategies of democratic communication can and cannot do. Certain liberal accounts of democracy or deliberative speech offer a rosy picture of inevitable progress, whereby democratic debate creates opportunities to learn and find compromise. This can sometimes be the case, but it is not the account I offer here. Democratic communication is a helpful tool for Pentecostals experiencing conditions of contempt or even the temptations of Pentecostal contempt. Further, closing with limitations leaves in view the real challenges and risks that confront democratic life. Conditions of political equality are not inevitable and are always something to be achieved in the face of opposition to egalitarian social arrangements. Should Pentecostals find conditions of political equality helpful

for following the Spirit, they will have to struggle to implement those conditions and protect them.

On this side of the eschaton, moral disagreement will continue to persist. Those disagreements will continue to be uncomfortable for Pentecostals and hearing opponents out will continue to feel like complicity. Opting to hold others in contempt and dismiss the details and reasons why they might disagree on a moral issue can certainly have the immediate payoff of felt faithfulness. However, these patterns will leave Pentecostals in the same conditions of contempt that distort perceptions of God and others. In addition to the case I have made throughout this dissertation, this chapter pointed out that when communities become homogeneous the views within that community become increasingly polarized and the community becomes more brittle or prone to fracture. Developing the skill to sustain difference and disagreement creates more vibrant communities with a stronger capacity to both encounter others and follow the Spirit.

Talking to others and encountering those who would disagree has the potential to break open Pentecostal communities to see others in new ways and avoid sliding into familiar habits of contempt. It might be the case that tolerating opponents in the midst of moral disagreement will feel like those opponents are taking advantage of Pentecostal hospitality in a way that they would never themselves reciprocate. However, the benefits of offering others reciprocity are not bound by their response or willingness to offer reciprocity in return. Rather, taking on the burdens of reciprocity and seeking out those who might otherwise be objects of contempt will help Pentecostals to discern the activity of the Spirit more clearly.

Conclusion

The Pentecostal revolution is fundamentally remaking the shape of global Christianity. More than a quarter of the world's Christians are Pentecostal and this growth is having a strong pentecostalizing effect on other forms of Christianity. To compound the scale of this growth, consider that it has all occurred in a single century. In Chapter One of this dissertation, I quoted Hent de Vries as seeing in religion "both an integrative and potentially disintegrating or even violent aspect of modern societies" "whose volatile dynamics contain as much promise as potential for political havoc."¹ The political havoc of Pentecostal contempt is the way it turns Pentecostals against their neighbors, poisoning communities, constructing a shared life as unsafe for Christians, ceding the public to forces of privatization, and leaving Pentecostals eager for the next authoritarian promising to save them from sharing life with those they hold in contempt. Until Pentecostals come to see the Spirit's relationship to the world and to those outside of their communities differently, they will remain ripe for manipulation and primed for extreme political action.

Throughout this dissertation, I defended the thesis that for Pentecostals contempt is one prevalent, dangerous, and unnecessary way of receiving difference. Other people too often pose a problem for Pentecostal communities. The experience of difference is certainly not unique to modernity. Modernity, however, has facilitated greater mobility of people and ideas, thus creating a heightened sense of one's particularity and the diversity of human experience. Pentecostalism is born into this reality and has grown with the presence of global difference in mind. Often,

¹ Hent de Vries, "Introduction: Before, Around, and Beyond the Theologico-Political," in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, eds. Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 6.

though, Pentecostals receive that difference, whether it be physically present or epistemically present, with contempt.

Contempt itself is not unique to Pentecostals, as many others engage in the categorical dismissal of people or groups. This study of how Pentecostals might work through their own contempt can potentially also offer a guide to other communities seeking to do the same. Pentecostal contempt has a unique theological structure that I identify and engage throughout this dissertation. Pentecostal contempt assumes an exclusive relationship between the Holy Spirit and particular communities. This closed pneumatology assumes not only a close relationship between the Spirit's activity and one's community, but also a relationship of absence between the Spirit and those outside of that community. As such, those outside of a particular community are beyond the activity of God and potentially the site of demonic or evil activity.

The second component of Pentecostal contempt flows from the first. Ethical exceptionalism assumes that the exclusive relationship between the Spirit and a given community necessitates particular moral outcomes. The community relating exclusively to the Spirit is more holy because of that relationship. Ethical exceptionalism assumes both an inflated sense of a community's worth but it also necessitates a demonized other against which the community can be juxtaposed as holy. There are theological incentives to keep this demonized or devalued other at a distance, both to preserve or prove the distinctiveness of the ethically exceptional community and to prevent influence from the ethically inferior outside.

The final dynamic of Pentecostal contempt concerns the resulting posture of a closed pneumatology and a sense of ethical exceptionalism. This threatened posture sees others as always threatening the status and position of the exclusive community of the Spirit. The nature of the threat can change in different settings; perhaps the imagined threat is dilution or syncretism

in one place while the imagined threat is literal destruction or violence in another. The extent of the constructed threat then determines the extent of the Pentecostal response.

I demonstrate Pentecostal contempt in two different case studies that are diverse enough so as to foreground their shared Pentecostalism and not other shared factors. Foregrounding their shared Pentecostalism does not devalue other studies, but spotlights one shared element. These case studies were not intended as comparisons, but instead two illustrations of how Pentecostal contempt manifests, makes claims to knowledge and spiritual authority, and sustains itself over time. One key is that Pentecostal contempt facilitates a form of discernment done at a distance; put differently, a form of discernment that avoids encounters with objects of discernment. As such, both of these case studies show Pentecostal contempt encouraging a break or rupture from perceived difference. Discernment under conditions of Pentecostal contempt, then, seeks to locate knowledge about objects that Pentecostals refuse to encounter. As a result, this form of discernment relies on stereotype and faulty information justified only by strong appeals to the assumptions of Pentecostal contempt.

In Chapter Two I demonstrated Pentecostal contempt among Nigerian Pentecostals. This contempt was directed towards the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture. The use of traditional African religious images and practices at FESTAC '77, is understood by Pentecostals as a moment where leaders invited demons into Nigeria and changed the national destiny of Nigeria. For Nigerian Pentecostals, the Holy Spirit is associated with particular Christian cultures with some Pentecostals even associating the Holy Spirit with European Christianity explicitly. This closed pneumatology undergirds a sense of ethical exceptionalism where traditional religions are always sites of divine absence and therefore more likely full of evil spirits that threaten Nigeria. Interestingly, while Pentecostal contempt demands strong

spiritual claims about those whom Pentecostals know little about, it also spiritualizes the terms of the existing social arrangement about which Pentecostals know a great deal but offer minimal criticism. Here, Pentecostals equate material wealth and power with the work of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, those with wealth and power are imagined as close to God while those without wealth or power are imagined as distant from God and influenced by evil spirits.

Chapter Three demonstrated Pentecostal contempt among White Pentecostals in the US. Similar to Nigerian Pentecostals, White Pentecostal contempt both draws spiritual conclusions about others that White Pentecostals have not encountered while also assuming the spiritual validity of the social arrangement that brought White Pentecostals material prosperity. Given the conditions of racial segregation, White Pentecostals came to hold Black people and cities as objects of contempt while the subsidized White suburbs were seen as a product of divine favor that were always under threat.

These case studies most immediately demonstrate the presence and danger of Pentecostal contempt. Though, they also give occasion for demonstrating the relationship between theology and the social sciences. Whereas studies of Nigerian Pentecostalism often exclude the theological, I demonstrate that including attention to how the theological is functioning better illuminates how Pentecostals are constructing their own worlds and imagining their own practices. The inclusion of theology in social scientific thought does not require social scientists to become theologians or to abandon other helpful lenses. Instead, the inclusion of the theological helps to consider the non-human agents that are also shaping Pentecostal worlds.

Additionally, these case studies demonstrate the value of the social sciences for understanding theological reflection. White Pentecostals made explicit theological claims about cities and Black people. Social theory helps to place these claims within the larger social

arrangement that both raises the questions White Pentecostals are answering and renders the answers they are finding salient. Certainly, Chapter Three further demonstrates the mutually beneficial relationship between theology and the social sciences. However, it also demonstrates the power of social scientific thought for Pentecostal self-reflection. Social scientific thought offers a voice outside of Pentecostal communities that can help Pentecostals think about how social arrangements are shaping theology, whether that theology be done in academic settings, church settings, or in the day to day of lay Pentecostals. This benefit of the social sciences for Pentecostals is something that I carry throughout Part Two of this dissertation.

Part One demonstrated the dynamics of Pentecostal contempt in two settings and one result of those theological conditions was a distance at which Pentecostals sought to learn about others. This distance encouraged by Pentecostal contempt leaves Pentecostal discernment relying on stereotypes, rumor, and other false information because they confirm the already held contempt. Part Two, though, asked what it would mean to close that gap between Pentecostals and others. What would it mean for Pentecostals to encounter others instead of holding them at a distance as objects of contempt? What if Pentecostals saw the Spirit as so pervasive and so fundamental to reality that there was not a neighbor beyond the activity of God? I am quite critical of Pentecostal contempt because it is both bad for the Pentecostal communities in which I am invested and because it is not necessary or frankly helpful for Pentecostals seeking to follow the Spirit of Christ.

As one invested in a Pentecostalism that does not rely on contempt, I made a constructive turn in Part Two. Here I made both a theological and a political argument. These two distinct yet interrelated arguments are intended to show a plausible account of Pentecostalism that does not draw on contempt in receiving difference. More than merely another plausible account of

Pentecostalism, though, I see the account I offer as more faithful to the Spirit of Pentecost. The theological argument I made sought to articulate a theology of encounter by inverting the conditions of Pentecostal contempt. I name these dynamics of Pentecostal encounter as an open pneumatology, a sense of ethical commonality, and an anticipatory posture.

The fundamental question, theologically, concerns whether or not the Spirit of Christ can rightly be anticipated outside of the church. The Spirit is poured out on all flesh and the activity of the Spirit in the church cannot be separated from the activity of the Spirit in forming and sustaining the creation, nor can the activity of the Spirit be isolated from the larger life and activity of the Triune God. Pentecostals, then, ought to anticipate encounters with the Spirit of Christ everywhere they go because the Spirit blows wherever the Spirit wills. This does not dissolve the distinctiveness of the church, as the church during the world has been called out by the Spirit to bear witness to the resurrection of Christ. Such a distinctive relationship to the Spirit, though, does not also imply an exclusive relationship to the Spirit. The Spirit is active beyond the church and the Spirit calls Christians to join in what the Spirit is doing. The Spirit even calls followers of Christ out to encounter those they may hold in contempt so that they may watch as the Spirit brings salvation to objects of contempt. Be it with Peter and the house of Cornelius or Jonah and the Ninevites, the Spirit is one that overcomes contempt and transgresses the lines of separation that sustain it.

This theology offers coherence to a different way of being politically. Political habits are not a mere product of theological thinking. Instead, as I demonstrate in Part One, political habits and the social arrangements they create have the effect of shaping certain ways of thinking theologically. I draw on this insight and others from existing social scientific research to craft Pentecostal political habits that can help render contempt less coherent. There exists an

incredible amount of evidence demonstrating that when people encounter others as equals, those encounters have the effect of undoing prejudice and contempt. By taking others as equals, even in moments of intense political disagreement, Pentecostals can begin to have stereotypes and false information corrected, or at least rendered less helpful. Instead of encountering difference with recourse to contempt, sustained encounters under conditions of equality can better facilitate an anticipatory posture towards the activity of the Spirit. This posture does not take difference, or encounters with those outside of one's church as a threat, but instead opportunities to encounter another and God.

There are many examples of Pentecostals engaging in egalitarian political movements such as labor movements or organizing around issues of voting rights. The theology I offer here in the form of an open pneumatology, sense of ethical commonality, and anticipatory posture offers theological coherence to egalitarian commitments. Those Pentecostals who have engaged in egalitarian movements likely do not struggle with the theological coherence of their actions. Other Pentecostals, however, do struggle to see the theological value of a shared life among equals. The theological coherence of such a life, rather than an appeal to dignity or nature, rests in a commitment to see another participate in the Spirit of Christ because of the positive value of encountering another as they participate in the Spirit and the positive value of being encountered by the Spirit as we encounter others. Conditions of domination foreclose both of these possibilities. No matter the movement and no matter the movement's association with Christian communities, the theology I have offered here gives coherent terms for Pentecostals to understand their cooperation with others as legitimate participation in the Spirit of Christ.

Even in moments of intense disagreement or political opposition, a commitment to equality can help Pentecostals avoid the conditions of Pentecostal contempt and leave open a

sense of anticipation for the Spirit's activity. The tools of democratic communication can help keep Pentecostals from falling into Pentecostal contempt by refusing to dismiss others as unworthy of consideration or as objects of contempt. As such, Pentecostals insist as best they can on maintaining an openness to the resurrection of dead relationships while maintaining a realistic sense that those relationships are in fact dead. Even dry bones come to life.

I have been clear on the negative side of Hent de Vries observation that religion's "volatile dynamics contain as much promise as potential for political havoc." If modern politics assumes a sort of theological stability to government or a given social arrangement, Pentecostalism assumes that God might intervene at any time and upend that social order. The potential for political havoc here is clear. But, how could this volatility also constitute a promise?

While pastoring at an Assemblies of God church in southern California, I watched on several different occasions as a man who was bound to a wheelchair prayed that his body would be healed. He was older in age and had suffered a terrible car accident years before that left him unable to walk or hold his head upright. This man had been a talented organist who played with some of the most famous Pentecostal evangelists and revivalists in the US. He had no illusions about his capacity to walk. He, more than anyone else, knew that his body was broken. But, on several occasions I saw this man, with the help of others, insist on trying to walk. In moments of prayer at the altar, he had felt as if he might have been healed or as if the Spirit was calling him to step out in faith so that he might be healed.² Each time I saw him step out of his chair, I saw him fall and others catch him. As far as I know, he never experienced the healing for which he prayed. But, he always expected and waited on God to intervene and make things new.

² "Stepping out in faith" is a common Pentecostal formulation when praying for healing or blessing. There is no need, at this time, to explicate exactly what is meant by this phrase or the theological tensions inherent within it.

I wonder if there is something of this man's experience that might teach about the promise of Pentecostal volatility. Perhaps a willingness to fall tells us something about the vulnerability required to step out and participate in the work of the Spirit. Perhaps a willingness to fall where others catch you can tell us about the types of mutuality and vulnerability that facilitate encounter with God and others. These would both be fine things to take away and would offer some promise for Pentecostalism. But what I see in this experience is a refusal to take a given situation as permanent or necessary. In conditions where there is suffering and where there is pain, a Pentecostal expectation is that the Spirit of God would intervene to upend that suffering. In conditions of domination a Pentecostal expectation is that God would intervene to radically alter the terms of the social arrangement. The Spirit moves and initiates resurrection, Pentecostals seek to discern in participate in that movement. This is a volatility, but a promising volatility.

Waiting on the Spirit is not a surrender of agency and responsibility. Rather waiting on the Spirit is a recognition that there is always another way. That things can always be otherwise than we currently experience them. It is a recognition that the Spirit might be active in places we do not expect and that those we do not see as following Christ may well be participating in his Spirit in ways we do not yet understand. It is an openness to difference and ways of being that do not rely on hierarchy or domination. Domination enforces a given social arrangement as necessary and those in positions to dominate will often insist that such an arrangement is itself natural. At times this can be an insistence that a certain hierarchy of being is itself natural. At other times this might be an insistence that people or groups are naturally opposed or in competition. Waiting on the Spirit, in those cases is a refusal to accept the terms of death as we inherit them. The promise of Pentecostal volatility starts from a realism about death and

brokenness while sustaining a hope that something from beyond the world would breathe life and create the spaces for mutuality and vulnerability where people can encounter one another as they participate in the Spirit of God. This is a hope that eagerly seeks after and looks to join the Spirit who creates, redeems, and wraps all things into the loving life of the Triune God. This is the type of anticipation that a politics of encounter seeks to create in those desiring the Spirit of God.

Bibliography

- Abiodun, Rowland. *Yoruba Art and Language: Seeking the African in African Art*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Ables, Travis E. *Incarnational Realism: Trinity and the Spirit in Augustine and Barth*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013.
- Adelakun, Abimbola A. *Performing Power in Nigeria: Identity, Politics, and Pentecostalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022.
- Adelana, Oludolapo. "Pastor Adeboye, Dr. Olukoya, Apostle Suleiman... See the amazing prophecies for 2017." *YNaija.com*, January 3, 2017. <https://ynaija.com/adeboye-olukoya-and-apostle-suleiman-lets-us-into-their-2017-predictions/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.
- Adésuyi, Olúkáyòdé R. "How to to Individuate Destiny: A Critique of Segun Ogungbemi's Conception of Destiny." *Philosophia* 47 (2019), 1391-1404.
- Adunpe, Felix. Quoted in Ebus Sessou, "Demonic power troubling Nigeria since 1977 FESTAC – Cleric," *Vanguard* (10 Feb, 2018), <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/02/demonic-powers-troubling-nigeria-since-1977-festac-cleric/>. Accessed June 11, 2022.
- Alao, Abiodun. *Rage and Carnage in the Name of God*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022.
- Aldrich, Roy L. "Anglo-Israelism Refuted." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 93, no. 369 (Jan-Mar 1936), 41-63.
- Allen, Danielle. "A New Theory of Justice: Difference without Domination," in *Difference without Domination: Pursuing Justice in Diverse Democracies*, Danielle Allen and Rohini Somanathan eds. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2020. 27-58.
- _____. *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- Alexander, Estralda Y. *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011.
- Allport, Gordon. *The Nature of Prejudice* 25th Anniversary Edition. New York: Basic Books, 1979.
- Al Ramiah, A. and M. Hewstone. "Intergroup Difference and Harmony: The Role of Intergroup Contact," in *Individual, Group and Cultural Processes in Changing Societies. Progress in Asian Social Psychology*. Delhi: University Press, 2011. 3-22.

- Anderson, Allan. "The Dubious Legacy of Charles Parham: Racism and Cultural Insensitivities Among Pentecostals." *Pneuma* 27 no. 1 (Spring 2005), 51-64.
- _____. *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- _____. "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions." In *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis Van Der Laan. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. 13-29.
- Anderson, Elizabeth. "Can We Talk? Communicating Moral Concern in an Era of Polarized Politics." *Journal of Practical Ethics* vol. 10 no. 1 (2022), 67-92.
- _____. "The Epistemology of Democracy." *Episteme* (2006), 8-22.
- _____. "Fair Opportunity in Education: A Democratic Equality Perspective." *Ethics* 117 (July 2007), 595-622.
- _____. *The Imperative of Integration*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- _____. *Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It)*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.
- _____. "What Is the Point of Equality?" *Ethics* 109 (1999), 287-337.
- Anderson, Wendy Love. *The Discernment of Spirits: Assessing Visions and Visionaries in the Late Middle Ages*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006.
- Apter, Andrew. *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Terence Irwin. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1985.
- Augustine, Daniela C. *The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019.
- Bächtiger, Andre, John S. Dryzek, Jane Mansbridge, and Mark Warren. "Deliberative Democracy: An Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, Andre Bächtiger *et al* eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Bacote, Vincent. *The Spirit in Public Theology: Appropriating the Legacy of Abraham Kuyper*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010.

- Beaman, Lori. *Deep Equality in an Era of Religious Diversity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Bediako, Kwame. *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of Non-Western Religion*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.
- Bell, Macalaster. *Hard Feelings: The Moral Psychology of Contempt*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Berger, Peter. *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*. Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2014.
- Berry, Damon. "Voting in the Kingdom: Prophecy Voters, the New Apostolic Reformation, and Christian Support for Trump." *Nova Religio* vol. 23 no. 4 (2020), 69-93.
- Bialecki, John. *A Diagram for Fire: Miracles and Variation in an American Charismatic Movement*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017.
- _____. "Does God Exist in Methodological Atheism? On Tanya Lurhmann's *When God Talks Back* and Bruno Latour." *Anthropology of Consciousness*, vol. 25.1 (2014). 32-52.
- Blier, Suzanne Preston. *Art and Risk in Ancient Yoruba: Ife History, Power, and Identity, c. 1300*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America* 6th ed. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022.
- Botman, Russel. "Is Blood Thicker Than Justice? The Legacy of Abraham Kuyper for Southern Africa," in *Religion, Pluralism, and Public Life: Abraham Kuyper's legacy for the twenty-first century*, Luis E. Lugo ed. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000. 342-361.
- Bretherton, Luke. *Christ and the Common Life: Political Theology and the Case for Democracy*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019.
- _____. *Resurrecting Democracy: Faith, Citizenship, and the Politics of a Common Life*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Butler, Anthea. *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2021.
- Butler, Judith. *Giving an Account of Oneself*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.
- Callahan, Leslie D. "Redeemed or Destroyed: Re-evaluating the Social Dimensions of Bodily Destiny in the Thought of Charles Parham." *Pneuma* 28 no. 2 (Fall 2006), 203-227.

- Campbell, John. *Nigeria and the Nation-State: Rethinking Diplomacy with the Postcolonial World*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.
- Carroll, Ross. "Wollstonecraft and the Political Value of Contempt." *European Journal of Political Theory* vol. 18.1 (2019). 26-46.
- Carter, J. Kameron. *Race: A Theological Account*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Cartledge, Mark. *The Holy Spirit and Public Life: Empowering Ecclesial Praxis*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2022.
- Castelo, Daniel. *Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2017.
- Chan, Simon. *Liturgical Theology: Church as Worshiping Community*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
- _____. "The Nature of the Church: The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Life," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 22 (January 2013), available at: <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj22/chan.html>.
- _____. *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay in the Development of Doctrine*. Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2011.
- _____. *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011.
- _____. *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of Christian Life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.
- Cherry, Myisha. *The Case for Rage: Why Anger is Essential to Anti-Racist Struggle*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Clemmons, Ithiel C. "What Price Reconciliation: Reflections on the Memphis Dialogue." *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 116-122.
- Coakley, Sarah. *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay 'On the Trinity'*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Cottrell-Boyce, Aidan. *Israelism in Modern Britain*. London: Routledge, 2021.
- Crawley, Ashon T. *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Crean, Thomas and Alan Fimister, *Integralism: A Manual of Political Philosophy*. Havertown, PA: Eurospan, 2020.

- Day, Keri. *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022.
- D'Costa, Gavin ed. *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990.
- de Vries, Hent. "Introduction: Before, Around, and Beyond the Theologico-Political." In *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, edited by Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan. New York: Fordham University Press, 2006. 1-90.
- Dewey, John. *The Public and Its Problems: An Essay in Political Inquiry*, edited by Melvin Rogers. Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 2016.
- Dias, Elizabeth and Ruth Graham. "How White Evangelical Christians Fused With Trump Extremism." *New York Times* (January 19, 2021).
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/us/how-white-evangelical-christians-fused-with-trump-extremism.html>.
- Didymus the Blind. "On the Holy Spirit," in *Works on the Spirit*. Edited by John Behr. Translated by Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres. Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2011. 143-228.
- Dryzek, J.S. "Reflections on the Theory of Deliberative Systems." *Critical Policy Studies* 10 (2016), 209-215.
- Dupuis, Jacques. *Toward a Christian Theology of Pluralism*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001.
- du Toit, S. *Holy Scripture and Race Relations: with special application to South African conditions*. Potchefstroom, South Africa: Rege-pers Beperk, 1960.
- Dyer, Richard. *White, Twentieth Anniversary Edition*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Ekanola, Adebola Babatunde. "A Naturalistic Interpretation of the Yoruba Concepts of *Ori*." *Philosophia Africana* vol. 9, no. I (March, 2006), 41-51.
- Enlow, Johnny. *The Seven Mountain Mantle: Receiving the Joseph Anointing to Reform Nations*. Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2009.
- _____. *The Seven Mountain Prophecy: Unveiling the Coming Elijah Revolution*. Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2018.
- Enos, Ryan. *The Space Between Us: Social Geography and Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

- Entman, Robert M. "Blacks in the News: Television, Modern Racism and Cultural Change." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* vol. 69 no. 2 (Summer 1992), 341-361.
- _____. "Modern racism and the images of blacks in local television news." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* vol. 7.4 (1990), 332-345.
- Espinosa, Gastón. *Latino Pentecostals in America Faith and Politics in Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.
- _____. *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Falade, Tomi and Seyi Taiwo-Oguntuase. "FESTAC '77 Was Like A Knife In God's Heart – Evang Osundolire." *Independent*, Jan. 21, 2018. <https://independent.ng/festac-77-like-knife-gods-heart-evang-osundolire/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.
- Falola, Toyin and Matthew M. Heaton. *A History of Nigeria*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Falola, Toyin ed. *The Philosophy of Nimi Wariboko: Social Ethics, Economy, and Religion*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2021.
- Fish, Stanley. *The Trouble with Principle*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: Volume Two*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.
- Fourie, Carina. "What is Social Equality? An Analysis of Status Equality as a Strongly Egalitarian Ideal." *Res Publica* 18 (2012), 107-126.
- Friedman, Marilyn. *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Gbadegesin, Olusegun. "Destiny, Personality and the Ultimate Reality of Human Existence: A Yoruba Perspective." *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* vol. 7 no. 3 (1984), 173-188.
- Gilad, Corinne and Michael R. Maniaci. "The push and pull of dominance and power: When dominance hurts, when power helps, and the potential role of other-focus." *Personality and Individual Differences* 184 (2022), 111159.
- Gilbert, Gary. "The List of Nations in Acts 2: Roman Propaganda and the Lukan Response." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121.3 (2002), 497-529.
- Goff, Jr., James R. *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism*. Fayetteville, AR: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988.

- Goossen, Rachel Waltner. “‘Defanging the Beast’: Mennonite Responses to John Howard Yoder’s Sexual Abuse.” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 89, no 1 (January 2015), 7-80.
- Gorski, Philip S. and Samuel L. Perry. *The Flag + the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022.
- Grady, Christopher. “Group Conflict and Intergroup Contact.” PhD Diss. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2020.
- Green, Chris E.W. *The End is Music: A Companion to Robert W. Jenson’s Theology*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018.
- _____. “The Spirit that Makes Us (Number) One: Racism, Tongues, and the Evidences of Spirit Baptism.” *Pneuma* 41 (2019), 397-420.
- _____. *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord’s Supper: Foretasting the Kingdom*. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2012.
- Gregory, Eric. *Politics & the Order of Love: An Augustinian Ethic of Democratic Citizenship*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Gushee, David P. “Ending the Teaching of Contempt.” In *Changing Our Minds* 3rd ed. Canton, MI: Read the Spirit Books, 2017. 125-144.
- Gutmann, Amy and Dennis Thompson. *Democracy and Disagreement: Why Moral Conflict Cannot be Avoided in Politics, and What Should be Done About It*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Hale, Grace. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. New York: Vintage Books, 1998.
- Harding, Susan. *The Book of Jerry Falwell: Fundamentalist Language and Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- _____. “Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other.” *Social Research* 58 no. 2 (Summer 1991), 373-393.
- Hartman, Tim. *Kwame Bediako: African Theology for a World Christianity*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2022.
- Hefner, Robert W. “The Unexpected Modern—Gender, Piety, and Politics in the Global Pentecostal Surge.” In *Global Pentecostalism in the 21st Century*, edited by Robert Heffner. Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2013. 1-36.
- Heim, S. Mark. *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995.

- Henry, P.J. and David Sears. "The Symbolic Racism 2000 Scale." *Political Psychology* vol. 22 no. 2 (2002), 253-83.
- Hense, Elizabeth. *Early Christian Discernment of Spirits*. Zürich: Lit Verlag GmbH & Co., 2016.
- Hick, John and Paul Knitter, eds. *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987.
- Hittinger, Russell. *A Critique of the New Natural Law Theory*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988.
- Hobbes, Thomas. *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol. 2. Edited by William Molesworth. London: John Bohn, 1839.
- Hobhouse, L.T. *Liberalism and Other Writings*. James Meadowcroft ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Hodson, Gordon and Miles Hewstone eds. *Advances in Intergroup Contact*. New York: Psychology Press, 2013.
- Hollenweger, Walter J. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.
- _____. "The Pentecostal Elites and the Pentecostal Poor: A Missed Dialogue?" in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*. Edited by Karla Poewe. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994. 200-214.
- Honig, Bonnie. *Public Things: Democracy in Disrepair*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2017.
- Isaac, Jules. *The Teaching of Contempt: Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism*, translated by Helen Weaver. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964.
- Ilesanmi, Simeon. *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1996.
- Jaima, Amir R.A. "Don't Talk to White People: On the Epistemological and Rhetorical Limitations of Conversations With White People for Anti-Racist Purposes: An Essay." *Journal of Black Studies* vol. 52 no. 1 (2021), 77-97.
- Jennings, Willie James. *Acts*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017.
- _____. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

- Jenson, Robert. "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went." *PRO ECCLESIA* 2, no. 3 (1993), 296–304.
- Joas, Hans. *Faith as an Option: Possible Futures for Christianity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014.
- Johnson, Todd M. and Gina M. Zulo. *Introducing Spirit-Empowered Christianity: The Global Pentecostal & Charismatic Movements in the 21 Century*. Tulsa, OK: Oral Roberts University Press, 2020.
- Jones, Paul Dafydd. "Cheerful Unease: Theology and Religious Studies," in *Religious Studies and Rabbis: A Conversation*. Elizabeth Shanks Alexander and Beth A. Berkowitz eds. New York: Routledge, 2017. 69-81.
- Kahan, Dan. "Climate-Science Communication and the *Measurement Problem*" *Advances in Political Psychology* 36 (2015), 1-43.
- Kalu, Ogbu. *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Kane, Ross. *Syncretism and Christian Tradition: Race and Revelation in the Study of Religious Mixture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Kant, Immanuel. *The Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated and edited by Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *Christian Theology of Religions: An Introduction*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.
- _____. *Christology: A Global Introduction* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.
- _____. *Doing the Work of Comparative Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2020.
- _____. *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- _____. *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.
- Katz, Irwin and R. Glen Hass. "Racial Ambivalence and American Value Conflict: Correlational and Priming Studies of Dual Cognitive Structures." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* vol. 55 no. 6 (1988), 893-905.
- Kaveny, Cathleen. *Prophecy Without Contempt: Religious Discourse in the Public Square*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.

- Keener, Craig. *Acts*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- _____. "Power of Pentecost: Luke's Missiology in Acts 1-2." *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 12:1 (2009), 47-73.
- _____. "The Spirit and the Mission of the Church in Acts 1-2." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62.1 (2019), 25-45.
- Klaus Byron D. and Douglas P. Peterson *The Essential J. Philip Hogan*. Springfield, MO: The Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2006.
- Kuyper, Abraham. *Lectures on Calvinism*. Haddington, Scotland: Handsel Press, 1943.
- _____. "Sphere Sovereignty," in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, James D. Bratt ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998.
- Laborde, Cécile. *Liberalism's Religion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Lafont, Cristina. *Democracy Without Shortcuts: A Participatory Conception of Deliberative Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Laidlaw, James. *The Subject of Virtue: An Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Land, Steven Jack. *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010.
- Latona, Olayinka. "Be grateful to God, Adeboye counsels Nigerians." *Vanguard*, April 16, 2016. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/04/grateful-god-adeboye-counsels-nigerians/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.
- Lawuyi, Olatunde Bayo. "Orí, Ayé and the ontogeny of society." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* vol. 39 no. 3 (2021), 353-363.
- Lee, Latoya A. "Black Twitter: A Response to Bias in Mainstream Media." *Social Sciences* 6.26 (2017) doi:10.3390/socsci6010026.
- LeVan, A. Carl. *Contemporary Nigerian Politics: Competition in a Time of Transition and Terror*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Lipsitz, George. *How Racism Takes Place*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011.
- _____. "The Racialization of Space, and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape." *Landscape Journal* 26:1-07 (2007), 10-23.

- _____. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2018.
- Locke, John. *Locke on Toleration*, Richard Vernon ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Loffland, Lyn. *A World of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press Inc., 1985.
- Long, D. Stephen. *Augustinian and Ecclesial Christian Ethics: On Loving Enemies*. New York: Lexington Books, 2018.
- Lovett, Leonard. "Looking Backward to Go Forward." *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 123-4.
- Lucker, Kristen. *Abortion & the Politics of Motherhood*. Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 1985.
- Luhrmann, T.M. *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship With God*. New York: Vintage Books, 2012.
- Macchia, Frank D. *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.
- _____. "From Azusa to Memphis: Where Do We Go From Here? Roundtable Discussions on the Memphis Colloquy." *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 113-115.
- _____. *Jesus the Spirit Baptizer: Christology in Light of Pentecost*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2018.
- _____. *The Spirit-Baptized Church: A Dogmatic Inquiry*. New York: T&T Clark, 2020.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Prince*. Edited by Quentin Skinner and Russell Prince. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Mahmood, Saba. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Manavhela, Gwashi Freddy. "An Analysis of the Theological Justification of Apartheid in South Africa: A Reformed Theological Perspective." PhD diss., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2009.
- March Andrew F. and Alicia Steinmetz. "Religious Reasons in Public Deliberation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, Andre Bächtiger *et al* eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018, 203-217.

- Marina, Jacqueline. "Schleiermacher on the outpourings of the inner fire: experiential expressivism and religious pluralism." *Religious Studies* 40.2 (June 2004), 125-143.
- Markus, Robert A. *Christianity and the Secular*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.
- Marshall, Ruth. *Political Spiritualities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Massey, Douglas and Nancy Denton. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Mason, Michelle. "Contempt as a Moral Attitude." *Ethics* 113 (January 2003), 234-272.
- Mathewes, Charles. "Appreciating Hauerwas: One Hand Clapping." *Anglican Theological Review* 82 no. 2 (Spring 2000), 343-360.
- _____. *A Theology of Public Life*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- McConahay, John. "Modern Racism, Ambivalence, and the Modern Racism Scale." In J. F. Dovidio & S. L. Gaertner eds., *Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1986. 91-125.
- Medina, Néstor. *Christianity, Empire, and the Spirit: (Re)configuring Faith and the Cultural*. Leiden, ND: Brill, 2018.
- Menzies, Robert P. "Acts 2.17-21: A Paradigm for Pentecostal Mission." *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 17 (2008), 200-218.
- Milbank, John. *Theology & Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.
- Miller, Donald E., Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory, eds. *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Miller, Donald E. and Tetsunao Yamamori. *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.
- Miller, Richard B. *Friends and Other Strangers: Studies in Religion, Ethics, and Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.
- Mills, Charles. "White Ignorance." In Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana eds, *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007. 13-38
- Milner, Marlon. "Dis/parity: Blackness and the (Im)possibility of a Pentecostal (Political) Theology." *Pneuma* 44 (2022), 421.

- Mittermaier, Amira. "Dreams for Elsewhere: Muslim subjectivities beyond the trop of self-cultivation." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18, 247-265.
- Mojoyinola, Ayoyemi. "How I Built Largest Evangelical Church In Europe – Pastor Sunday Adelaja." *The City Pulse*, July 5, 2016. <https://thecitypulsenews.com/how-i-built-largest-evangelical-church-in-europe-pastor-sunday-adelaja/>. Accessed: March 31, 2023.
- Moradi, B. and L. Miller. "Attitudes of Iraq and Afghanistan War Veterans Toward Gay and Lesbian Service Members." *Armed Forces & Society* 36 (2010), 397-419.
- Morgridge, Andrew. "No to Another FESTAC." *Vanguard*, December 18, 2016. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/12/no-to-another-festac/>. Accessed: July 3, 2022.
- Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992.
- Mouffe, Chantal. *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically*. London: Verso, 2013.
- Mouw, Richard J. *Pluralisms and Horizons: An Essay in Christian Public Philosophy*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993.
- Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019.
- Murillo, Mario. *Vessels of Fire & Glory: Breaking Demonic Spells over America to Release a Great Awakening*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2020.
- Nietzsche, Friederich. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage, 1967.
- Ngong, David Tonghou. "Formed by the village and the church: The reception of Stanley Hauerwas's theological ethics in Africa." *Review and Expositor* 112.1 (2015), 92-103.
- Ngumah, Isaac. "FESTAC '77 number one sin of Nigeria against God- Pastor Adepoju." *Church Times Nigeria*, July 30, 2019. <https://churchtimesnigeria.net/festac-adepoju-nigeria/>. Accessed: July 2, 2022.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- _____. *The Monarchy of Fear: A Philosopher Looks at Our Political Crisis*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018.

- Obadare, Ebenezer. *Pastoral Power, Clerical State: Pentecostalism, Gender, and Sexuality in Nigeria*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2022.
- _____. *Pentecostal Republic: Religion and the Struggle for State Power in Nigeria*. London: Zed Books, 2018.
- Obasanjo, Olusegun. Quoted in “Obasanjo opens up on role in FESTAC ’77,” *National Daily Newspaper*, Nov. 7, 2017. <https://nationaldailyng.com/obasanjo-opens-up-on-role-in-festac-77/>. Accessed June 10, 2022.
- O’Callaghan, Derek, Derek Greene, Maura Conway, Joe Carthy, and Pa’ draig Cunningham. “Down the (White) Rabbit Hole: The Extreme Right and Online Recommender Systems.” *Social Science Computer Review*, vol. 33.4 (2015), 459-478.
- Oduala, Sunday. *Demons at Loose*. Self-Published, Sunday Oduala, 2019.
- Olúpònà, Jacob K. *City of 201 Gods: Ilé-Ifé in Time, Space, and the Imagination*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011.
- Ogunnaike, Ayodeji. “How Worship Becomes Religion: Religious Change and Change in Religion in Èdẹ and Salvador.” PhD diss. Harvard University, 2019.
- Ogunnaike, Oludamini. *Deep Knowledge: Ways of Knowing in Sufism and Ifa, Two West African Intellectual Traditions*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021.
- _____. “From Heathen to Sub-Human: A Genealogy of the Influence of the Decline of Religion on the Rise of Modern Racism.” *Open Theology* 2 (2016), 785-803.
- Ojo, Mathews A. *The End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements In Modern Nigeria*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2006.
- Painter, Nell Irvin. *The History of White People*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010.
- Panikkar, R. “Is the Notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?” *Diogenes* 120 (Winter 1982), 75-102.
- Papathanasiou, Athanasios. “If I Cross the Boundaries, You are There! An Affirmation of God’s Action Outside the Canonical Boundaries of the Church.” *Communio Viatorum* 53.3 (2011), 40-55.
- Parham, Charles F. *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*. Baxter Springs, KS: Apostolic Faith Bible College, 1902.

- Peel, J.D.Y. *Aladura: A Religious Movement Among the Yoruba*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968.
- _____. *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2016.
- Pemberton III, John and Fuso S. Afọlayan. *Yoruba Sacred Kingship: "A Power Like That of the Gods"*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996.
- Pettigrew, T.F. "Intergroup Contact Theory." *Annual Review of Psychology* (1998), 65-85.
- Pettigrew, T.F. and L.R. Tropp. "A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90 (2006), 751-783.
- Phillips, Anne. *Unconditional Equals*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021.
- Phillips, Baba Aladura Henry. Quoted in Olayinka Latona, "FESTAC '77 responsible for Nigeria's woes — Baba Aladura Philips," *Vanguard* (13 July, 2019), <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/07/festac-77-responsible-for-nigerias-woes-baba-aladura-philips/>. Accessed June 10, 2022.
- Poinsett, Alex. "FESTAC '77: Second World Black and African Festival of Art and Culture draws 17,000 participants to Lagos." *Ebony Magazine* vol. 32.7 (May 1977), 33-46.
- Portier, Phillipe. "Religion and Democracy in the Thought of Jürgen Habermas." *Culture and Society* 48 (2011), 426-432.
- Premawardhana, Devaka. *Faith in Flux: Pentecostalism and Mobility in Rural Mozambique*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018.
- Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Touchstone Books, 2001.
- R, Johnathan C. "FESTAC: Upbeat Finale." *Washington Post* (14 Feb, 1977), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1977/02/14/festac-upbeat-finale/e97a144d-bd6a-4e03-ba18-e0be4217d057/>. Accessed June 10, 2022.
- Rahner, Karl. *Theological Investigations*, tr. David Bourke. New York: Seabury Press, 1974.
- Ramírez, Daniel. *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
- Rawls, John. *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

- Reynolds, Thomas. "Reconsidering Schleiermacher and the Problem of Religious Diversity: Toward a Dialectical Pluralism." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73.1 (March 2005), 151-181.
- Richmann, Christopher J. "Prophecy and Politics: British-Israelism in American Pentecostalism." *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 22 (January 2013), available at: <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj22/richmann.html>.
- Rivera, Lauren A. "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." *American Sociological Review* vol. 77 no. 6 (2012), 999-1022.
- Robbins, Joel. *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in Papua New Guinea Society*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004.
- _____. "On the Paradoxes of Global Pentecostalism and the Perils of Continuity Thinking," *Religion* 33 (2003), 222-3.
- Robeck, Jr. Cecil M. *The Azusa St Mission & Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- _____. "The Past: Historical Roots of Racial Unity and Division in American Pentecostalism." *Cyber-Journal for Pentecostal Charismatic Research* no. 14 (May 2005), available at: http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj14/robeck.html#N_73_.
- _____. "Pentecostal Ecclesiologies," in *T&T Clark Companion to Ecclesiology*, Kimlyn J. Bender and D. Stephen Long eds. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020.
- _____. "Racial Reconciliation at Memphis: Some Personal Reflections." *Pneuma* 18 no. 1 (Spring 1996), 137-9.
- Roberts, Tyler. *Encountering Religion: Responsibility and Criticism After Secularism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.
- Rogers, Eugene F. *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005.
- Rorty, Richard. "Religion as a Conversation-stopper," in *Philosophy and Social Hope*. London: Penguin Books, 1999. 168-74.
- Rosario-Rodriguez, Rubén. *Dogmatics After Babel: Beyond Theologies of Word and Culture*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John-Knox Press, 2018.
- Sanders, Lynn. "Against Deliberation." *Political Theory* vol. 25 no. 3 (1997), 347-376.

- Scacco, Alexandra and Shan S. Warren. "Can Social Contact Reduce Prejudice and Discrimination? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Nigeria." *American Political Science Review* 112.3 (2018), 654-677.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. Richard Crouter ed and trans. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Seidel, Andrew L. "Section V: Events, People, and Networks Leading Up to January 6th." In Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, *Christian Nationalism and the January 6th 2021 Insurrection*. February, 2022. 14-25. Available at: https://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Christian_Nationalism_and_the_Jan6_Insurrection-2-9-22.pdf.
- _____. "Section VI: Attack on the Capital: Evidence of the Role of White Christian Nationalism." In Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, *Christian Nationalism and the January 6th 2021 Insurrection*. February, 2022. 25-40. Available at: https://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Christian_Nationalism_and_the_Jan6_Insurrection-2-9-22.pdf.
- Shaull, Richard and Waldo Cesar. *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches: Promises, Limitations, Challenges*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000.
- Scherz, China. "Enduring the Awkward Embrace: Ontology and Ethical Work in a Ugandan Convent." *American Anthropologist* vol. 120 no. 1 (March 2018), 102-112.
- Senn, Frank. *New Creation: A Liturgical Worldview*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000.
- Shabazz, Rashad. *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicago*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015.
- Shelby, Tommie. *Dark Ghettos: Injustice, Dissent, and Reform*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2016.
- Shklar, Judith N. The Liberalism of Fear. In *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, edited by Nancy L. Rosenblum. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989. 21–38.
- Simmel, G. "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, K. H. Wolff ed. New York: The Free Press, 1950. 409-424.
- Soyinka, Wole. *Death and the King's Horseman: A Play*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2002.

- Standage, Tom. *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century's On-line Pioneers*. New York, Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Stanley, Matthew L. Peter S. Whitehead, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, and Paul Seli. "Exposure to opposing reasons reduces negative impressions of ideological opponents." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 91 (2000), 104030.
- Stephenson, Christopher A. *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Staples, Jason A. "'Rise, Kill and Eat': Animals as Nations in Early Jewish Visionary Literature and Acts 10." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 42(1) (2019), 3-17.
- Stewart, Katherine. *The Power Worshippers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.
- Stout, Jeffrey. *Democracy and Tradition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Stronstad, Roger. *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984.
- Studebaker, Steven M. *A Pentecostal Political Theology for American Renewal: Spirit of the Kingdoms, Citizens of the Cities*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- _____. *From Pentecost to the Triune God: A Pentecostal Trinitarian Theology* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012.
- Sunstein, Cass R. "Deliberative Trouble? Why Groups Go to Extremes." *The Yale Law Journal* vol. 110 no. 1 (October, 2000), 71-119.
- Synan, Vinson. *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997.
- Tajfel, H. and J.C. Turner. "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, W.G. Austin and S. Worchel eds. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1979. 33-47.
- Talisse, Robert B. *Sustaining Democracy: What We Owe to the Other Side*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022.
- Tang, Lu *et al.* "'Down the Rabbit Hole' of Vaccine Misinformation on YouTube: Network Exposure Study." *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, vol. 23.1 (January 2021).
- Tanner, Kathryn. *God and Creation in Christian Theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1988.

- _____. *Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.
- _____. *The Politics of God: Christian Theologies and Social Justice*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992.
- _____. “Workings of the Spirit: Simplicity or Complexity?” In *The Work of the Spirit: Theology and Pentecostalism*, edited by Michael Welker. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006. 87-108.
- Taylor, Charles. *A Catholic Modernity: Charles Taylor’s Marianist Award Lectures*, James L. Heft ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- _____. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Thiessen, Matthew. “A Worthy Cornelius and Divine Grace: Complicating John Barclay’s *Paul and the Gift*.” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 84 (2022), 462-479.
- _____. *Paul and the Gentile Problem*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Tilly, Charles. *Durable Inequality*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998.
- _____. *Identities, Boundaries & Social Ties*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Tinker, George E. “Tink”. *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008.
- Tonstad, Linn Marie. *God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitude*. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other*. New York: Basic Books, 2012.
- Turner, John C., et al. *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
- Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Tweed, Thomas. *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Ukah, Asonzeh. *A New Paradigm for Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 2008.

- UNESCO, "Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization," June 24, 2022. Available at: https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/constitution?TSPD_101_R0=080713870fab200063a349d07c1926c825478f0b60a5193e386f21b860afaaa88e5d7f20e88065030845fcc1bd1430007866ad9c8b0757f356c24310f570e19c2305d2820f40134dd18a6638f5f1d91ed985c4b629e6ce0ff45a55a32356a60f.
- Vaughan, Olufemi. *Religion and the Making of Nigeria*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Vial, Theodore. *Modern Religion, Modern Race*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Villafañe, Eldin. *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1992.
- Villegas, Isaac Samuel. "The Ecclesial Ethics of John Howard Yoder's Abuse." *Modern Theology* (May 11, 2020): <https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.12623>.
- Voigt, Kristin. "Relational Egalitarianism," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (30 Jun. 2020) <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-1387>.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.
- _____. "The Trinity is Our Social Program': The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement." *Modern Theology* vol. 14 no. 3 (July 1998), 403-423.
- Vondey, Wolfgang, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel*. New York: T&T Clark, 2017.
- Wacker, Grant. *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Dominion! How Kingdom Action Can Change the World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2008.
- Wall, Robert W. "Peter, 'Son' of Jonah: The Conversion of Cornelius in the Context of Canon." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 28 (1987), 79-90.
- Wallnau, Lance. *God's Chaos Candidate: Donald J. Trump and the American Unravelling*. Keller, TX: Killer Sheep Media, 2016.
- _____. *God's Chaos Code: The Shocking Blueprint that Reveals 5 Keys to the Destiny of Nations*. Keller, TX: Killer Sheep Media, 2020.

- Wallnau, Lance and Bill Johnson, *Invading Babylon: The 7 Mountain Mandate*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishing, Inc., 2013.
- Wariboko, Nimi. *Ethics and Society in Nigeria: Identity, History, Political Theory*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2019.
- _____. *Ethics and Time: Ethos of Temporal Orientation in Politics and Religion of the Niger Delta*. Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2010.
- _____. *Nigerian Pentecostalism*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014.
- _____. *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2012.
- Washington, Harriett. *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*. New York: Anchor Books, 2008.
- Weber, Max. *Economy and Society: An outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds. New York: Bedminster, 1968.
- West, Ryan. "Contempt and the Cultivation of Character: Two Models." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 43.3 (2015). 493-519.
- Westfall, Jacob, Leaf Van Boven, John R. Chambers, and Charles M. Judd. "Perceiving Political Polarization in the United States: Party Identity Strength and Attitude Extremity Exacerbate the Perceived Partisan Divide." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 10 (2015), 145-158.
- Williams, Rowan. *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002.
- Winter, Gibson. *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches: An Analysis of Protestant Responsibility in the Expanding Metropolis*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961.
- Wolfe, Stephen. *The Case for Christian Nationalism*. Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2022.
- Wolff, Jonathan. "Social Equality and Social Inequality," in *Social Equality: On What It Means to Be Equals*, Carina Fourie, Fabian Schuppert, and Ivo Wallimann-Helmer eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 209-225.
- Yong, Amos. *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003.
- _____. *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018.

- _____. *Hospitality & the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008.
- _____. *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010.
- _____. *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2005.
- _____. *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.
- _____. "Spiritual Discernment: A Biblical-Theological Reconsideration," in *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Russell P. Spittler*. Edited by Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies. New York: T & T Clark International, 2004.
- Young, Iris Marion. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Zahl, Simeon. *The Holy Spirit and Christian Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Assemblies of God Primary Sources

Primary sources of Assemblies of God publications are all taken from The General Council of the Assemblies of God's *Consortium of Pentecostal Archives*, <https://pentecostalarchives.org/index.cfm>.

Pentecostal Evangel. 1960, April 10. "...at a Glance," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 11.

Pentecostal Evangel. 1969, September 7. *Pentecostal Evangel*: 15.

Pentecostal Evangel. 1969, September 28. "One Out of Every 50 Americans was Victim of Crime Last Year," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 27.

Pennington, Lawrence V. 1968, February. "Days of Lawlessness," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 15.

Langford, Mrs. W.C. 1968, August 18. "Curfew," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 21.

Bonnici, Roberta Lashley. 1968, January 14. "Order Restored," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 32.

Bacon, L. Calvin. 1968, January 14. "Eyewitness at a Funeral," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 20.

Hogan, J. Philip. 1969, October 12. "The Assemblies of God in Mission," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 4.

- Ringness, Curtis W. 1968, November 24. "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 12.
- Ringness, Curtis W. 1969, January 12. "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 15.
- Ringness, Curtis W. 1969, June 8. "Viewpoint on Home Missions," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 17.
- Hackett, Charles. 1991. "Report from the National Director of the Division of Home Missions," in Minutes, Revised Constitution and Bylaws, *The General Council of the Assemblies of God: The Forty-Fourth General Council: Portland, Oregon, August 6-11, 1991*, 84.
- This Present World: News and Notes on our Times, 1968, March. "News of Modern Man: Ghetto Negroes are Apathetic, Not Angry," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 7.
- Jones, Nancy. 1968, February 25. "The New Neighbors," *Pentecostal Evangel*: 22-23.
- W.F. Carothers, "Attitude of Pentecostal Whites to the Colored Brethren in the South," *The Weekly Evangel* (August 14, 1915), 2.