THE LORD’S SUPPER AND THE ETHICS OF GOD’S PRESENCE:
A PENTECOSTAL CONSIDERATION
FOR POLITICAL FORMATION

by

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ABSTRACT
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The purpose of this study is to explore the socio-political implications of the regular observance of the Lord’s Supper in Pentecostal communities. Pentecostalism represents a spirituality characterized by its receptivity to the transformative experience of God, but as a consequence of over-spiritualization, Pentecostals, at times, fail to enact the socio-political implications of the Holy Spirit’s presence work in creation. This present thesis argues that celebrating the Lord’s Supper reinforces the Pentecostal characteristics of expectation of God’s presence and anticipation for the establishment of the Kingdom at Christ’s second coming, overcomes escapist tendencies, and prepares worshippers to enact the socio-political vision of the Kingdom that is to come.

Chapter one reflects on the formative nature of worship and its essential role in the life of the Church. The Church as the worshipping community is meant to embody the political implications of God’s intentions for creation. Due to the habituating effect of narrative on humanity, the Church’s own liturgical enactment, in addition to facilitating experiences of God in worship, offers means of counter-formation to the rituals employed by visions rival to the Kingdom. Chapter two draws from Pentecostal scholars and their characterization of Pentecostal spirituality with its openness to the activity of the Spirit. This chapter finds that Pentecostal observance of the Eucharist can faithfully acknowledge the sacrament as a symbol of God’s activity, of the Spirit’s presence, and of the Kingdom that is still to come. Therefore, The Lord’s Supper offers a liturgical pedagogy consistent Pentecostal commitments that prepares communities to participate in Christian mission. Chapter three imagines the socio-political possibilities of the Eucharist for Pentecostal communities. When acknowledged as an occasion to experience God and as a sign of the Kingdom coming, the Lord’s Supper offers counter-formation to the effects of liturgies rival to God’s intentions for creation. Like Pentecostal worship, celebrating Lord’s Supper creates opportunities for the people of God to participate in the enactment of the narrative of God’s past, present, and future work through the worshipping community and in creation.
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INTRODUCTION

Alexander Schmemann identifies an increasing bifurcation between spirituality and life lived in the world, which, he contends, is a result of emphasizing one over the other. The dangers of taking spirituality over life in the world lie in classifying important social issues as insignificant to Gospel concerns.\(^1\) While some Christians see the world as antithetical to God’s ultimate intentions, Schmemann argues creation was always intended to mediate and catalyze the human experience of God.\(^2\) Over-emphasizing life lived in the world at the expense of spirituality risks failing to see the spiritual dynamics at work in creation.\(^3\)

In what follows, this study seeks to address this dichotomy in the context of Pentecostalism by suggesting that Pentecostals seek to understand their socio-political responsibility sacramentally.\(^4\) This thesis argues that the regular observance of the Lord’s Supper in Pentecostal worship reinforces the affirmation of God’s active work in and through the worshipping community and in the world; counteracts tendencies of dualism, escapism, and privatization of the work of the Spirit; and prepares worshipers to embody the socio-political realities of the coming Kingdom.

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\(^1\) Alexander Schmemann, *For the Life of the World* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1982), 12-15. Here, Schmemann is using the term “spirituality” to denote a faith solely focused on the disembodied spirit life, and he describes this as the of “activism” which, in Schmemann’s use of it, has the sole aim of bettering this life here and now. He claims the tragedy of the Church is its spiritualization. This differs from how Pentecostal scholars have used “spirituality” to denote a pattern of life that is connected to matters of the whole human being, spirit and body. Schmemann is not arguing for the removal of spirituality all together but is referring to the over-spiritualization of the Church at the expense of its mission in the present world. For more on Pentecostal spirituality, see Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 1993).

\(^2\) Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 17-20. Schmemann describes the account of the Fall recorded in Genesis 3 as a demonstration of the consequences of creation being consumed as an end of itself instead of a means given to facilitate relationship with God. This mistake continues today, licensing the commodification of creation and the institutionalization of religion.

\(^3\) Ibid., 12-15.

\(^4\) Ibid., 22. Schmemann holds this dichotomy is evidenced in the increasing disassociation between the sacraments and the Church’s mission.
Chapter one seeks to illuminate the formational role of experiences and habits in a person’s experience of the world. The Church’s activity is founded in its identity as the worshipping community, and congregations, as local expressions of the universal Church, must align their practices to correspond to that identity and vision.\(^5\) Christian formation requires the enactment of liturgical practices to counteract rival rituals that direct individuals to ends counter to God’s vision for creation.

Drawing from Pentecostal theologians, chapter two describes Pentecostalism as a spirituality characterized by the expectation for the experience of the actual presence of God that enlivens individuals and communities with passion and anticipation for the Kingdom.\(^6\) Though not always formalized, the liturgical rhythms of Pentecostal worship shape radical openness to the activity of God.\(^7\) Lacking critical reflection and intention regarding enacted liturgical practices leaves Pentecostals vulnerable to competing liturgies. This chapter contends that the regular observance of the Lord’s Supper can reinforce Pentecostal expectation for the Spirit’s presence, cultivate longing for the Kingdom’s realization, and prepare worshippers for Christian mission in light of both of these.

Chapter three imagines the implications of a Pentecostal, sacramental political theology. It identifies dichotomizing theological streams within Pentecostalism that compromise Pentecostals’ socio-political witness and considers how the practice of the Lord’s Supper may


counteract them. This chapter concludes by envisioning how the political vision of the Eucharist may be employed in Pentecostal communities.
CHAPTER 1:
CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: EXPERIENCING GOD AND ENGAGING THE WORLD

Introduction

In *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community*, Simon Chan argues that the Church is the ontological reality in which individuals become the people of God. Though the Church fulfills a purpose in creation, her identity is determined by her relationship with God and reinforced by her worship, which is her faithful response to God’s revelation. It is this identity that shapes the way the Church relates to the world. This chapter argues that the Church should engage from its core identity as the people of God, that this core identity is realized and instilled in individuals through Christian worship and practice, and that the realization of this identity serves as counter-formation to the practices of the world thus preparing participants for ethical and political engagement from a distinctly Christian ethos.

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8 Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 21-24. Chan uses the Biblical metaphors of the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit to describe the relationship between God and the Church. Chan’s project critiques what he calls the functional view of the Church, in which she is defined according to her function. He diagnoses contemporary evangelicalism with an ecclesiological deficit, which has led to the prominence of functional ecclesiology. He demonstrates how ecclesial practices can be developed on the basis of the Church’s ontology, instead of what is considered effective, popular, or fashionable. See also, 41-42.

9 Ibid., 1-15, 56. For Chan, Christian worship is a gift from God and would not be possible without God first acting in revelation to which the worshipping community can then respond.

The Worshipping Community

Dietrich Bonhoeffer characterizes the church-community as uniquely marked by its organization according to God’s will that is actualized through her regular worship.\(^\text{11}\) Due to the affective nature of humanity, the experience of God in worship forms participants according to the vision of the world that is liturgically enacted. The experience of God draws people and unites them with Christ in a formative way that prepares them for Christian mission.\(^\text{12}\) As Christian worship rehearses the story of God’s activity in the world, it points to the eschatological consummation of God’s Kingdom and provides them with the narrative tools needed for their life lived in the present.\(^\text{13}\)

The aim of worship remains to glorify and experience God. When the project of formation overshadows this intent, it ceases to be Christian worship.\(^\text{14}\) Reducing Christian worship to formation commodifies the practice as means for individuals to achieve better lives reinforcing consumerism among attendees, which Chan classifies as the error of “functional ecclesiology.”\(^\text{15}\) As Christian communities gather to worship, the imaginations of the


\(^{14}\) Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 54.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 41. See also Smith, *Awaiting the King*, 207. Smith asserts that worship is good apart from its “effectiveness,” and he warns against instrumentalizing worship. He sees worship first as a gift from God. For Smith, God enables the worshipful response to God’s self-revelation. See also Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 153. Similarly, Aidan Kavanagh argues that engaging God in the liturgy induces change in the participants which impacts subsequent liturgical acts. The community can continually engage the same liturgy differently with each experience because of the way experiencing God in the liturgy changes participants. See Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1981), 73-77.
congregants are directed toward the reality of God’s active presence and work within the worshipping community and, by extension, in the world. In telling and retelling the Christian story through acts of worship, participants are re-centered into the community characterized by God’s activity and intentions for the world.16

Ecclesial gatherings are naturally liturgical, and in the Church, liturgy constitutes the vehicle by which worship is enacted and encounter with God is fostered.17 Don E. Saliers writes, “Normatively considered, faithful liturgy is the fundamental imaginal framework of encounter with God in Christ which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, forms intentions in and through the affections oriented to God revealed in Christ as their goal and ground.”18 Christian liturgies are the repeated practices made of the normal words and actions that are employed in acts of worship and serve as frameworks for experiences of God.19 There are beliefs implicit in the liturgy enacted by the Church, and liturgical theology seeks to make those explicit.20 Liturgy happens in all worship contexts; even “non-liturgical” communities enact recognizable patterns, rhythms and norms.21 The Church’s liturgy, both formal and informal, initiates individuals into the

16 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 152.


21 Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 152. Smith cautions that inattention to the methods and rhythms of corporate practices can lead to malformation. Elsewhere, he considers the adverse effects of applying a Christian message to “secular” liturgies. For example, he discusses how contemporary worship services have adopted a rock
Christian life teaching them through practices that make up and form her core identity. When believers gather, they become an eschatological sign of the coming Kingdom.22 Worship gives space for participants to experience the presence of God that actualizes the reality of God’s will.23 By enacting this eschatological vision, Christian practices invite and equip worshippers for participation in God’s mission in the world.24

**Liturgical Anthropology**

While Christian liturgy focuses on the worship of God, James K. A. Smith recognizes that neither worship nor liturgy are exclusive to the Church. Broadly speaking, “worship” describes an individual’s orientation to what is perceived as ultimate, and “liturgy” identifies

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22 Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen, “The Formative Power of Liturgy. The Church as a Liturgical Community in a Post-Christendom Society,” *European Journal of Theology* 23, no. 2 (2014):163. See also Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998), 125. Lathrop contends that the act of regularly gathering is itself a formational act. For Chan, the Church when it gathers as the Body of Christ is the visible Kingdom of God. Chan claims there is a corporate spirituality that is actualized when the Church gathers that is greater than the aggregate of the individual spiritualities of those present. See Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 92. Schmemann claims that worship is the life of the Church and that gathering together is the public act that actualizes her nature as the Body of Christ. For Schmemann, Christian worship should place the Church in the world, not away from it. See Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 14, 29.

23 Jonathan E. Alvarado, “Pentecostal Worship and the Creation of Meaning,” *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Worship*, ed. Lee Roy Martin (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2016), 226. Alvarado uses the category of fantasy to describe the way worshippers are able to enact and engage with this alternate reality of God’s presence as if it were so. While “fantasy” describes the way in which the reality is rehearsed, I believe his use of the term could give the impression that the experience is not an experience of the real presence of God. Additionally, the category of fantasy could tend toward escapist approaches to worship in which the participant retreats to a fantastical experience detached from the real world to escape the mess of reality. Christian worship should give space to both celebrate and lament all that is right and wrong with the world. Both bad and good experiences should be brought to the worship experience and the ritual practice should both give voice to the praise and lament but also shape, and possibly critique, the way Christians approach these matters.

24 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 161.
rituals that communicate and instill ultimate concerns. Smith addresses humanity’s liturgical essence and the pervasiveness of secular liturgies throughout all dimensions of life. His project offers “liturgical anthropology” as a corrective alternative to “cognitive anthropology,” which defines humans as “thinking things” oriented the world through cognitive deliberation. Smith argues cognitive anthropology inadequately addresses the determinative nature of bodily existence and downplays the formative effects of rituals and environments. Therefore, cognitive anthropology falls short of fully accounting for the way humans experience and inhabit the world.

Seeking a wholistic account, Smith contends that humans are primarily lovers navigating the world through desires that are shaped to particular ends through rituals. Habituation conditions human bodies to move, react, and play out rituals with little prompting. Bodily practices shape persons by normalizing a desire until pre-cognitive inclinations to act on that

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25 Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 52, 82-85. Kavanagh also recognizes the broad sense in which “liturgy” could be understood. He says that liturgy is often applied to any “ceremonial human gathering.” See also Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 73.

26 Smith does this in his *Cultural Liturgies* trilogy. In volume one, Smith begins by challenging the Cartesian anthropology that defines humans as primarily “thinking things.” He levels his critiques to cast a more wholistic vision for Christian education and formation. See Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*. In volume two, Smith attends to the roles of imagination, bodily formation, and story in making individuals into certain kinds of people. See Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*. In volume three, Smith turns his attention to political theology to prescribe methods of Christian engagement particularly in liberal democracies. See Smith, *Awaiting the King*.

27 Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 42.

28 Ibid., 85.

29 Ibid., 69. Smith distinguishes between “thick” and “thin” rituals. “Thin” rituals are those habits that are repetitive activities in which individuals engage and effect human activity in a pre-cognitive way, but they do not point to any meta-vision for the world. He distinguishes these from “thick” rituals, which Smith says are full of meaning. He classifies “liturgies” as those rituals which address ultimate concern and call for our allegiances. Smith also points out how it is the mundane that can have the deepest effect. He contends that love is taught in what seems to be insignificant. Smith uses the example of the Lord’s Supper as an example of this. Items as mundane as bread and wine mediate the presence of God, and in this ritual, the Christian vision for the world is retold and imitated. See also Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 100.

30 Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 69.
desire develop. Consequently, ritual and habit can determine human activity without the necessary intervention of deliberation. In this sense, humans are also teleological creatures, because their lives take aim at the object of their desires as they act in accordance with their habituated inner states. Pre-cognitive tendencies to act in a certain way, what Smith calls “dispositions,” reveal to what end, or telos, individuals are oriented. Through active and passive experiences of the body, an individual’s thought patterns and dispositions take shape.

Formative narratives and their liturgies pervade society and are at work though their effects may be inconspicuous. Participating in communal rituals makes individuals natives to the societies they inhabit by calling them to imitate and internalize the dominate story as they practice the habits of the community. Smith argues that secular claims and their corresponding liturgies are not benign because they demand allegiance to a prescribed ultimate claim about the world. Secular liturgies have a religious quality that is often overlooked because they are not employed in an explicitly religious context. Every ultimate claim calls for the formation of individuals into certain kinds of people, and liturgies shape participants in view of these ends through the use of narrative. As Christianity makes ultimate claims about humanity and the

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31 Ibid., 55.

32 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 75-76. Smith points out that not all human activity springs directly from cognitive deliberation, but much of it is the result of habit.


34 Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 52.

35 Ibid., 85.

36 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 93.

37 Ibid., 108-111.
world, rival visions employ competing liturgies in an effort to garner the loyalties of individuals.38

Stanley Hauerwas argues that narrative informs beliefs and helps agents to act in accordance with the story presented.39 Humans participate in the enactment of stories that root themselves within human imaginations.40 Ultimate claims are made available to individuals through the shaping of their imaginations, which Smith describes as a faculty that organizes human perceptions in an affective way.41 Stories show an embodied picture of the “good life” and provide opportunities to imagine and enact that vision.42

By participating in communal narratives, persons find their place in these stories and begin enacting them. Through narrative enactment, ultimate claims about the world connect to human imaginations, shape their desires, and develop their dispositions.43 The liturgical practice of dominant narratives creates habits and practices that cultivate imaginations for an ultimate claim. Due to the existence of societal narratives, Smith argues that individuals inhabit the societies in which they reside with an implicit, bodily understanding.44 In this climate, Christian

38 Ibid., 38.


40 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 125.

41 Smith, Desiring the Kingdom, 18, 137.

42 Ibid., 32. See also Smith, Desiring the Kingdom, 52, 103. Visions effectively embed themselves in dispositions by being imagined in concrete ways. The best commercials and print advertisements encourage the purchase of their products by presenting a relatable narrative and giving consumers the opportunity to imagine themselves with the advertised product. The presentation is not just a product but a better, more efficient, happier way of life.

43 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 108-110.

44 Ibid., 56-60. See also Smith, Desiring the Kingdom, 69. Smith describes discipleship as being less about knowledge and more about intuitive understanding.
worship needs to be intentionally liturgical, formative, and pedagogical in order to equip Christians to face the “worship” practices of the world.\textsuperscript{45} Eventually, liturgies conscript participants to retell their stories.\textsuperscript{46} In cultures permeated by rival liturgies, Christian congregations must heed Smith’s call to become sites of counter-formation. Christian practices can sanctify perceptions and shape dispositions by “re-storying” worshippers to the Gospel.\textsuperscript{47}

\textbf{Worship and Christian Worldview}

The vision to which Christian worship points is the Kingdom of God. When communicating the Gospel, Smith finds that Protestants tend to place heavy emphasis on the discursive portion of their gatherings. Critiquing this over-emphasis, Smith argues that a purely rationalistic pedagogy that does not engage human desire will fail to properly counter-form Christians.\textsuperscript{48} Regarding Pentecostal practice, Christopher A. Stephenson contends that worship practices should influence doctrinal formulation without standing impervious to critique of

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{45} Smith, \textit{Desiring the Kingdom}, 88.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{46} Smith, \textit{Imagining the Kingdom}, 109. In \textit{Desiring the Kingdom}, Smith demonstrates his point by exegeting the liturgies and pedagogy of a shopping mall. He describes how the architecture, the lighting, the rhythms, and the décor are all meant to reinforce a vision of consumption as the ultimate aim. The “liturgies” of the mall intend to form participants into good consumers. See, 95-101. Smith makes a similar point in an article published in the Washington Post. In it, he describes how the original intent of Thanksgiving to thank God for provisions has been replaced by the liturgies of football and militarism. In the rituals he describes, fans gather in stadiums and around televisions to celebrate the national mythology in which modern day gladiators compete on a football field while thanks are directed to the military for safe-guarding domestic freedoms. To demonstrate the religious quality of the day’s traditions, Smith uses the occasion of the current controversy of professional football players kneeling during the playing of the national anthem in protest to the treatment of minorities in the United States. To the outraged, those who kneel fail to properly “worship,” and Smith believes the response to these protests by many Christians reveals the idolatrous connection of God and country in which a person’s partisan, political identity becomes primary. See James K. A. Smith, “The NFL’s Thanksgiving Games are a Spectacular Display of America’s ‘God and Country’ Obsession.” (23 November 2017) https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/11/23/the-nfls-thanksgiving-games-are-a-spectacular-display-of-americas-god-and-country-obsession/?utm_term=.24a982de86d1}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{47} Smith, \textit{Imagining the Kingdom}, 161.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 7-10. Simon Chan warns against the notion that truth is contained within the sermon and worship experiences are merely added benefits. See also Chan, \textit{Liturgical Theology}, 52.}
theological reflection. Their relationship should be reciprocal, in which both mutually inform and critique the other. Stephenson claims that doctrinal articulation incorporates what is assumed about God in spiritual practice, and spiritual practice helps shape and inspire theological reflection. For Stephenson, beliefs and practices serve as hermeneutical lenses to the other, and he argues their mutual influence is unavoidable and should be embraced.

Alexander Schmemann describes worship as a cosmic, historical, and eschatological act that constitutes worldview. Christian worship liturgical expression effectively perpetuates tradition by employing practices that engage the body and mind to shape the affections that orient the participant to the world in a Kingdom-centric way. The Christian “worldview” must be shared in teaching and instilled through the enactment of Christian practices. In the Christian gathering, congregations absorb an eschatological vision for the world and prepare to be sent out again to live according to that vision. Reflection can serve as a catalyst for change

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49 Christopher A. Stephenson, “The Rule of Spirituality and the Rule of Doctrine,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15, no. 1 (October 2006): 88. Stephenson points out the insight of Geoffrey Wainwright, which is that Catholics tend to place priority on the rule of prayer while Protestants tend to place priority on the rule of doctrine. Stephenson calls Pentecostals to see how the two mutually inform one another and tasks Pentecostals to seek further doctrinal articulation to complement their robust worship schema. When referring to Pentecostal practice, Stephenson opts for “rule of spirituality” over rule of prayer as Pentecostals typically do not employ the recitation of liturgical prayers.


52 Turner, “Tradition in the Church,” 139.

53 Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 161.

54 Ibid., 178. See also Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 161.
and help to engage worship with intentionality, but new dispositions and habits are needed to counteract and replace old, bad ones.\textsuperscript{55} Without corresponding practices, intellectual reflection will fail to address the affective nature of humanity and will leave worshippers vulnerable to visions rival to the Kingdom.\textsuperscript{56}

**Sacraments as Embodied Tension**

Christian worshippers should experience dissonance between the message of faith, hope, and love enacted in Christian worship and their experiences in the world. Rituals and symbols continually remind and shape disciples according to the eschatological tension they inhabit and give shape to how they are to live in it.\textsuperscript{57} The sacraments serve as symbols that reinforce the tension because they are ordinary objects, words, and practices that facilitate and point to encounter with the transcendent, triune God.\textsuperscript{58} With a sacramental understanding such as this, one may reflect on how worship practices mediate God’s presence.

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\textsuperscript{55} Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 188-191.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 7. Smith grants that the exposition of a Christian worldview can serve as a catalyst for change, but the change occurs when what is taught is accompanied with affection shaping habits. Smith seeks to break down the dichotomy between reflection and habituation, because both are essential to Christian formation. Smith attributes the reluctance to engage ritual to Protestants associating repetition with “dead orthodoxy,” viewing worship as an exclusively upward event, and subjecting themselves to the cult of novelty. Smith suggests this line of reasoning undercuts the counter-formative power of Christian ritual. Smith describes human activity as being subject to inertia of habit. He points out that if action is only perceived as springing exclusively from cognitive deliberation, then there is little room to address participation in social, systemic forces. See also, 129, 183. Alexander Schmemann suggests that humans are primarily worshippers and describes secularism as a kind of “heresy.” See Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 118-120.

\textsuperscript{57} Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 82. Chan locates the eschatological character of the Church in its ontological identity as the temple of the Holy Spirit.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., 70. See also Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Promulgated by Pope Paul VI (1963), III.61. Miroslav Volf distinguishes practices and sacraments in their relation to belief. For Volf, core Christian beliefs are normatively embedded in sacraments. He writes, “Practices are essentially belief-shaped, and beliefs are essentially practice-shaping.” He goes on to assert that practices can and do effect beliefs, but their impact is complex and unpredictable. See Miroslav Volf, “Theology for a Way of Life” in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, eds. Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 245-257. Speaking of sacraments, Gordon W. Lathrop demonstrates that ordinary things are employed to perpetuate the story of Christian community. For instance, immersion in water for baptism communicates in a tangible way the reality of the participant’s initiation into a new life and a new
In Vatican II’s *Constitution on Sacred Liturgy*, the Council states that the sacraments sanctify individuals, build up the Body of Christ, and facilitate the worship of God. It goes on to assert that sacraments also serve as instructional signs. According to the Council, the presence of sacraments situates the faithful to receive grace, worship God, and practice charity. Sacramental observance includes movement by God to the worshipper (grace), acknowledgment and movement toward God by the participant (worship), and recognition of the believer’s call to one’s neighbor (charity).\(^{59}\) Word and sacrament come together in Christian gatherings to help participants discern the truth.\(^{60}\) According to Ann R. Riggs, ritual action provides an interpretative matrix and establishes context to understand who Jesus is and the significance of His life.\(^{61}\) Bodily participation allows the hearer to experience and to internalize all that is said about God.\(^{62}\) Christian liturgy and sacramental observances allows worshippers to participate with their whole selves in the enactment of Christ’s death and resurrection.\(^{63}\)

\(^{59}\) *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, III.59-61. SC claims there is “hardly any material thing which cannot be directed toward the sanctification of men and the glory of God.”

\(^{60}\) Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 47. Lathrop uses the term “juxtaposition” as a refrain throughout his book *Holy Things*. It communicates the reality that no singular symbol or act encompasses the worship experience. Both word and liturgical act stand next to each other and in tandem communicate and illuminate truth.


\(^{62}\) Ibid. 14-16. Kavanagh makes a similar point and demonstrates the difference bodily participation can make. He uses the example of how a tribal dancer and an informed tourist understand a ritual dance differently. The tourist may have all the facts of the dance and its history detailed in a pamphlet, but through participation, the performer understands the ritual in a more intimate way, a way the tourist can never grasp from observation and secondary study. See Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 10.

\(^{63}\) Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 176.
Christian Narratives and Politics

In “Christian Ethics as Informed Prayer,” Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells claim worship is the most political, ethical thing a congregation can do. Worship, they say, organizes the body of believers toward God and in acts of worship participants are made more like Christ.64 William Cavanaugh describes the Church’s enactment of liturgy as a “counter-performance” of the world’s politics. The Christian liturgy represents a different imagination than what is offered by the rituals of the world. Cavanaugh claims that the simple act of gathering in Christian community is itself an act of the counter-performance.65 Worship enables the transformation of current patterns of action and join the community constituted by the presence of the Spirit and the practices that re-tell the message of the Kingdom-coming. It forms Christian character that counteracts the emphasis of individualization placed on persons by Western societal structures teaching the worshipping community to be attentive to others and their needs.66

Christians are to be uniquely oriented to the narrative of the Gospel and the experience of God.67 Liturgy teaches participants to identify and to enact the socio-political imagination of the


65 William Cavanaugh, “Politics and Reconciliation,” in The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics, eds. Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 202. Cavanaugh argues that Christian liturgy enacts politics of reconciliation. He contends that that modern liberal political orders were developed to protect individuals from violence. In this conception, when lines of division are drawn by religion or ideology, the state creates safe space for public exchange devoid of ultimate claims. Consequently, Cavanaugh argues that the Church’s influence is stifled and the pervasive message of the gospel that impacts all areas of life is sequestered. He offers a Christian counter-narrative beginning with Scripture’s account of the goodness of creation and the announcement of the Kingdom come in Christ. He disputes the view that the Church should withdraw from politics leaving political activity to the state, and he argues that Christian liturgy via confession, passing of the peace, and celebration of Eucharist provides means through which reconciliation in a pluralistic society can be imagined and achieved. See also Cavanaugh, Migrations of the Holy, 121.


67 Hauerwas, A Community of Character, 35.
coming Kingdom and shape desires according to that vision. Right worship teaches Christians to love rightly, to be loved, and, ultimately, through sanctification, to be love. Chris E. W. Green asserts that experiencing the revelation of God through the Spirit is not meant to be an end in itself because of the Church’s task is to bear witness to the Gospel. This is why Christian gatherings conclude by commissioning the participants to embody the Spirit-transformation experienced in worship. The formational rhythms employed in worship should also inform the way that Christian worshippers are present in the world. The narrative presentation of the Gospel in word and sacrament implies communal norms with ethical and political implications.

Through reinforcing its identity in worship, the Church learns to enact a better way of engaging politics than what is commonly held as the status quo. In this quest, Smith identifies

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68 Paul J. Griffiths, “Christians and the Church,” in The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics, eds. Gilbert Meilaneder and William Wepehowski (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 411. Griffiths holds eschatological anticipation necessitates training in lament, which he claims is public evidence of hope. Lament offers clear admission of the less than perfect reality of the world while at the same time affirming the hope that all will be made right when the eschaton is realized.


70 Chris E. W. Green, “In Your Presence is Fullness of Joy,” in Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Worship, ed. Lee Roy Martin (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2016), 189. Green goes on to claim that describing experiences of God can be as formative as the experience itself both for the one who had the experience and for others.

71 Smith, Imagining the Kingdom, 3. See also Daniel L. Stubbs, “Ending of Worship,” A More Profound Alleluia: Theology and Worship in Harmony, ed. Leanne Van Dyk (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005). Stubbs uses Karl Barth, John Howard Yoder, and Alexander Schmemann to argue for a direct connection between worship and Christian life. He identifies a perception amongst church-goers that worship helps with “real life” that occurs outside of the worship experience. Contra this perception, Stubbs claims that worship creates a window into God’s intent for the world and as such is the most real enactment of the Christian life around which the rest of life ought to be organized.

72 Saliers, Worship as Theology, 172.

73 William H. Willimon contends that ethics cannot be properly relegated to the study of rational argument because ethical motives are a person’s responses to a vision of the world. For Willimon, ethics is a matter of discipleship. See The Service of God: How Worship and Ethics are Related (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1983), 64.

74 Smith, Awaiting the King, 97.
two problematic assumptions often held by political theologies. The first is seeing politics as “spatialized,” which is a reduction of “politics” to the common space where ideas and beliefs are exchanged. In contrast, Smith describes politics as pertaining to common forms of life, and, as such, politics address all mechanisms of society where humans interact, not just the arena in which ideas compete. Second is the assumption that citizens are rational actors. In contrast, Smith asserts that humans often act based on conditioned desires and that politics intend to shape certain kinds of people according to the virtues, and vices, upheld by the society.

For Smith, political theology’s primary function is to help the faithful with discernment. First, it helps discern the political vision of the Gospel. The Good News and its eschatological implications are guides for how Christians are to engage public life. Regular Christian worship practices ought to communicate a Kingdom-centric understanding of the self, the community and the world. It should teach participants that their political engagement must be according to the Gospel.

Second, political theology helps discern liberal democracy and the ethos of rituals enacted within liberal democratic societies. Smith argues that liberal democracy is a child of the Church, and while differences exist between the Christian vision and parts of liberal democratic societies, the two are not necessarily always at odds. When their visions compete,

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75 Ibid., 9.
76 Ibid., 8-14.
77 Ibid., 97.
78 Ibid., 152-153.
79 Ibid., 97. Smith calls for pastors to assume the role of cultural ethnographer equipping parishioners to read the societal rhythms in which they participate. The role of pastor is apocalyptic, unmasking the pretensions of the political. See, 191-198. See also James K. A. Smith, “The Pastor Theologian as Political Theologian: Ministry Amidst the Earthly City” in Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership, eds. Todd Wilson and Gerald Hiestand (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015), 27-30.
ultimate allegiance must be given to Christ and His Kingdom, but this does not bar Christians from engaging within liberal democracies on common ground where it may be found. Political theology should illuminate the areas of commonality and expose issues where the Christian vision diverges from the societal ethos. Immersed in the rhythms of the Church, matters of resonance and dissonance between the God’s Kingdom and this world will become increasingly clear, and worshippers will be able to discern where partnership is possible and what must be opposed.\(^80\)

Third, Smith claims political theology should help believers understand themselves as sent ones heralding the coming Kingdom of God.\(^81\) In the dissonance between the present reality and the hope for God’s Kingdom, political theology should teach believers to await the coming of the King.\(^82\) Smith argues that the rule of the world is contested rule and the Christian message is ultimately subversive to dominant political streams politics of this world. The task for Christians is to proclaim the lordship of Christ to political society while recognizing that Christ’s rule is yet to be ultimately established on earth.\(^83\)

\section*{Conclusion}

Participation in worship provides an opportunity for the affections and dispositions of individuals to be bent towards the will of God by the Spirit in Christian practice. Liturgical practices communicate the message of the Gospel in a way that prepares Christians to live

\footnotesize{\(^80\) Smith, \textit{Awaiting the King}, 92-96.}

\footnotesize{\(^81\) Ibid., 97.}

\footnotesize{\(^82\) Ibid., 16-18. Smith argues that in part liberal society is inherited from the Gospel and not necessarily antithetical to the Gospel’s claims.}

\footnotesize{\(^83\) Ibid., 159-162.}
faithfully in the world and teaches the Church how to act when the liturgy has concluded. Chan calls for “active participation” claiming that the power of formation is in participation in the ascetical act itself. He describes active participation as an intent to understand what is happening in the liturgy and a willingness to seize upon the opportunity of enactment. He claims that understanding and intention are necessary for proper formation, but as individuals regularly gather, formation will occur according to the liturgies enacted by the local body. Complete understanding and the right motivations in Christian gatherings can enhance and direct the formative results. Inattention to the employed rituals leaves Christian communities vulnerable to malformation. Local churches should analyze the way worshippers actively participate or do not participate in corporate gatherings. Intentionality ensures that these ends remain communion with God and preparation for God’s coming Kingdom.

What communities do when they gather shapes and is shaped by what is most valuable to them. This is true of not only of the message proclaimed in gatherings but also of the form that message takes. Liturgical enactment tells and re-tells a story, which naturally connects and

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85 Chan, Liturgical Theology, 91. For Chan, understanding and intention are needed for formation. Proper intention and clear understanding are helpful to achieve proper formation, but formation happens, and understanding and intention can help to deepen and direct that formation.

86 Ibid., 147-166. Chan argues that attentiveness to the liturgy can result in deeper understanding and purer motives, but participation in the liturgy itself can shape the dispositions necessary for full internal participation. The phrase “active participation” comes from the Vatican II’s document Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. See Sacrosanctum Concilium, II.14. The Council calls pastors to promote the full and active participation both internally and externally. In I.1, the Council encourages worshippers to come with proper dispositions so that they may cooperate with the grace of God at work in the liturgy.

87 There are corporate gatherings in congregations employing orders of service that initiate or encourage minimal to no congregational participation beyond attendance. In these kinds of services, formation still occurs, and those present are being formed as passive consumers of what is offered to them from a stage.

88 Willimon, The Service of God, 50-56. According to Willimon, liturgics offers a window into seeing the world and exposing the effect that secular liturgies place on individuals.
shapes human participants locating them within that narrative. Humans are storied creatures that will enact some story. Christian worship should enact the story of the Gospel and give space for worshippers to rehearse their place within it.
CHAPTER 2:
PENTECOSTAL EXPERIENCE AND SACRAMENTALITY

Introduction

Pentecostal identity is marked by the expectation that God is present and active in the lives of communities and individuals and is shaped by communal practices that facilitate Pentecostals’ experiences of God.\(^89\) Pentecostalism’s orientation to the future and affirmation of the active presence of the Spirit embodies the “already-but-not-yet” tension of the Kingdom. Though shaped by the experience of God in the present, adherents continue to anticipate the final consummation of the Kingdom. The same Pentecostal worship practices that nurture passion for the life that is to come in the future Kingdom also cultivate the disposition of expectation of the presence and activity of God in this world. This chapter seeks to give an account of the Pentecostal worldview and to explore how a Pentecostal, sacramental approach to the Lord’s Supper cultivates anticipation for the experience of the Spirit in this life and maintains the longing for the return of Christ.

This chapter argues that the Lord’s Supper should be regularly observed in Pentecostal worship and should be understood as a symbol of God’s presence, God’s activity, and the Kingdom that is to come. This chapter begins by overviewing the work of Pentecostal theologians and their articulation of Pentecostal theology. It continues with an account of Pentecostal sacramentality and concludes with suggestions for understanding the Lord’s Supper in the context of Pentecostal worship.

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Pentecostalism: Speaking from Experience

Land and Pentecostal Affectivity

In *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, Steven Jack Land argues that Pentecostalism is a spirituality characterized by “passion for the Kingdom,” which serves as the organizing principle forming individuals and directing communities to the Kingdom of God.\(^{90}\) Per Land’s account, the emergence of modern Pentecostalism in the late 19\(^{th}\) and early 20\(^{th}\) centuries served as an eschatological critique to those teaching the pre-mature resolution of the tension between the “already” and the “not-yet” of the Kingdom of God.\(^{91}\) Discontent in this world fueled the search for the experience of the Spirit, and Pentecostalism provided an outlet for marginalized people to approach God in response to their condition.\(^{92}\) From its beginning, the movement marks the development of a spirituality that embraces emotive expression and emphasizes the proper formation of personal affections in the context of Christian practice.\(^{93}\) It continues to be characterized by the “apocalyptic affections” that long for God to intervene and do something new.\(^{94}\)

Pentecostal experience of the Spirit addresses the whole human and facilitates the integration of belief, affection, and action.\(^{95}\) Pentecostal thought, praxis, and affectivity do not

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\(^{90}\) Ibid., 174-177.

\(^{91}\) Ibid., 3. Land holds the first ten years of the modern Pentecostal movement to be its prime, not its infancy. See also, 44.

\(^{92}\) Ibid., 117-118. Land points out that at the time of the emergence of the modern Pentecostal movement in America, upper and middle-class religion deemed emotion to be inappropriate further marginalizing certain subgroups.

\(^{93}\) Ibid., 12-17, 28.

\(^{94}\) Ibid., 133-135.

\(^{95}\) Ibid., 28-31. Drawing from Karl Barth, Land sees his unique contribution as the wholistic consideration of theology, spirituality, and method. Land cites the work of Wesley to expose the way that affections are formed by
stand alone and must be intentionally addressed and shaped within the Pentecostal tradition through prayer. Land writes, “Prayer is the primary theological activity of Pentecostalism. All worthwhile knowledge must be gained and retained prayerfully because only the Spirit can lead into all truth.”

Land holds that humans are characterized by their affections and that the heart constitutes the integrated center of the mind, will, and emotions. Right affections need to be developed alongside of correct doctrine and proper practices. To cultivate passion for the Kingdom, Land calls for the convergence of orthodoxy (right doctrine), orthopraxis (right practice), and orthopathos (right affections). Pentecostal spirituality affirms the Spirit’s activity that strengthens, sustains, and directs all affections toward the Kingdom of God.

Land writes, “It is crucial for Pentecostals to consider carefully their beliefs, affections, and practices before they uncritically accommodate to culture, are assimilated into mainstream denominations, and are co-opted by socio-political ideologies.” Similarly, Kenneth J. Archer asserts that a problem within Pentecostal theology is the failure of Pentecostals to articulate theology in accordance with their own tradition. Like Land, Archer acknowledges the

the Biblical narrative. As the formation of affections is an essential part of Land’s project, the reflection of the Spirit must always be in conversation with the revelation of God in Scripture.

96 Ibid., 164-165. Land describes three forms of prayer in the Spirit. They are praying with words (gratitude), praying without words (compassion) and praying with words not understood (speaking in tongues). The forms of prayer in the Spirit cultivate the Pentecostal affections of gratitude, compassion and courage. See also, 133-159.

97 Ibid., 128. Land defines Christian affections as those “abiding dispositions orienting a person towards God and neighbor.”

98 Ibid., 134.

99 Ibid., 35.

theological distinctiveness of the Pentecostal movement and its affective-experiential nature.\textsuperscript{101} Archer suggests a Pentecostal theological method in which orthodoxy and orthopraxy are brought together and right affections catalyze praxis.\textsuperscript{102} His suggested method employs a narrative approach that begins with the experience of the Spirit in the community.\textsuperscript{103} The Pentecostal turn to orthopathos, the use of narrative, and the proximation of actions and beliefs corrects narrow, modernistic theological methodology and encourages attentiveness to marginalized communities and the suffering members within communities. The shift to narrative forms of theology in Pentecostalism further reinforces the centrality of Scripture as the grand story in which the community participates and offers a cohesive structure by which a community can articulate Pentecostal theology.\textsuperscript{104}

Land argues that the corporate life of the Pentecostals has been shaped by the understanding of their participation in the eschatological narrative of God’s coming Kingdom.\textsuperscript{105} Speaking of the formative effect of eschatological expectation, Land writes, “Pentecostal narrative beliefs under the influence of this apocalyptic vision of imminent fulfillment called forth distinctive practices, which were themselves signs, confirmations, and celebrations of the power and legitimacy of the beliefs.”\textsuperscript{106} This turns the focus of Pentecostal theology outward to the world in efforts of evangelization and reconciliation to enact a new society modeled after the

\textsuperscript{101}\textsuperscript{ Ibid., 302-305.}  
\textsuperscript{102}\textsuperscript{ Ibid., 309.}  
\textsuperscript{103}\textsuperscript{ Ibid., 306.}  
\textsuperscript{104}\textsuperscript{ Ibid., 311-312.}  
\textsuperscript{105}\textsuperscript{ Land, Pentecostal Spirituality, 55.}  
\textsuperscript{106}\textsuperscript{ Ibid., 88.}
eschatological vision of the coming Kingdom.\textsuperscript{107} Pentecostal practices emphasize worship and witness in light of the end and accentuate the experience and agency of the Spirit. Therefore, Pentecostal practices are those actions taken based on beliefs, expressive and formative of affections, and influenced by the in-breaking Kingdom of God.

Castelo and Pentecostalism as a Mystical Tradition

Like Land, Daniel Castelo affirms spirituality’s relationship with theology and calls Pentecostals to look to the mystic traditions of the historic Church in their quest to unite the two.\textsuperscript{108} Castelo warns against scholasticizing theology so that it is devoid of spirituality and diminishes the consideration of the experience of God.\textsuperscript{109} Because participation is essential for God-knowledge, experiencing God should not and cannot be reduced to the conceptual level.\textsuperscript{110} Conversely, spiritualization that reduces spirituality to privatized, disembodied experiences is equally dangerous. All Pentecostal accounts should maintain an informative spirituality that is communal and participatory.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 35.
\textsuperscript{109} Castelo, Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition, 76. Castelo describes spirituality as encounter with the divine that is situated in the broader consideration of the anticipation and outcome of the encounter. Within his working definition, mysticism is a subset of the broader category of spirituality and refers directly to the experience of God. The experience of God is the orienting framework for Pentecostal spirituality and, therefore, a subset of the broader category of spirituality. See also, 81-83.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 80.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 55-61.
Castelo cautions Pentecostals not to adopt uncritically the pneumatologically deficient theological methods employed by neo-evangelicals and fundamentalists.\footnote{Ibid., 125-126.} He argues that these streams of Christianity rely on overly methodized and rationalistic methodologies that are incoherent with the mystical orientation of Pentecostal spirituality.\footnote{Ibid., 85-91. See also Castelo, \textit{Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics}, 19-22. Castelo identifies differences in Pentecostals’ approach to Scripture, accounts of anthropologies and harmtiologies, and understanding of the supernatural.} To demonstrate their discontinuity, Castelo describes different approaches to reading Scriptures. While Evangelicals may approach the texts to garner truths and facts for intellectual constructions, Pentecostals approach Scripture seeking an encounter with God in the texts.\footnote{Castelo, \textit{Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition}, 112-115. Castelo compares the method employed by Pentecostals to the way the ancient church read Scripture. He concludes that Pentecostals would compromise their hermeneutical vantage point and their understanding of God-knowledge if they accepted an Evangelical stance of the inerrancy of Scripture. Cheryl Bridges Johns admits that Pentecostal epistemological features of their communal worship have not adequately integrated into Pentecostals’ approach to reading Scripture. Johns offers an approach to Bible study for Pentecostals that includes sharing testimony, searching the Scriptures, yielding to the Spirit, and responding the call of God. See Cheryl Bridges Johns, \textit{Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed} (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998), 130-138.}

Castelo suggests that Pentecostals turn to ecclesiology as they embrace their mystical roots and seek to perpetuate their tradition.\footnote{Castelo, \textit{Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics}, 13-16.} He perceives a tension at the heart of the Pentecostal ethos that experiences the fulfillment of the experience of the Spirit, yet still longs for the return of Christ.\footnote{Castelo, \textit{Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition}, 162-163.} Castelo writes, “One could say that the Spirit-baptized life is one that lives in an ongoing paradox of attainment and pursuit because its ground and end is the triune God of Christian confession.”\footnote{Ibid., 166.} One cannot induce the experience of God but can only prepare
for it by cultivating openness and practicing waiting on the Spirit.\textsuperscript{118} Based on this assertion, Castelo develops an ethic in accordance with the Pentecostal altar practices of tarrying and waiting, which anticipate and prepare worshippers to encounter God.\textsuperscript{119}

Smith and Radical Openness to the Spirit of God

Smith describes Pentecostalism as a worldview approach that is radically open to and expectant of the work of the Spirit in the world and through the community of faith.\textsuperscript{120} Smith writes, “It is the ‘natural’ expectation of the so-called supernatural that makes Pentecostalism’s radical openness to divine surprise.”\textsuperscript{121} Like Land and Castelo, Smith resists the reduction of the Pentecostal worldview to a list of doctrinal commitments.\textsuperscript{122} Smith identifies five markers of Pentecostalism that color its adherents understanding of reality. First, Pentecostalism offers an experiential interpretive grid by which spiritual encounters may be judged. Second, it adheres to pre-theoretical beliefs about God and the world based on experience. Third, it perpetuates ultimate beliefs about the world. Fourth, it provides a metanarrative of God’s relationship to humanity and its telos. Finally, it gives individuals a sense of their personal role within the narrative. These markers are cultivated within the distinct forms of worshipping and living that consists of Pentecostal spirituality.\textsuperscript{123}

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 55.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Castelo, \textit{Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics}, 22-25. Though the title of his work bears the word “ethics,” Castelo categorized Pentecostalism in the tradition of moral theology which he finds a better fit than ethics.
\item \textsuperscript{120} James K. A. Smith, \textit{Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy} (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), xvii.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 38.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Ibid., xix-xx.
\item \textsuperscript{123} Ibid., 27-31.
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Pentecostal altar services cultivate external and internal space in which God can freely speak and work in the lives of respondents.\textsuperscript{124} In addition to their radical openness to the surprise of God’s active presence, Smith finds that Pentecostalism represents an “enchanted theology of creation and culture.” Pentecostals recognize the struggle of powers in the present age. They seek the work of the Spirit’s in creation and recognize the existence of malevolent forces manifesting in opposition to the Spirit’s life-giving activity.\textsuperscript{125}

Smith recognizes that Pentecostal orientation is also characterized by a “non-dualistic affirmation of embodiment and materiality.”\textsuperscript{126} The Incarnation and the Spirit’s activity affirm the redeemability of creation. For Pentecostals, the full Gospel is applied to the whole of the human being effecting not just spiritual healing and salvation, but physical and social as well. Pentecostal experiences testify that the Spirit heals broken bodies, intervenes in matters of this embodied life, and empowers human beings to participate in the Spirit’s redemptive activity.\textsuperscript{127}

Cross and Pentecostal Theology of Experience

Based on the Incarnation, theology speaks of the experience of God’s self-disclosure in and to creation. Terry L. Cross seeks to develop a theology of Pentecostal experience.\textsuperscript{128} According to Cross, Pentecostal theology, as a second order reflection on the primary narrative of God’s revelation, seeks to articulate the reality of God’s encounter with humanity and activity

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 33-38. See also Castelo, \textit{Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics}, 22.

\textsuperscript{125} Smith, \textit{Thinking in Tongues}, 39-41. Smith notes that the acknowledgement of evil powers at work in the world is increasingly absent in Western Pentecostalism, but awareness of the malevolent forces persists in Pentecostalism due to the global growth of the movement.

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., 41-43.

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 41-43. Pentecostal application of the Gospel to physical bodies stands in contrast to an increasing sense of dualism within modern Christian thought.

in creation. Cross contends that spirituality should infuse and inform theological efforts so that theology is never disconnected from the ritual life of the Church. In their experience of God revealed in Scripture, Pentecostals understand themselves as participants in the continued story of God’s revelation. Experiencing the God of the Bible makes the language of Scripture in its disclosure of God available to worshippers as a framework to articulate their own experiences of God.

As the Spirit bridges the historical chasm between Jesus and the present Church, the Spirit also bridges the ontological gap between God and humanity through the Spirit’s indwelling. Cross asserts that humanity in itself does not possess the capacity for holding God but by grace is given the capacity through the Spirit. Some streams within the charismatic movement adopt a triumphalistic disposition and fail to recognize the Otherness of God who is revealed. Gratefully acknowledging the grace that makes experience of God possible, Pentecostals can resist the triumphalism of those who would equate humanity with little gods because of the experience of the Spirit’s indwelling.

Cross calls Pentecostals to overcome their ambivalence to theological reflection, so they may develop a theology and a theological method attuned to their experience. Chris E. W. Green makes a similar call to Pentecostals arguing that second-order theological reflection on

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129 Terry L. Cross, “The Rich Feast of Theology: Can Pentecostals Bring the Main Course or Only the Relish?” Journal of Pentecostal Theology 16 (2000), 34. Cross uses “second order” denotes that the reflection is based on the primary or “first order” revelation and experience of God.

130 Cross, “The Divine-Human Encounter,” 23-24


133 Ibid., 19-20.

134 Cross, “The Rich Feast of Theology,” 34.
experiences of God are necessary to receive the full effect of encountering God in Pentecostal altar experiences. Green claims that describing encounters with God is as important to the formative process as the experiences themselves. Putting descriptive language, though at times inadequate in comparison to the encounter, frames individual and communal understandings of their experiences of the Spirit. Pentecostal formation requires the work of critical engagement by seeking to articulate experiences of God.

Cross suggests that by developing a theological method, Pentecostalism can make positive contributions to contemporary apologetics. When posed with postmodern questions, Pentecostals can comfortably refer to their experiences of God without having to rely solely on neatly packaged, modern constructions, which proponents of postmodernism tend to distrust. In their approach to apologetics, Pentecostals demonstrate that there is more to faith and experiencing God than limited human intellect and language can encompass. As Pentecostals develop their own theology and prepare to share it in ecumenical dialogue, constructions faithful to their tradition will incorporate robust accounts of spirituality and theological reflection on their experiences of God’s revelation.

Yong and the Multiplicity of Experience

Amos Yong maintains that experience of the Spirit in Pentecostalism provides grounds for theological articulation and argues that the multiplicity of Pentecostal experience lends itself

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135 Chris E. W. Green, “In Your Presence is Fullness of Joy,” in Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Worship ed. Lee Roy Martin (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2016), 198. Green writes, “We have to make room for second-order theological reflection as integral to our worship and not merely an addendum to it.”

136 Ibid., 189-190.


138 Ibid., 32.

139 Cross, “The Rich Feast of Theology,” 34.
to the diversity of their theological expression in varying contexts and cultures. A variety of experiences and cultural instantiations create Pentecostal worship practices that are diverse and often informally enacted. Therefore, Yong suggests there is no singular, global Pentecostalism but many Pentecostalisms that assume diverse forms around the world.

Despite variances, in all cases the end goal of Pentecostals’ worship practices remains encounter with and surrender to God. The binding agent among diverse expressions of Pentecostalism is the presence of the Spirit. Yong writes, “… the work of the Spirit in forming the community of faith in regeneration and sanctification must be central. It is this work which sets the Church apart from other communities.” Yong posits that the inbreaking of the Spirit also redeems the diverse places of the world in anticipation of the gathering of all peoples in the Kingdom. A tradition based on the event of Pentecost in which the Spirit manifested in the sounds of many tongues must continue to embrace the diverse ways God is experienced and worshipped.

Conclusions

Taking together the preceding accounts of Pentecostal spirituality, what emerges is a movement whose adherents believe and fully expect the activity of God in their collective and

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141 Ibid., 93-95.


143 Amos Yong, “Radically Orthodox, Reformed, and Pentecostal,” 248.

144 Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 331.
individual lives. Pentecostal theology is appropriately connected to spirituality, which will incorporate moments of surprise and ecstasy as finite humanity collides with the transcendence of the Holy Spirit. There is no surprise that the experiences of God and corresponding theological reflections are as diverse as the people encountering God in varying cultures around the world. Pentecostals must continually and critically engage their practices to ensure they are in continuity with the Spirit-baptized, Kingdom-embodied message revealed in Scripture to which their communities represent in their own contexts.

**Pentecostal Sacramentality**

Pentecostal worship practices condition participants to expect God’s presence and activity both in communal gathering and in their lives. As Cheryl Bridges Johns points out, the primary place of Pentecostal formation is communal worship. Pentecostal rituals and practices, which are both informing and informed by theological reflection, must continue to instill the dispositions of expectancy and receptivity to the Spirit. They should direct and prepare worshippers to embody the implications of those events for the life of the community and the world. Because their dispositions, which are shaped in worship and practice, reflect and determine how they are oriented to the world, Pentecostals must intentionally and critically engage the practices they enact in their corporate settings. Pentecostal liturgies teeter between fixed and chaotic because its framework allows for variations of the entire structure. While rarely written or formalized, Pentecostal liturgies emphasize the full participation of all in attendance and should catalyze worshippers to partner with the Spirit’s activity outside of the church-community. To maintain their radical openness to the Spirit’s activity in the world,

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146 Ibid., 89.
Pentecostals must continue to cultivate practices that nurture a willing disposition to the Spirit’s movements amidst the worshipping community and in creation at large. Regular observance of sacraments within Pentecostal liturgies reinforces openness to the Spirit’s work, provides physical signs of God’s presence in communal worship, and shapes worshippers for Kingdom work when the assembly concludes.

Wolfgang Vondey and Chris W. Green contend that despite Pentecostal resistance to liturgy and sacramentality both are necessary components for a fuller understanding of Pentecostalism. Typically, Pentecostals resist the implementation of liturgy and sacramentality because they associate both with stifling traditionalism or dead ritualism. Vondey and Green argue that in so far as Pentecostals embrace a surrealistic approach to their worldview, they can faithfully express sacramentality. Vondey and Green understand surrealism to be a desire to conceive of the world differently. Pentecostalism, with its eschatological proclamation that the Kingdom of God is at hand, affirms a world in which what is has not yet been fully realized. To describe and embrace this reality, Vondey and Green find that Pentecostals adopt a quasi-surrealistic approach in which the norms of rationality and the logic of description are broken to produce affective, emotional, and desire-based representations of the world that is but is still not yet. The incorporation of a surrealistic approach gives prophetic space to imagine an alternate reality, which for Pentecostals is the Kingdom of God that has come but is still close at hand.

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148 Ibid., 245.

149 Ibid., 245-251. See also, Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, 84-85. Smith suggests making use of this worldview approach in art and filmmaking. Represented in artistic mediums, the Pentecostal worldview would push against the conventional perceptions of reality.
Sacramentalism fits into this worldview approach by giving physical signs of the alternate reality that fuel the imagination to conceive of the world otherwise.

The eschatological tension of Pentecostalism cannot be completely engaged cognitively but can be made accessible to celebrants in liturgical practice. While Pentecostal approaches to life and worship faithfully represent eschatological tension between the Kingdom that is here but is still coming, their understanding of the ordinances diverge from this orientation. Vondey and Green perceive a diminishment in eschatological tension among Pentecostals, which they blame on a weak articulation of sacramentality.\(^{150}\)

Alexander Schmemann claims that the Eucharistic liturgy maintains eschatological tension because it is served on earth but accomplished in heaven. He argues that the sacraments and liturgy cause participants to experience in the present the new time created by the presence of the Spirit.\(^ {151}\) Schmemann asserts that faith requires symbols because it seeks to manifest what is operable in one reality within another reality. Symbols are points of contact to the alternate reality. Everything about the other reality cannot be contained in the symbol, but it serves as an epiphany of the other reality in so far as it itself participates in the alternate reality.\(^ {152}\) For Christians, the other reality is the Kingdom of God, which is to be embodied by the Church. Pentecostal worship should incorporate the symbol of the Lord’s Supper as often as possible to offer to worshippers a physical point of contact to the coming Kingdom of God. Inhabiting eschatological in-betweenness, sacraments herald the presence of Christ with the body of believers via the Spirit while maintaining the anticipation for Christ’s Second Coming. Like

\(^ {150}\) Vondey and Green, “Between This and That,” 260.


\(^ {152}\) Ibid., 39.
Christ, sacraments bridge heaven and earth, and sacramentality captures the dynamic confrontation of human and divine realities in its embrace of both the physical and spiritual, the earthly and heavenly, dimensions of Christian experience.153

Vondey and Green encourage Pentecostals to dialogue with sacramentalists and identify four benefits Pentecostals could receive from the exchange. First, sacramentality could help Pentecostals theologically account for their being-in-the-world. As a sign of God’s presence in this life that awaits its full realization in creation, the sacraments offer an embodied example of the tension characterizing Pentecostal affectivity. Second, sacramentality provides for Pentecostals grounds to articulate the merger of the divine and human realms. The sacraments offer a physical example of God’s presence infusing creation.154 Third, sacramentality challenges triumphalistic references and simplistic explanations of the “this is that” and “this is not that” hermeneutic within Pentecostalism. Explanations of the sacraments maintain the tension of “this,” the sacrament or experience, is neither fully “that” nor is it fully “not that.” Such as, the Eucharistic elements are the body and blood of Christ, but they are not fully the body of Christ. Fourth, sacramentality accounts for the embodied, eschatological narrative that provides physical markers for Christian formation. The physical symbols can help Pentecostals be in the world while celebrating their movement toward the Kingdom that will be fully realized.155

Summing up their argument, Vondey and Green write,

153 Vondey and Green, “Between This and That,” 255-257. Vondey and Green assert that Christ, in whom divinity and humanity converge, is the “hermeneutical key” for Christians to understand reality sacramentally.

154 Ibid., 262.

155 Ibid., 263. They also identify three benefits that sacramentalists can receive from dialogue with Pentecostals. First, sacramentalism could be aided by Pentecostalism’s inherent openness to the reality of spirit(s). Second, Pentecostalism could open up sacramentalism to the exercise of spiritual gifts. Third, Pentecostal dialogue could help sacramentalism challenge ritualistic reductionism.
Both Pentecostals and other Christian traditions can (re)discover a sacramental reality only through sacramental practice, for it is only in the particular practice of the sacraments that we will put ourselves in a position to understand the sacramental character of the Christian existence.156

The Lord’s Supper as Symbol of God’s Activity

The celebration of the Lord’s Supper is a symbol of the work of God in individuals, communities, and creation. The elements are physical representations of the Gospel and point to the hospitality of God extended through the life and work of Christ. For individuals, the occasion recalls the memory of their personal experiences of God and the ways in which the Spirit continues to work in the lives of the celebrants to sanctify and transform. The moment of reflection prompts thanksgiving for the personal effect of the transformative work of God and reinforces their call to live according to Christ’s example.157

While there is a personal aspect to the impact of the Lord’s Supper, it must push beyond the relegation of the experience to a privatized matter. When it is made into an entirely personal experience the communal and eschatological implications of the rite are dismissed or lost altogether. Addressing individualized spiritual experience, Castelo observes,

… the pursuit of a spiritual experience is largely an individualized and privatized affair apart from an abiding and perduring fellowship to sustain, uplift, and chasten the seeker. When left to their own, individual seekers of privatized religious experience will simply find such experiences both initially exciting but also transformatively and theologically short-lived.158

156 Ibid., 264.

157 Chris E. Green, “‘The Body of Christ, the Spirit of Communion’: Re-Visioning Pentecostal Ecclesiology in Conversation with Robert Jenson,” Journal of Pentecostal Theology 20 (2011), 251. Green asserts that one cannot separate belief in the passion of Christ from the observance of the Lord’s Supper. He contends that theology should be Eucharistic and accountable to the Eucharist. See also, 297.

158 Castelo, Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics, 110.
Remaining faithful to Pentecostalism requires reflection on personal experience with God and inspires the corporate sharing of personal testimony of the Spirit’s work in thanksgiving for the sake of building the faith of the community. However, the propensity to individualize participation in the Lord’s Supper takes the sacramental opportunity to experience the real presence of the Spirit in community and anticipation of the coming Kingdom and reduces it to a private memorial that just happens to be in a corporate setting.

For church-communities, it is a symbol of the Spirit’s unifying activity.\textsuperscript{159} Celebrating the Lord’s Supper, the people of God gather in their common need, realize their collective identity, and prepare to participate in the mission of God. Members of the community are literally seen as one as they collective respond to the invitation of Christ.\textsuperscript{160} As a point of unification for the body of believers, the Lord’s Supper symbolizes the coming Kingdom of God that is embodied in the unity of the Church. Vondey argues that discerning the Lord’s Body in celebration of the Lord’s Supper cultivates an ecclesiological imagination that grounds Eucharistic hospitality in the person of Christ. The imagination he describes allows the Church to maintain Christ as the center of her common life and experience and for congregants to understand themselves as the visible presence of Christ in the world.\textsuperscript{161}

The Lord’s Supper, as a symbol of God’s activity in the world, symbolizes God’s willingness to use ordinary things to accomplish His will in creation. The Supper reminds worshippers that the basic elements of human existence are good gifts from God to be received

\textsuperscript{159} Schmemann, \textit{For the Life of the World}, 43-44.


\textsuperscript{161} Wolfgang Vondey, “Pentecostal Ecclesiologies and Eucharistic Hospitality: Toward a Systematic and Ecumenical Account of the Church” \textit{Pneuma} 32 (2010), 45.
with gratitude, not shunned or demeaned because of their materiality.\textsuperscript{162} The “this world-ness” of the Lord’s Supper is an affirmation of embodiment that aligns with Pentecostal sensibilities. Schmemann asserts that since the revelation of the Spirit at Pentecost the whole world has been made a sacrament in which God may be encountered.\textsuperscript{163} The understanding of material things communicating the presence of God fits with Pentecostal sensibilities and practice. The regular observance of the Lord’s Supper reaffirms the goodness of creation, though it suffers the effects of the Fall, and locates it in the purview God’s redemptive plan to make all things new.

The Lord’s Supper as a Symbol of God’s Presence

The celebration of the Lord’s Supper provides an occasion to experience the transformative presence of the Spirit. Perhaps, the greatest hurdle for Pentecostal sacramentalism is the affirmation of the experience of God’s real presence in the sacraments. Pentecostals have firsthand experience of the Spirit in worship in the form of gifts, tongues, miracles, and blessings, but many have avoided formal Eucharistic practices.\textsuperscript{164} They want all they do in worship to be endued with the blessing, power, and presence of the Spirit, and for this reason, they resist forms that may inhibit freedom or quench the Spirit’s activity. Those things that appear to lack the enlivening, ecstasy-inducing presence of the Spirit are considered to be vanity in corporate settings, or at least, of less importance than those things that can or do communicate the experience of God’s “real” presence such as corporate singing, preaching, and prayer.


\textsuperscript{163} Schmemann, \textit{For the Life of the World}, 112.

Archer calls for the reconsideration of Pentecostal sacramental ordinances based on the experience of God’s real presence by celebrants in their observance of the sacraments. He holds that observation of the sacramental ordinances in communal contexts brings worshippers into contact with the saving acts of Christ. They are physical proclamations of the Gospel and of the immanence of God, and through them believers experience the real presence of God. He contends that the sacraments should not be reduced to cognitive, reflective experiences, when in the presence of God and as representations of the presence of God, sacraments provide means by which the Church can rehearse the Gospel and refresh her prophetic identity.165

Frank D. Macchia argues that Pentecostal spirituality does not advocate for unmediated encounters with God, though some Pentecostal teachings perpetuate this misunderstanding. Like Vondey and Green, Macchia locates Pentecostal’s wariness of sacramentality in their concern with squashing spontaneity, over-institutionalizing the Church, and quenching the move of the Spirit in corporate settings.166 Despite this concern, Macchia finds no theological or historical justification for Pentecostals to understand their experiences of God as completely unmediated. Pentecostals have sacramental, mediated, experiences, but these occasions are not typically linked theologically with the sacraments as understood within traditional accounts of sacramental theology.167 Pentecostal sacramental experience most often encountered in the acts of laying on

165 Archer, “Nourishment for Our Journey, 82-83.

166 Frank D. Macchia, “Tongues as a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience,” Pneuma vol. 15 no. 1 (Spring 1993), 62. Macchia perceives within the writings of Rahner and Tillich a move to an understanding of the sacraments as occasions for encounter with God that is more consistent with Pentecostal understanding of tongues.

167 Ibid., 61-64. Like Macchia, Amos Yong holds that Pentecostals are already sacramental in that their experience of the Spirit is mediated by the created order. See Amos Yong, The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 156.
of hands for healing, glossolalia, and footwashing.\textsuperscript{168} These are sacramental because they are earthly means that communicate the divine presence to the worshipping community. This leads Macchia to conclude that Pentecostal theology needs to catch up to Pentecostal experience.\textsuperscript{169}

In his argument, Macchia claims that speaking in tongues fills the sacramental function because it is an outward, physical sign of the presence of the Spirit.\textsuperscript{170} Sacramentality is traditionally developed institutionally, but speaking in tongues is commonly practiced in communities on the margins who are dissatisfied with institutional forms. The spontaneity and unpredictability of tongues becomes a sacramental reminder of institutional limits.\textsuperscript{171} In the event, the Spirit empowers the believer to become an active part of the Church’s mission, which is accompanied by the audible sign of tongues that marks the presence of the Spirit upon the individual and to the community.\textsuperscript{172}

\textsuperscript{168} Frank D. Macchia, “Is Footwashing the Neglected Sacrament: A Theological Response to John Christopher Thomas,” \textit{Pneuma} vol. 19 no. 2 (Fall 1997), 242. I would add to these the Pentecostal practice of anointing cloths for the sick. When a member of the community is absent from the corporate gathering due to illness or infirmity, it is the practice of some Pentecostal congregations to pour oil on a cloth, to pray over it on behalf of the absent brother or sister and to give it to the sick as a representation of both the Spirit presence and the prayers of the community.

\textsuperscript{169} Ibid., 241.

\textsuperscript{170} Ibid., 62-63. Macchia traces the sacramental, self-disclosure of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost back to the tradition of theophany in the Old Testament. Expectation of theophany characterizes Pentecostal worship as celebrants await the final theophany of Christ. On the day of Pentecost, the theophany was sacramentally discernable with the sights (tongues of fire) and sounds (rushing wind, speaking in other tongues) of the day. Macchia sees the possibility for ecumenical dialogue on sacramental theology based on the understanding of the sacramental nature of speaking in tongues. He grants that tongues are different in that they are spontaneous, often exhibited with marginalized communities, and serve to expose the limits of institutional Christianity. See also, 72-74.

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid., 72-74. Macchia argues that spontaneity and surprise can be experienced within a general form as long as space is created for celebrants to prepare to receive the sacrament. Pentecostals use a form for baptism, but spontaneity is invited within the form by offering the celebrant a chance to give a public testimony of the work of God. Pentecostals also use a form, however minimal, when observing the Lord’s Supper, and space for surprise can be cultivated in the moments of tarrying or thanksgiving leading up to and following the moment of partaking of the elements. The form can encourage spontaneous moments within its structure that may not otherwise occur. See also Johns, \textit{Pentecostal Formation}, 89.

\textsuperscript{172} Archer, “Nourishment for Our Journey,” 92-93. Archer calls tongues “the expression of the mystical experience of union with and participation in God’s triune being
Acknowledging the inadequacy of theological rationalization void of concrete practices, Green encourages Pentecostal churches to testify of the experience of the Spirit through sacraments.\(^{173}\) He asserts that Pentecostals’ resistance to ritual and practice is counter-intuitive for Pentecostal formation. To those resisting the regular observance of sacraments in the name of freedom and keeping things lively, Green responds claiming that the symbols offered as sacraments of the Church need no life imparted to them by the assembled body because the Spirit’s-self inhabits and enlivens the sacramental signs of God’s presence.\(^{174}\) Addressing the danger of lacking form Green writes,

However, I suspect that for all their verve, Pentecostal services too often fail to impress upon celebrants the splendor of the Gospel and the Gospel’s god. In an effort to leave ‘right of way’ to the Spirit, many Pentecostals have in fact opened themselves to other spirits. If worshippers do not share in prearranged rituals (e.g. professing the creed, praying the ‘Our Father’, eating the Supper), they tend to lose themselves in their own worlds (succumbing to what Jenson calls ‘religious self-concentricity’), alienated from the Gospel’s concreteness and specificity.\(^{175}\)

Green argues that the Lord’s Supper should be central to the project of Pentecostal theology and takes the mandate by Jesus to observe the Lord’s Supper as an invitation to experience the real presence of God at the Table.\(^{176}\) The elements used in the sacraments are not

\(^{173}\) Green, “‘The Body of Christ, the Spirit of Communion,’” 23. Amos Yong describes baptism as the “proto-sacrament” for Pentecostals that can lead them to a fuller understanding of the sacraments beyond mere symbolism. He identifies a close connection between the rite and understanding experiences of the Spirit. Water baptism should include the invocation of the Spirit indicating that the significance of the event is due to the presence and activity of the Spirit. Also, as water baptism enacts the believer’s participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, it represents the believer’s reception of the Spirit. See Yong, The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh, 160.

\(^{174}\) Green, “‘The Body of Christ, the Spirit of Communion,’” 21-23.

\(^{175}\) Ibid., 22. Parenthetical statements and emphasis are Green’s own.

\(^{176}\) Green, Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord’s Supper, 294. Green affirms that any theology calling itself Pentecostal must begin with authentic Christian spirituality.
means to an end but are part of the end itself that makes God and the participants mutually available to each other.\textsuperscript{177}

Jonathan E. Alvarado holds that the Eucharistic prayer of epiclesis provides an intersection for Pentecostal practice and the traditional Eucharistic theology. Alvarado acknowledges that Pentecostals typically do not practice the formalized Eucharistic prayers of epiclesis used by traditional churches, but inviting the Spirit into a service and upon the lives of the assembled community is common in Pentecostal communities.\textsuperscript{178} The epiclesis invites the Spirit to accomplish the dual purpose of sanctification, which is setting apart for God, and transformation, which is the mark of a Spirit-empowered life. Alvarado argues that Pentecostals can learn from the formal epicletic prayers used in traditional settings. These prayers point to the reality of the sacraments as means by which God’s grace may be communicated to those participating.\textsuperscript{179} In the case of Eucharistic celebration, the Spirit comes upon the elements to be with the community. In celebration of the Lord’s Supper, the Spirit makes Christ present to the community, and in that experience, the Spirit accomplishes the transformation of the assembly and the individuals present.\textsuperscript{180}

While Pentecostals can glean a sacramental sensibility from traditional, formal prayers, the epicletic prayers of Pentecostals can take formalized forms of prayer further by boldly inviting the Spirit not just to be present but to act amidst the community. Pentecostal epicletic prayers leave open the possibility for the Spirit and presence of God to surprise the assembly of

\textsuperscript{177} Ibid., 288.

\textsuperscript{178} Alvarado, “Pentecostal Epiclesis,” 186.

\textsuperscript{179} Ibid., 191, 194-196.

\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., 195-197.
the faithful. Epicletic prayers and along with observing the Lord’s Supper re-orient participants to the metanarrative of God’s redemptive work in the world.\textsuperscript{181} Alvarado writes,

… Pentecostals see the Spirit’s coming upon the elements and the people as a sanctifying or consecrating presence. As we engage in meaningful dialogue with Christians from sacramental traditions, and among ourselves, we may begin to agree that this sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit makes the bread and wine efficacious for the transmission of grace into the lives of worshipers and opens the worshipers up to the life of God, through the church. This is to say that in a renewed, Pentecostal, Eucharistic vision, epiclesis invites the Spirit to mysteriously use the bread and wine to convey grace to those who believe and presents the community for an encounter with God—not in a meaningless way that does not require faith, but rather in a cogent, active way, participating in a sacrament fully, but by the Spirit, through faith.\textsuperscript{182}

The Lord’s Supper as Expectation of the “Not-Yet”

While sacramentally the Eucharist represents the presence of God among the assembled body of the faithful, it also brings increasing attention to the ways in which Kingdom has not yet been established. As a symbol it points to what is yet to come in the full realization of the presence of God on earth. Regular observance of the Lord’s Supper shapes the identity of the participating community into those who await the coming of the King.\textsuperscript{183} In light of unfulfilled eschatological expectation, Castelo calls Pentecostals to cultivate the patience of the Spirit through the Pentecostal practices of “waiting” and “tarrying.”\textsuperscript{184} Patience still anticipates a different future while maintaining the disposition of gratefulness for what God has already given. God’s patience can become the Christian’s patience when it is embodied as a disposition through

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., 197.

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., 190.

\textsuperscript{183} Archer, “Nourishment for Our Journey,” 94. Archer connects Jesus’s office as Soon-Coming King with the sacramental ordinance of the Lord’s Supper. He also connects Jesus as savior to water baptism, Jesus as sanctifier to footwashing, Jesus as Spirit baptizer to the sacramental experience of Spirit baptism, and Jesus as healer to the sacrament of healing.

\textsuperscript{184} Castelo, \textit{Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics}, 111.
Castelo writes, “Pentecostals need to recognize that part of the Spirit’s work includes the practical dimension of helping the faithful overcome and endure both suffering and evil as they patiently wait for the unfolding of God’s eschatological reign.”

Pentecostal worship is often expressed as celebration to the neglect of lament. Humanity and all of creation groan in this present age awaiting the fulfillment of God’s promised Kingdom. When the sacrament’s practice is relegated to celebration to the exclusion of lament, eschatology is collapsed into the present and the essential discontinuity between this life and the life to come is ignored. As Land points out, it was the recognition that the present reality is not how it ought to be that inspired the search for the Spirit that sparked the modern Pentecostal movement in North America.

Similarly, facing the discontinuity between the Kingdom reality promised and the present age should stimulate passion to see God’s vision for the world realized. Symbolizing the work of God in the world, the Lord’s Supper demonstrates the responsibility of the Church to the world. Concerning the Eucharist, Schmemann writes, “It is not an escape from the world, rather it is the arrival of a vantage point from which we can see more deeply into the reality of the world.”

In patient anticipation of the full realization of the Kingdom that is on display at the Lord’s Supper, participants are commissioned at the Table to live according to its vision. The ways in which “this” is not “that,” the fully realized Kingdom and presence of God, cultivate

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185 Ibid., 114-117.
186 Ibid., 126
187 Land, Pentecostal Spirituality, 117-118.
188 Schmemann, For the Life of the World, 113.
189 Ibid., 27.
longing expectation for the return of Christ and inspire action in this world according to the awaited Kingdom. Patience is essential when the ‘not yet” of the Kingdom becomes burdensome for the epicletic community. In this in between, Pentecostals must enact practices that shape their action in the world that is consistent with their passion for the Kingdom and their anticipation of the return of the King that is to come. The Lord’s Supper provides a practice and a vision of the Kingdom that can inform action according to that reality in its immediate “not yet.” Thus, Vondey writes, “Sharing the Eucharistic meal is a proclamation of the Gospel and a commitment to the church’s mission in a fragmented, alienated, and hostile world to break the boundaries of sin, pain, hunger, isolation, sorrow, and death by sharing freely and unreservedly the bread of life.”

Conclusion

As Pentecostals develop approaches to observation of and reflection on the Lord’s Supper, Green encourages them to remain faithful to Pentecostal practice. Pentecostal observance should be framed by practices native to Pentecostals, such as altar calls, tarrying, prayers for healing, testimonies, and footwashing. Beyond these, he offers guidelines for the implementation of Eucharistic liturgy in Pentecostal communities. First, liturgies in Pentecostal contexts should maintain the possibility of improvisation and spontaneity. While the implementation of some consistent form will be helpful in Pentecostal contexts, completely scripting the entire Eucharistic liturgy would not be faithful to Pentecostal spirituality. Second, Green suggests officiants take time to explain why and what is happening in the celebration.


191 Vondey, “Pentecostal Ecclesiologies and Eucharistic Hospitality,” 52.

192 Green, *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord’s Supper*, 319.
Space should be created for reflection in preparation of receiving the Lord’s Supper. To ensure that participants have a working understanding of the meaning behind the observance of the Lord’s Supper, time should be allotted to instruct on the significance and implications of the sacrament. Third, celebrants should partake of a single loaf and from a single cup further illustrating the unity in Christ represented in the sacrament and sealed by the Spirit. Employing a singular loaf and cup combats the propensity to make observance of the Supper an exclusively private matter. Fourth, Pentecostals should maintain the practice of an open table imaging the unity of the catholic Body of Christ. Similarly, Jürgen Moltmann asserts that the Supper is the Lord’s and as such is to stand as a sign of unity of the Body of Christ. When congregations limit access to the Table, they make the meal their own instead of God’s.  

\[193\] Ibid., 320-321.  
\[194\] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1975), 244-246. Moltmann seems to argue for a completely open table. He resists drawing denominational lines around the Table and seems suggests that the openness of Christ’s invitation to the Table extends beyond the bounds of Christianity to the whole world.
CHAPTER 3:
TOWARD A SACRAMENTAL, PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Introduction

How are followers of Jesus to live in the tension between what is now and what will be? Pentecostal theological ethics seek to answer this question through the particular lens of Pentecostal spirituality and practice. How are Pentecostals to respond to the present work of God’s Spirit in their lives and in the world? The Kingdom of God is the vision that informs Christian activity in the world and poses the question of Christian engagement with socio-political issues. Pentecostal spirituality affirms that the Spirit is active in empowering humans to participate in the coming Kingdom here and now. The question is how are Christians, and specifically Pentecostals, to engage in political discourse and action given their commitments to the Kingdom and their affirmation of the socio-transformative presence of God in the world. As with theological construction, theologico-ethical and political considerations faithful to the Pentecostal tradition will be rooted in the experience of God in community.195

This chapter argues that the Lord’s Supper expresses the imagery of God’s past, present, and future activity in and through the world, and regular observance of the Lord’s Supper offers a formative compass for navigating the tension of the already-but-not-yet Kingdom that the sacrament embodies. First, this chapter identifies tendencies within Pentecostal communities that threaten their participation in the socio-political vision of the Kingdom, demonstrates how these threats are antithetical to Pentecostal spirituality, and describes how the frequent celebration of the Eucharist provides a means of counter-formation to their effect. Second, this chapter asserts

that the regular observance of the Lord’s Supper reinforces the narrative of God’s commitment to this world and imagines how the Spirit is active in socio-political spaces. Finally, this chapter suggests the characteristics of a Pentecostal political theology based on the Lord’s Supper.

**Politics of Unfaithfulness**

At least two factors threaten faithful socio-political action. The first is the disposition of escapism that causes detachment from the world and its challenges. Escapism emerges from an eschatological dualism that perceives no continuity between this life and the next. The second is compromising the Kingdom vision in response to perceived marginalization from power. Both obstacles to faithful Christian political mission can be simultaneously present and mutually informing. Avoiding these begins with seeking a fuller understanding of the eschatological implications of the mission of the Spirit and of the Church. Correcting them requires a reevaluation of the placement of hope for change and the means by which change is expected to occur.

**Eschatological Dualism: Heavenly Minded, but No Earthly Good**

The danger of eschatological dualism lies in its failure to perceive how the Spirit’s present activity aligns with God’s ultimate intentions for creation. The tendency of some Pentecostals toward eschatological dualism threatens their faithful participation in the Christian mission because it expects every part of this life to be destroyed and replaced. It relegates the work of the Spirit to gracing believers with perseverance to face the increasing chaos that looms between the present and Christ’s foretold return. A misunderstanding of what the future holds for creation leads to a distorted picture of God’s will and activity in the present.

Overemphasizing rapture theology can cultivate dispositions of escapism. N.T. Wright describes the phenomenon of rapture theology as a North American obsession and cites the rise
of literature and media that is sold, speculating how the events leading to the end of the world will unfold. Wright argues that any vision of the end that excludes the promise of God’s recreation and renewal of the cosmos is inconsistent with the Kingdom vision found in Scripture.  

Wright traces this kind of inconsistency to the influence of the dispensationalist teachings of J.N. Darby. Dispensationalism holds that God has acted throughout history in period of dispensations. The present-day Church is in between the dispensation of the initial coming of Christ in the Incarnation and the Spirit at Pentecost and the dispensation to come when Christ returns. The final dispensation will be preceded by signs of global turmoil and catastrophe including war, disease, and natural disasters, which has led dispensationalists to attempt to reconcile geopolitical events with their readings of prophetic text. In the mid-19th century, dispensationalist ecclesiologies spread through easily understood hermeneutics and neatly-packaged teachings on complex issues. Brock Bingaman suggests Darby’s constructions were appealing because they offered a conservative alternative for interpreting Scripture and provided a framework to make sense of Scripture as a whole. The tenants are both simple and complex and connect to people’s fears and anxieties about the world and its future. It cultivates an

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196 N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York, NY: Harper One, 2008), 118-120. As an example, Wright recounts a conversation he had with a group of Christians in North America who questioned if creation-care practices were an expressed lack of faith. They expected Jesus would return and remove all believers before the earth’s impending destruction rendering environmental concerns inconsequential.

197 Ibid., 121.


199 Brock Bingaman, “Learning from Left Behind? A Call for Coherent Accounts of Scripture.” *ATR* 91 (Spring 2009), 262-263.

200 Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 121. See also Bingaman, "Learning from Left Behind." 255-272. Bingaman highlights the connection between Darby’s eschatology and ecclesiology. According to Bingaman, Darby disdained the institutional church and envisioned life with Christ a one that was withdrawn from the world.
identity for those who are awake to the signs of the times and offers hope to those who fear uncertainty.201

Many North American Pentecostal and charismatic communities have adopted dispensationalist hermeneutics and theology. Amos Yong identifies two misguided notions that some Pentecostal communities have assumed from dispensationalism. The first is the theology surrounding the anticipation of the future, secret rapture, in which the faithful will be rescued from the impending period of tribulation suffered under the anti-Christ.202 Because a view such as this leaves little to no hope for this world, adherents adopt a *laissez-faire* approach to the plight of others and creation. It leads some to hold to blanket stances on major political issues that they believe will “assist” the return of Christ.203

Second, over-emphasizing the rapture, future tribulation, and subsequent millennial reign minimizes the present, redemptive work of God. As a consequence, ecclesial history is disregarded, and Pentecostal experiences are isolated to ecstatic moments to sustain the faithful until the end. Yong finds this kind of futurism to be inconsistent with Pentecostal spirituality, and he particularly takes aim at what he describes as “futuristic apocalypticism,” which holds that the cosmos is a battlefield between the forces of good (God) and evil.204 As the end of history becomes immanent, the forces of evil will increase their attacks creating the apocalyptic

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201 Bingaman, “Learning from Left Behind,” 263-264. Bingaman argues that when the Church fails to equip the faithful with hermeneutical tools, it leaves a vacuum that will be filled.


203 Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 320-325. An example of this is the stance that many Evangelicals take on the modern nation-state of Israel. They adopt a blanket stance of approval to the actions of Israel. Yong points out that their commitments prevent them from empathizing with the challenges the Palestinian people face.

204 Ibid., 324-329.
signs of the times. According to this account, God will ultimately win the cosmic war and rain judgment upon a fallen, wicked world. This eschatological vision does inspire a mission in the world, but it is one perpetuating the notion that creation is spoiled beyond what is recoverable and fails to see the glimpses of the coming Kingdom that exist in the present. The action in the world inspired by this vision is relegated to “spiritual” matters in light of the coming destruction failing to consider the past and present work of the Spirit.

For Yong, the lack of concern for this world that is encouraged by futuristic apocalypticism contradicts fundamental Pentecostal commitments such as embodiment, healing, and holistic soteriology. Eschatological doctrines provide orienting frameworks for current Christian practice, and Pentecostals’ adoption of the disembodied eschatology of escapism threatens their mission. Though couched in expectation for the apocalyptic return of Christ, adherents use rapture theology to justify and perpetuate the political status quo. Economic and environmental projects are cast as wastes of time or even counter-productive attempts to preserve a world that will inevitably pass away in its entirety. Any Pentecostal ethic or political theology in a western context will have to address the challenge of dispensationalism that has taken root in many Pentecostal and charismatic communities.

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205 Ibid., 327-328.
206 Ibid., 327-329. Yong notes that for those holding to futuristic apocalypticism judgment of God that destroys the world is considered grace because of the patience of God that allows time to repent before the ultimate judgment.
207 Ibid., 329. Expanding on Land’s articulation of the Spirit’s redemption of time in *Pentecostal Spirituality*, Yong includes place to the redemptive work of the redemptive work of the Spirit. The expansion leads him to emphasize the Spirit’s work in addressing environmental concerns and the threat of climate change.
208 Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 352.
209 Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 133-134.
As an antidote to escapism, Wright encourages exegetes to understand the “coming” of Christ in Scripture to refer to the event of the future renewal of the cosmos that is promised with the Second Coming. Wright suggests that “eschatology” includes the entirety of God’s intentions for the world and the direction in which the Spirit is guiding history and refers to more than issues like the rapture. Wright acknowledges that the transition from the world as it presently is to the new world will be by an act of God’s divine healing. He concludes that a return to orthodoxy and the promise of God as stated in Scripture can renew a proper vision of the end and consequently turn Christians back to the earth in love for their neighbor.

Faithful Presence

Authentically Pentecostal spirituality recognizes God’s care for and activity in the world. Yong argues that a theological account of history incorporated into Pentecostal spirituality could provide the tools needed to conceive of the continued redemptive narrative of the Spirit in creation. Futuristic fervor should be redirected to engagement marked by an eschatological sensibility that is both incarnational and pneumatological in nature and is consistent with God’s promise to make all things new. Yong concludes his political theology writing, “History and cosmos now become the site and even field of the Spirit’s eschatological activity, and those upon

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212 Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 121-122.

213 Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 326-331.

whom the Spirit has been given now cry out for the kingdom and pathically live out a political theology of suffering and hope.”

The Problem of Political Marginalization

While the escapism of futuristic apocalypticism threatens to pre-maturely take Pentecostals out of the world, frustration due to perceived marginalization from seats of influence and from the values of the dominant culture makes believers vulnerable to compromising the political vision of the Kingdom. There are Christians in the U.S who fear the loss of socio-political influence, and many who hope that it can be restored with the latest round of elections. They fear Christian witness will be diminished, religious liberty stifled, and moral decay will ensue resulting in the collapse of society.

David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons capture the sense of loss of influence within the dominant culture sharing statistics indicating that eight in ten practicing Christians view religious freedom as constrained because of society’s general move away from Christian values. Studies also show that Christianity in the West is considered both irrelevant and extreme. Kinnaman and Lyons point out that the percentage of practicing Christians has waned with each

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215 Yong, In the Days of Caesar, 358.

216 Gregory A. Boyd, Myth of a Christian Nation: How the Quest for Political Power is Destroying the Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 117-119.

217 David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, Good Faith: Being a Christian When Society Thinks You’re Irrelevant and Extreme (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 13, 27. They define a “practicing Christian” as one who claims that faith is an important part of life and who attends a church gathering at least once a month. The findings they share show that fifty-two percent of practicing Christians and sixty percent of Evangelicals associate the word “persecution” with their faith experience in relation to broader society. See also, 52.

218 Kinnaman and Lyons, Good Faith, 21-22. Their definition of “extreme” includes more than violent acts in the name of religion. “Extreme” underscores the peculiarity of faith practices in a dominant society that does not understand them. According to a Barna Group study referenced by Kinnaman and Lyons, over forty percent of adults view people of faith and religion as part of the problems plaguing society. See also, 13.
The concern they capture is the end of the U. S. as a nation of Christians governed by certain standards framed as “Christian values.”

Gregory A. Boyd addresses the belief that the U. S. is fundamentally Christian arguing that this kind of rhetoric leads followers of Jesus to trust the power of the government more than the power of Christ. His concern is that Christians put more energy into wielding influence through governments and disregard the power of prayer to shape history. Boyd writes, “As U. S. citizens, we have a civil right to influence the political system. But in following our consciences, we must never forget where our real power—our distinctly kingdom power—lies. It’s not in ‘power over’ but in ‘power under.’” Boyd advocates for individual and communal responsibility inspired by the self-sacrificial love of Jesus expressed on the cross. Instead of ceding the initiative to act to the government to deal with major social issues, Boyd calls Christians to action exhibiting Christ-like love in response to the needs of their neighbors. He writes, “As kingdom-of-God citizens, we need not, and must not, wait for these issues to be resolved before we act. Our trust, time, energy, and resources must not be centered on improving

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219 Ibid., 224. The authors show that forty-five percent of Baby Boomers, forty-two percent of Gen Xers, and thirty-six percent of Millennials meet the criteria for practicing Christians. Those self-identifying as Christians have dropped from eighty-five percent among Boomers to sixty-seven percent among Millennials. Another study published by the Barna Group indicates only fifty-nine percent of Generation Z self-identify as Christian and about nine percent meet their criteria to be considered “engaged Christians.” These findings lead researchers to classify Generation Z the first post-Christian generation in the United States. See Gen Z: the Culture, Beliefs, and Motivations Shaping the Next Generation (Barna Group, 2018), 24-26.


221 Ibid., 119. Emphasis is the author’s own.

222 Ibid., 120-126. Boyd specifically addresses the use of violence by governments. Boyd argues that followers of Jesus living their lives in accordance with the cruciform life of Jesus should resist participation in violence. See also Graham Ward, The Politics of Discipleship: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 182. Ward claims that prayer is the most political act in which a believer can engage.
government but on living out the revolutionary kingdom of Jesus Christ in every way, shape, and form.”

William Cavanaugh admits that in the western political climate, Christians ought to feel homeless among dominant political movements, but he resists the concession that the political marginalization of the Church is normal. While Cavanaugh acknowledges the logic behind the desire to separate the Church from the state, he rejects the notion that religion can be separated from politics. He claims the concern of those who theologically critique America is not that religion remain absent from public discourse, but they challenge the idolatry that would replace the God revealed in the Bible with the American civil religion propagated by those who identify as Christ followers.

Stanley Hauerwas argues that politics as they have come to be perceived in the U. S. create a dualism in which the political nature of faith and the religious nature of politics are lost. This loss impedes the Christian perspective by reducing Christianity to another lifestyle instead

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223 Boyd, Myth of a Christian Nation, 125.


225 Ibid., 4-15. As an example of the religious nature of political movements, Cavanaugh offers the way the cultural phenomenon of nationalism is stoked to unify individuals within specified borders. According to Cavanaugh, the Church must remain separate from the state because the state enacts violence that the Church should reject. In a given region, Cavanaugh points out, the state holds a monopoly on legitimate claims to violence. He calls the Church to resist violence with the confession of human inability to wield violence justly. Similarly, Hauerwas holds that faithful followers of Christ cannot resort to violence and coercion; they must always rely on persuasion. See Stanley Hauerwas, Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church Politics, and Life (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 82.

226 Cavanaugh, Migrations of the Holy, 182. See also Boyd, Myth of a Christian Nation, 87-90. Boyd demonstrates how rituals celebrating nationalism and war are incorporated into Christian gatherings compromising the worship of those present. He describes a worship gathering he attended on Independence Day in 1992 and recalls how he was struck about how easily worship of Jesus had been mixed with symbols of the sword.
of understanding of the Church as an alternative politic.²²⁷ He calls Christians to resist impatience that would lead them to compromising political means and platforms.²²⁸

The problem of compromise arises when Christian hope is misplaced and directed away from Christ to another political movement or candidate. Faithful Christian, political witness in the U. S. can be neither encompassed nor consigned to the false choice between democrat and republican.²²⁹ Misplaced hope creates toxic political movements and environments that relegate social transformation to sweeping changes enacted from the top down and reduces Christian engagement to a voting caucus for a particular platform. Hauerwas considers the fading of Christian political power as an opportunity for the Church to rediscover and recover the eschatological potency of the Gospel.²³⁰

The Invitation to Salvation: Embracing the Margins

Instead of rallying around nationalism, Christians gather based on the common invitation to the salvific experience of God. Instead of compromising to maintain seats of influence within governmental structures, Christians can embrace the cultural moment by faithfully fulfilling their vocation in the world as members of the worshipping community bearing witness in word and deed to the Kingdom that is to come. Cavanaugh writes, “Salvation is not a matter of pulling a few individual survivors from the wreckage of creation after the Fall, but is about the re-creation of a new heaven and a new earth.”²³¹ Salvation history, Cavanaugh argues, is the history of

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²²⁷ Hauerwas, Approaching the End, 73-75.
²²⁸ Ibid., 82.
²²⁹ Cavanaugh, Migrations of the Holy, 5.
²³⁰ Hauerwas, Approaching the End, xi.
²³¹ Cavanaugh, Migrations of the Holy, 123. In Revelation 21:1, the writer experiences a vision of the culmination of history with a new heaven and a new earth, not just new humanity.
humanity and not just a subset of history proper. It is about everything, and political theology requires the acknowledgment of the political nature of the Church and its responsibility to creation within the unfolding of salvation history.\textsuperscript{232}

Cavanaugh maintains that the Church is not the magic pill to solve all political woes, but the Church does have a key role to play as the worshipping community that embodies the Kingdom, represents Christ, and is empowered by the Spirit. He writes, “The Church’s job is to try to discern in each concrete circumstance how best to embody the politics of the cross in a suffering world.”\textsuperscript{233} The Lord’s Supper encourages those anxious about what is becoming of the world and of their country to be patient. It instills the perspective of eternity brought to bear on the concerns of the present. The sacrament is the ritual enactment of the drama of Christ’s confrontation with the powers in this world that have been co-opted by evil forces.\textsuperscript{234} The present concerns of this world matter in so far as they relate to human flourishing, but believers must always engage them in light of and according to the Kingdom to come.

**Observance of the Lord’s Supper as a Narrative of God’s Active Presence**

Both political marginalization and escapism are results of the same gap between the experience of reality and the expectation for what life ought to be. The faithful response is neither the disengagement propagated by futuristic apocalypticism nor is it the compromise that comes with the will to maintain power. Pentecostal implementation of regular observance of the sacraments, beginning with the Lord’s Supper, can reinforce their mission and identity according

\textsuperscript{232} Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy*, 139. For Cavanaugh, the Church is not just another *polis* but a universal gathering for all cultures.

\textsuperscript{233} Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy*, 140.

\textsuperscript{234} Ibid., 127. Cf. Ephesians 6:12.
to the eschatological covenant and the active presence of God in the worshipping community and the world. The Supper offers a pedagogy faithful to Pentecostal sensibilities that can help worshippers make the connection between what they do in their communal gatherings and the way they live their lives. It can push the understanding of Christian responsibility and communal holiness beyond the bounds of personal piety to incorporate active presence and witness to the Kingdom in socio-political matters.

Partnering with the Spirit to Seek the Good of the City

In his Pentecostal political theology, Steven M. Studebaker warns against perceiving this world and the Kingdom in binary terms and argues that a relationship with the world does not impede a relationship with God. For Christians, there should be no distinction between the Christian life and life in the world. He critiques the subordination of earthly concerns to spiritual concerns arguing that it undermines the narrative of the Spirit’s activity in the world.\(^{235}\) There is continuity between this world and the next because of the work of the Spirit and the creative work of humanity, empowered by the Spirit as individuals image God’s own creativity.\(^{236}\) The Spirit’s renewal of creation means that love for God and for the earthly “city” can and should coexist because the city is the center for human life and an expression of human creativity.\(^{237}\)

Studebaker acknowledges that while Pentecostal rhetoric sounds antithetical to the world, Pentecostal praxis is not and cannot be because Pentecostal mission necessitates a commitment


\(^{236}\) Ibid., 126.

to creation. He argues that creation is the object and location of God’s redemptive work. Studebaker demonstrates that seeking the good of the earthly city and seeking the purpose of the Kingdom is the same pursuit, and the first step in reconciling the binary is to seek the good for this world by aligning with God’s intentions for it. Studebaker sees Creation and Pentecost are two points on the redemptive continuum of the universal work of the Spirit in time and space. From the beginning of creation, through Pentecost and continuing today, the Spirit remains the source of life.

Daniela C. Augustine posits that creation itself is a divine act of hospitality, and in a fallen world, God’s hospitality continues as the sanctifying work of the Spirit effects the totality of human experience. Augustine writes, “Human creative labor becomes a priestly sacramental enactment of God’s love for His creation – the very love which hosts the cosmos in self-sacrificial nurture and care for all creatures and demands the same of humanity as a faithful

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238 Studebaker, A Pentecostal Political Theology, 176. See also, Yong, In the Days of Caesar, 331. Recall Frank D. Macchia’s observation that Pentecostal doctrine needs to catch up to Pentecostal experience. His argument deals with the notion of mediated experience of God, and the principle applies here. Pentecostal rhetoric need not be antithetical to the world because, in addition to their mission to the world, the material of the world can be instruments of revelation. Pentecostals experience this even they may not always articulate it. See Frank D. Macchia, “Is Footwashing the Neglected Sacrament?” Pneuma: The Journal for the Society of Pentecostal Studies 19 (Fall 1997), 241.

239 Studebaker, A Pentecostal Political Theology, 142-150. Studebaker contends that Genesis 1—2 is more concerned with soteriology than cosmology. He describes creation as the theatre in which one lives out their relationship with God. This means, for Studebaker, that the conceptualizations of creation and redemption should be mutually informing.

240 Ibid., 156.

241 Ibid., 155.

242 Ibid., 176-177.

stewardship of God’s household.”

Incorporating the material of this world, the Eucharist instills reverence and gratitude for the gifts of creation. The Spirit’s outpouring at Pentecost is a foreshadowing of the new heaven and the new earth, and this foreshadowing renews life here and now. The event of Pentecost reinforces God’s commitment to humanity. The promise of the Spirit means Pentecost for all people. Pentecost marks the Spirit’s activity within humanity to transform human culture. Cultural productions, in so far as they exhibit human flourishing, are acts of participation in the Spirit of Pentecost. Cultural aspirations and creative activities that take place in the world emerge from the creative-redemptive work of the Spirit. The presence of the Spirit makes the future for which God is working present now through the Body of Christ.

“The Way of Babylon”

In light of the Spirit’s activity in creation, the proper response to eschatological dissonance is not disengagement from socio-political concerns. The issue is participating in politics through methods characterized by self-centered desires and injustice; these are antithetical to the Kingdom and human flourishing. Studebaker uses the classification of the “way of Babylon” to identify politics of this kind and to demonstrate that they are not equal to

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244 Ibid., 184.
245 Yong, In the Days of Caesar, 313.
246 Studebaker, A Pentecostal Political Theology, 146-150.
248 Ibid., 141.
250 Studebaker, A Pentecostal Political Theology, 158.
but can be present within the human city.\textsuperscript{251} In any place where humanity gathers, there is the possibility for the emergence of either new Jerusalem and demonic Babylon.\textsuperscript{252} For Graham Ward, the contemporary emergence of Babylon is evidenced in society’s hyper-focus on entertainment and dematerialization. The rise of these has led to the burying of the value of production cost and to pervasive commodification that is even applied to faith. According to Ward, religion must be liberated from its relegation to an individual’s private conviction in order to face the rise of depoliticization.\textsuperscript{253}

Escapism and dualism pose the same threat to human well-being. Both abandon the city, the center of life for human relationships, to the way of Babylon. Both advocate for antagonistic relationships with “cultures” in a whole sale fashion and miss the glimpses of redemption and justice expressing outside of explicitly Christian contexts. Blanket “counter-culture” stances lack awareness of the good human creativity can initiate. Studebaker asserts that where there is human flourishing, in the state or otherwise, there is a collective response to the Spirit.\textsuperscript{254} His

\textsuperscript{251} Studebaker, \textit{A Pentecostal Political Theology}, 176. The present mandate is to seek the good of the city with an eye for God’s promised future with God. This tension is similar to what is called for by the prophet in Jeremiah 29:11 – 12. See also Boyd, \textit{Myth of a Christian Nation}, 18, 31-33, 47. Boyd uses the “way of the sword” and “power over” to describe the way fallen humanity wields power versus the “way of the cross” and “power under” as Jesus demonstration of power. Boyd is particularly concerned with Christians justifying and celebrating violence enacted by the United States.

\textsuperscript{252} Ward, \textit{Politics of Discipleship}, 213.

\textsuperscript{253} Ibid., 163. See also Graham Ward, \textit{Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 125. Ward blames movements toward privatization for depoliticization and calls for the contrast to hyper-individualism. Kinnaman and Lyons also find hyper-individualism to be a root problem in western societies and call for the de-centering of religion from the self. They cite a study showing that eighty-four percent of adults in the U.S. believe the highest goal in life is to find as much enjoyment as possible. Also, ninety-one percent believe that truth is found by looking within oneself. Exasperating the issue, social media has made authentic connections increasingly rare. See Kinnaman and Lyons, \textit{Good Faith}, 227-228.

\textsuperscript{254} Studebaker, \textit{A Pentecostal Political Theology}, 130-135. Studebaker critiques Radical Orthodoxy for being overly ecclesiacentric in which the redemption of the world is secondary to the church as alternative community and binary in that no good can come from nation-states. Studebaker finds this makes recognition of the eruptions of the Kingdom difficult. His biggest critique of Hauerwas, Yoder, Cavanagh is that they do not see how the goodness of God shines through in dominant cultures. For Studebaker, their constructions are too antithetical to this world.
designation of the way of Babylon affirms the potential for good in the city and gives Pentecostals imaginative space to embody and enact alternatives to the cultural streams that dominate a particular society.

Defining Political Space: Many Voices

Political theology itself assumes the activity of God and humanity’s calling to participate in it. At its core, political theology affirms God’s salvific power and mandates humans take responsibility for their public life. Yong seeks to explicate the intersection of politics and Pentecostalism and to encourage Pentecostals to reflect on politics from their own spirituality and theological distinctiveness. He sets out to cultivate a Pentecostal political imagination informed by and embedded in Pentecostal intuitions and sensibilities.

Surveying the field and history of political theology, Yong concludes that the political realm is vast and the questions of political engagement are perennial. Because of the plurality of Pentecostal expression, faithful Pentecostal ethics welcomes many perspectives on a given issue. Affirming diverse experiences of the Spirit provides a theological rationale to embrace the pluriform nature of human experiences and provides a means by which their contextualization can happen naturally. This affirmation applied to politics acknowledges that there are many voices, beliefs, practices, and approaches to politics and political theology. In a plurality of political theologies, how can believers discern faithful action in the public square?

255 Yong, In the Days of Caesar, 352.
256 Ibid., 3. For Amos Yong, politics refers to anything pertaining to the life of the polis, or the city.
257 Ibid., 92, 111-113.
258 Ibid., 83-84.
259 Ibid., 93-94.
260 Yong, In the Days of Caesar, 89.
The Day of Pentecost instituted an eschatological people of God that embodies an alternative way of relating to one another. From the upper room, a different way of life blossomed that is oriented around the person of Jesus and the common experience of the Spirit.\textsuperscript{261} The scriptural assertion that the Spirit is given to all without partiality cultivates an appreciation for many voices.\textsuperscript{262} Yong claims as there are many Pentecostalisms, so there are many tongues, and many political theologies.\textsuperscript{263}

\textbf{The Pneumatological Imagination: What Could Be and What Already Is}

If the city itself is not inherently evil but corruptible by the “way of Babylon,” then Christian social ethics must be able to discern in the midst of uncertainty. Cultivating a pneumatological imagination invokes the experience Spirit in the face of ambiguity so that standards are judged by what can be, not just by what is.\textsuperscript{264} Hope inspires the prophetic spirit and provides the courage to challenge the status quo that has capitulated to the “way of Babylon.”\textsuperscript{265} Instead of shrinking from the political process, Wariboko challenges believers to bring the vision of Pentecost to bear on policy, in what he calls the “Pentecostal principle.”\textsuperscript{266} Wariboko writes,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{261} Ibid., 354.
\item \textsuperscript{262} Ibid., 94. Se also, Wariboko, \textit{The Pentecostal Principle}, 108. Nimi Wariboko attempts to develop a Pentecostal theological rationale that is comfortable and consistent with the many tongues of Pentecost. He asserts that the differences among those gathered in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost were significant because Luke mentions them in the book of Acts.
\item \textsuperscript{263} Yong, \textit{In the Days of Caesar}, 119.
\item \textsuperscript{264} Wariboko, \textit{The Pentecostal Principle}, 81.
\item \textsuperscript{265} Ibid., 90.
\item \textsuperscript{266} Ibid., 111-112. Wariboko critiques public theologians for not always bringing public theology to bear on methodology. He also critiques Yong’s \textit{In the Days of Caesar} for not addressing means of constructing policy in the face of those resistant to the project. Wariboko’s concern is that Pentecostal theologians who have written political theologies have not done enough to keep Pentecostals from retreating into spirited isolation. Wariboko claims Yong’s political theology does not address how a Pentecostal can enter a public space to construct public policy without discarding their unique identity.
\end{itemize}
The pentecostal principle is pentecostal not in the sense of primal spirituality or pneumatic resources of any religion, but in the sense of the ethical ideal that arises from the tension between the symbol of the ‘is’ (what is already) and the ‘ought’ (what ought to be realized) in the directness of communal structures (meaning-fulfilling, existential relationships) toward better future alternatives, toward freedom.267

According to Wariboko, ethical analysis identifies a problem threatening society’s stability and morality, demonstrates how that problem moves society from “that which underlies its existence and expressed ultimate concern,” and determines how a resolution of the problem will re-ignite responsiveness to the ultimate concern.268 At the heart of ethical analysis from the perspective of the Pentecostal principle is the expression and recovery of teleology. It requires the articulation of what is most important and fundamental for the community.269 In practice, the Pentecostal principle holds to hope that in every social arrangement the novel can emerge and remains open to the possibility for the inbreaking of the miraculous in social life.270 It commits to new possibilities in its resistance of obstacles to human flourishing.271 The principle cultivates faith in the face of ambiguity able to overcome challenges in commitment to the ultimate good.272

Pentecostals push to the new by rejecting methodologies that undergird and uncritically accept the given world as it is.273 The expectation for the emergence of something new combats

267 Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 192,

268 Ibid., 116-117.

269 Ibid., 116-119. Wariboko identifies the following four conditions for ethical analysis: ultimate concerns, obstacles to the realization of ultimate concern, desire to overcome, and willingness to oppose own solutions because none are timeless.

270 Ibid., 78, 81.

271 Ibid., 130.

272 Ibid., 67, 117.

273 Ibid., 156. Wariboko describes Pentecostals as the children at play in the sacred spaces where they play with the rituals and standards opening them to new possibilities. He notes that rituals turn events into structures, but
escapism and compromise because it affirms that God can and will cause something new to blossom where the status quo does not meet the Kingdom standards for human flourishing. It wards off the vulnerabilities that come from political marginalization because believers do not have to rely on politics according to the way of Babylon. The creative Spirit can interrupt processes and cultural tides with a new thing that is not yet perceived.\textsuperscript{274}

While in hopeful anticipation of Christ’s return, Pentecostalism affirms the continued presence of God in the in-between, making this world look more like the one that is to come. Escapism also looks for new possibilities, but instead of seeing them emerge from within creation through the active work of the Spirit, hope for God’s intervention is relegated to the future apocalypse leaving adherents vulnerable to the idolatry of the dominant cultural stream. The world does not have to wait for the end to begin to experience the renewal of the Spirit inbreaking into this world.

The Lord’s Supper emblemizes a past event that points to the future and present reality of God’s nearness. It remembers a death that leads to new life. It is the ultimate end that creates the ultimate beginning for a new humanity and a new earth.\textsuperscript{275} The Eucharist is a symbol of social existence baptized in the presence of the Spirit that takes the ordinary and prophetically pushes toward a new reality. On the surface, the Lord’s Supper is an ordinary act with ordinary elements, but it points to a greater reality by witnessing to what God has done, is doing, and promises to do.

\textsuperscript{274} Cf. Isaiah 43:18 – 19

\textsuperscript{275} Wariboko, \textit{The Pentecostal Principle}, 98.
Enacting Pentecostal Political Theology at the Table of the Lord

A New People

Both Pentecost and the Lord’s Supper are signs of the establishment of a new community. The Eucharist is a centering practice for the community constituted at Pentecost around the common need for the Body of Christ. Gathering around the Table resists the privatization of spiritual experience that plagues modern, western Christianity.\textsuperscript{276} It locates the individuals, previously strangers to each other, in the reconciled community, into communion of the people of God. One’s personal spiritual experience and participation in the grace of God presented at the Table is enacted and bound up with the gathered community of believers.

The presence of God at the Table invites the marginalized to receive grace and forgiveness creating new standards for how humans are to relate to one another. There is no hierarchy of socio-economic status, nationality, ethnicity, or race at the Table. The hospitality of Jesus was revealed to his disciples in this meal.\textsuperscript{277} Therefore, it is a communal act that makes visible the people of God as they gather around the Table and that ultimately points to the greater, global, historic community that is not physically present.\textsuperscript{278} It is a precursor to the day when the people of God from all nations and ages will be finally united in Christ at His Table upon His return.

\textsuperscript{276} Amos Yong, \textit{The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology} (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 165. See also Ward, \textit{Politics of Discipleship}, 262-264.

\textsuperscript{277} Catherine Duce, “Church-based Work with the Homeless: Theological Exploration of the Practices of Hospitality” \textit{Practical Theology} (2013), 95.

\textsuperscript{278} John Howard Yoder, \textit{Body Politics: Five Practices of Christian Community Before the Watching World} (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1992), 44-46. Yoder cautions the celebrant not to over ritualize the sacrament so that the ordinary meaning of the rite is lost. The rite uses very ordinary elements in order to communicate the message of the Gospel. The practice of Eucharist can engage all five senses. The elements can be seen. The call to partake is heard. As the celebrant approach, the scent of the bread and the wine (or, if you are Pentecostal-holiness, probably juice) reaches his or her nostrils. The elements can be felt and tasted as they are received and ingested by the celebrant. See also, 21-22.
For first century Palestinians, sharing a table was more than just a meal; it was the formation of community.\textsuperscript{279} The origin of the rite itself recalls the original Passover in Exodus which marked the literal liberation of people from oppressive powers. The liberative motif continues in Christ and needs not be reduced to spiritual matters. In time and space, the Supper visibly and physically marks the erasing of boundaries of class, race, gender, and ethnicity.\textsuperscript{280} By imagining in concrete ways the reconciliation instituted by God’s redemptive work, observance of the Supper serves as a locale for sanctification, habituation, and renewal by the Spirit of God. The vision of one people representing all races, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, classes, and generations gathered around their common need for and experience of God, normalizes the reality of reconciliation, and teaches celebrants to long for the consummation of the work of God in the world.

New Economics

Western societies operate as loose, involuntary collections of autonomous individuals who unify only in personal self-interest, but the Church’s vision of humanity is one in which interdependent individuals gather in community. Underscoring the difference between neoliberal markets and the Christian economic vision, Daniela C. Augustine’s uses the imagery of the household (\textit{oikos}) of God to imagine the whole world united together under the care of the Creator.\textsuperscript{281} Augustine describes the contrast between the market logic of neoliberalism and the economics that are enacted upon the experience of the Spirit at Pentecost as evidence for the


\textsuperscript{280} Yong, \textit{Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh}, 165.

\textsuperscript{281} Augustine, \textit{Pentecost, Hospitality, and Transfiguration}, 75-78.
need for the sanctification of human desire. This vision of the household of God calls on Pentecost calls to leverage resources in care for each other within the house and provides counter formation to the effect of consumerism. Augustine writes,

> The Eucharist detoxifies us from the dehumanizing poisons of unrestrained consumerism and helps us to build immunity towards its seductive lures. It cultivates the community of faith as a dissident force of resistance against the commodification of market logic and forms it as an incarnated critique of the utilitarian objectification of God’s creation.

To deal with the poverty experienced in the world today, individuals need community, support, and resources available in caring, loving human relationships. There is no greater community of hospitality than the one transformed by the Spirit and oriented around the Table of Christ. The Lord’s Supper represents a new economic reality instituted by Jesus and actualized by the Spirit at Pentecost. In the face of self-centered greed and rampant individualism, the Church orients itself to the Kingdom of God promoting alternative Kingdom economics that place value on persons located in community over the notion of the autonomous, consuming individual.

The central story for the narrative of the Church is the reconciling, sacrificial love of Jesus that is expressed in Eucharist. Augustine asserts that Eucharist in Christian community

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283 Augustine, Pentecost, Hospitality, and Transfiguration., 106-107. The concern extends to all creation as economic habits and the expenditure of resources is called to reflect the Spirit-induced reality.


disciplines desires and instills “reverent consumption.”²⁸⁸ The practices awakens the consciousness of those who gather around the Table to not only see the need of others but also to evaluate their own consumption in the context of embodied community.²⁸⁹ One’s desires and consumption habits are not only encountered by the sanctifying Spirit but are also reoriented in service to the well-being of others. In the community centered on the Eucharist, goods are exchanged not on the basis of personal economic benefit but on the basis of need.²⁹⁰

In light of the Eucharist, one must be ready to redistribute resources to meet the needs of others. As Christ offered His Body for the sake of the Church, so the Church must offer itself for the sake of the world.²⁹¹ The Eucharist is a training ground, an enacted pedagogy, for the disciples of Christ that teaches them the meaning and scope of service exemplified by Jesus. The Spirit’s presence in the Body of Christ changes their ways of interactions and calls them to embody employ economics the household of God instead on accordance to the market logic.²⁹²

Resisting the reductions of materialism requires discernment, which is cultivated in the relationships of discipleship.²⁹³ Celebrants are commissioned to embody the Meal and to be the Meal for the world.²⁹⁴ On a global scale, the Eucharist initiates economics of sharing that inspire

²⁸⁸ Augustine, Pentecost, Hospitality, and Transfiguration, 103.
²⁸⁹ Ibid., 104-106.
²⁹¹ Ibid., 224. See also Alexander Schmemann, For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press), 15.
²⁹² Augustine, “Holiness and Economics,” 203. See also, 191.
²⁹³ Ward, Politics of Discipleship, 161, 264.
²⁹⁴ Yong, Spirit Poured Out, 165.
the pursuit of debt remission instead of debt collection.\textsuperscript{295} The context for discipling relationships is the “ekklessia,” which denotes a called out people who co-operate along political, ethical, and theological lines.\textsuperscript{296} Discipleship is inherently political because it implicates human relations and it ushers in the Kingdom.\textsuperscript{297}

New Practices

For Augustine, the event of Pentecost initiates the shaping of the Christian community into the image of Christ, allowing for the Church to practice the hospitality extended by God through the work of Christ.\textsuperscript{298} In light of the Lord’s Supper, the Church should cultivate habits of hospitality and practices reconciliation so that all who are willing may be incorporated into the community as functioning members. In the social act of observing the Lord’s Supper, the worshipping community embodies solidarity in which the resurrected One is united to His communal Body by the Holy Spirit. In observing the Meal, participants anticipate the Kingdom to come as one Body. In this context, an imagination can be cultivated for human transformation and reconciliation.\textsuperscript{299} The Supper both describes the eschatological vision of reconciled humanity and prescribes reconciliation to those gathered around the Table. As they experience foretastes of the Kingdom in encounters with the Spirit and in the presence of the reconciled ones, relationships broken by racism, xenophobia, ageism, and classism can be healed through

\textsuperscript{295} Yong, \textit{In the Days of Caesar}, 313. Yong admits that living with one another can have the same effect of reinforcing solidarity over selfishness, advocating for the bearing of burdens over competition, and encouraging sharing in place of the pursuit of personal gain.

\textsuperscript{296} Ward, \textit{Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice}, 125.

\textsuperscript{297} Ward, \textit{Politics of Discipleship}, 284.


repentance and shared experience around the Table. Before approaching the altar, reconciling with one’s brother or sister is required for full participation in this meal because gathering around the Table in worship in the presence of God is the consummation of the Church’s liturgical activity and a sign of her unity.

The people of God around the Table exhibit a way of life that is counter to the dominant, cultural streams and forms a liturgical imagination that, as Yong suggests, marks them as people of praise, prayer, worship, sacraments, and exorcisms all in light of the end that God will bring about. Further, the eschatological people of God embody a pneumatological imagination that empowers vocational ministry in the world to herald the redemptive possibilities ignited by God’s active presence and is expressed in gracious hospitality to all they meet. Regular observance of the Lord’s Supper orients missional communities. As individuals gather in unity and in the Spirit around the Table of the Lord to recognize and celebrate the mission of God in the world, they are collectively commissioned to carry on that mission. It is a task with political and ethical implications, not exclusively spiritual ones. The communal practice of gathering around the Table counter-forms the affections of participants to God and neighbor in light of the coming Kingdom. It cultivates desire for God’s presence and purposes in the world and encourages longing to see God’s plans become reality in the present age.

Pentecostal movements (insofar as it is done in the spirit of the event of Pentecost) have much to offer the Church in terms of understanding itself as infused and empowered by the

302 Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 354. Yong suggests that exorcism can be a liturgical mode for political praxis. See also, 157-161.
303 Ibid., 354-355.
Spirit. Vondey argues that observance of the Eucharist and a corresponding practice of hospitality could provide an opportunity for Pentecostals to bring people together. Despite limited development, Vondey holds that Eucharistic hospitality could be a starting point for Pentecostal ecclesiology that is open to dialogue with other traditions.\textsuperscript{304} For the Lord’s Supper to be a sign of hospitality, the thrust of the implications of the meal must imagined beyond the mere enactment of the ritual celebration. It must be understood to encompass and inform the entire life of the community and the believer. Relegation of Eucharistic hospitality to the ritual celebration will similarly sideline the unity of the Body of Christ to doctrinal platitudes.\textsuperscript{305}

Hospitality empowered and inspired by the Spirit should not be isolated to ecclesial matters, but its implications should inform immigration policy, consumption habits, and our dispositions to other members of humanity who likewise bear the image of God. The observance of the Lord’s Supper can create opportunities to strengthen communities that regularly gather around the Table together by providing a symbol of their common need and response to the invitation of God. In gathering and collectively affirming and experiencing the presence of God, celebrants recognize the gifts others receive for the building up of the community.

While fighting inequality, the Eucharist further reinforces the communal nature of Christianity and calls congregants to resist the individualization of the Gospel. The work of

\textsuperscript{304} Vondey, “Pentecostal Ecclesiologies and Eucharistic Hospitality,” 43. Christopher A. Stephenson, likewise, imagines possibilities for ecumenism in Pentecostal approaches to the Lord’s Supper. Stephenson advocates for the complete openness to the Spirit’s work that Pentecostals bring to their communal gatherings to be applied to their celebration of the Lord’s Supper. He claims that because they have not assumed the presence of Christ in the Meal, like many other denominations, Pentecostals can with fresh lenses to discern the presence of the Spirit at the Table without being entangled in the metaphysical debates of how Christ is presence. See Christopher A. Stephenson, \textit{Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit} (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 120-122.

\textsuperscript{305} Ibid., 52.
Christ creates a communal reality in which individuals participate in salvation.\textsuperscript{306} It confronts inequality with a concrete image of reconciliation that creates a point of shared experience. The Christian liturgy, and specifically the Lord’s Supper offers practices that can bring people together diverse peoples under one symbol and in one unified act.\textsuperscript{307} All manner of diverse humanity comes to the Table bringing unique experiences and gifts. It gathers people of all backgrounds and means to one Table in worship of one Lord in anticipation of His rule. It breaks down the barriers that modern nation states impose.\textsuperscript{308} All come to the same Table to experience the same presence of God and to receive the same wholeness made available and to leave with the same commission. Because the Church is a community organized around the work of Christ and the presence of the Spirit, functioning members do not simply consume but are called upon to contribute in their unique ways. True community empowered by the Spirit does not absorb all distinctives but celebrates uniqueness in unity that is founded on the active presence of God.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Vondey outlines implications of Pentecostal Eucharistic hospitality. First, Eucharistic practice is a commitment to mission in the world. As the elements represent the mission of Christ, partaking of the ordinance is not just to receive Christ but to assume His extended hospitality. Second, as the Body of Christ is offered in the Eucharist, so too is the body of the faithful made a sacrifice for the world. Christ becomes the model for how the Church is to offer

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\textsuperscript{307} Amos Yong, \textit{Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity} (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 211.
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\textsuperscript{308} Cavanaugh, \textit{Migrations of the Holy}, 121.
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herself in thanksgiving for the world. Third, Eucharistic hospitality as a communal disposition extends an open invitation for the poor, the suffering, and the marginalized to experience the fellowship centered around the love of Christ extended in the Lord’s Supper. Fourth, participation necessitates an outward, ethical turn that increases attention to ecological as well as ecumenical concerns.  

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309 Vondey, “Pentecostal Ecclesiologies and Eucharistic Hospitality,” 54.

310 Ibid., 54.
CONCLUSION

Gathering around the Table remembers the past and anticipates the full realization of God’s Kingdom in the future all while witnessing to the present reality of God’s activity through ordinary means, including human agents. An understanding of Pentecostal political theology consistent with this ethos points to the constitution of a new reality with the coming of the Spirit in anticipation of the return of Christ, the true King. A theme in the Pentecostal political theologies is the constitution or the expectation of something new brought about by the Spirit.\textsuperscript{311} The newness heralded by Pentecostalism is not completely novel, because it is the continuation of what God has been up to all along. It is only “new” in relation to human experience and to the politics of this world.

Regular observation of the Lord’s Supper could help Pentecostals develop theologies and ethics that affirm embodied life in ways congruent with their spirituality and facilitate discerning, faithful engagement in the human city. Full participation in the sacraments requires more than an affirming head-nod or a resounding “amen” to a doctrinal or ideological proposition. Consent is embodied by the physical movements required for participation.\textsuperscript{312} Likewise, Pentecostal worship invites the person to see their whole being in participation and under the influence of the divine presence. Worship gatherings should be only the beginning and inspiration for the Spirit’s influence. The new reality that the Spirit brings about is an embodied and enacted reality. The same is the case for engagement in the politics of the Kingdom. Regular observance of the Lord’s Supper draws the community to experience of God, which reinforces the Pentecostal


affirmation on experience. By engaging all of the senses, the observance of the Lord’s Supper offers an occasion to experience God and to cultivate an imagination attentive to the Spirit’s continued work in creation.

The Lord’s Supper symbolizes the presence of God that anticipates what is to come that is cultivated from what God has done and revealed in the person of Christ to the community of faith. When taken as a rubric for the Gospel, for worship, and for mission, it can free worshippers to partner with the Spirit in making all things new. Therefore, the celebration of the Lord’s Supper in Pentecostal communities reinforces the Kingdom’s socio-political vision and instills the expectation that the Spirit of God will show up not just in gatherings but also throughout the world wherever She may blow.

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