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The Pentecostal Educator

A Journal of the *World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education*

Aims and Scope

The Pentecostal Educator biannually e-publishes scholarly and practical articles related to theological education within the Pentecostal tradition to encourage the continuing maturation of Pentecostal theological education. It is intentionally practical, applied and international.

WAPTE Officers

Instructions for Authors

All submissions to *The Pentecostal Educator* should conform to the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* including its use of footnotes for all citations. For abbreviations of biblical and other ancient material, as well as transliteration of all non-Roman scripts, see *The SBL Handbook of Style*. Manuscripts should be written in English with consistent spelling throughout and using 12 point Times New Roman, single spaced lines. Submissions should not exceed 5,000 words in length (though longer submissions may be considered). All submissions should be emailed as Word (.doc) attachments to rwadholm@trinitybiblecollege.edu. Please include a brief biographical sketch, a 100-300 word abstract, 3-4 keywords, and a bibliography.

Use two levels of headings. They should be flush left, and not numbered.

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The Pentecostal Educator is indexed by the Christian Periodical Index.

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Editorial

Paul R. Alexander, PhD, Senior Editor

The reception to the first edition of this journal was most encouraging. It seems evident that among the numbers of learned journals available there remains a need to address the specific needs of the theological educator.

Let me suggest some of these specific needs:

- The regulatory environment around the world is changing rapidly bringing with it many challenges to theological educators. In countries where accreditation is available or required the authorities are increasing their demands on our institutions. In countries where there is an alternative form of accreditation (such as validation for example) the cost of these arrangements is becoming quite unaffordable to many Colleges.

- With rapid cultural shifts taking place the classroom is a much more challenging environment than it was before. Relativism and even syncretism is often the norm in our increasingly pluralist world.

- Technological advances mean that most of our students can gain the information they need without a teacher by means of a simple internet search. This changes the role of the educator. This is another significant challenge.

So, I hope this publication will prove to be a useful resource. I encourage our readers to encourage others to participate. To those who are active in engaging WAPTE please refer this publication to the institutions and educators within your network.

We continue to welcome articles and look forward to providing valuable material in the months to come.

Volume Editorial

Rick Wadholm Jr., Executive Editor

There are many challenges and changes taking place at the institutional level and among the constituencies of the wider Pentecostal movement. Some of these changes have impacted the very models upon which higher education has functioned. As an example, institutions of higher learning have begun to feel the impact of corporate operational models. In the highly competitive marketplace this has meant that institutions capable of providing the most cost-effective means of education without requiring student relocation have created a challenge for those institutions still primarily targeting the traditional student. In this period of history, education is being offered globally by institutions and individual faculty members via such modes as itinerant professors and online platforms and this trend is only growing. Pentecostal institutions and educators training students globally via alternate models is no longer simply possible, it is happening.

Lisa Long has contributed an article to this issue describing some of the details of discipleship in several institutes of higher learning: one in the United States and one in Central America. Her itinerant teaching over the last number of years has afforded her a firsthand opportunity to participate in instruction in two distinct contexts. This model of the professor taking the instruction to the students is not new, but it is more feasible given the ability to carry on the pedagogy via instant delivery distance learning that would not have been possible just two decades ago. Long describes a number of contextually specific discipleship emphases between the two culturally distinct locations. She reminds the Pentecostal educator that sensitivity to cultural location in developing discipleship models should be taken into careful consideration in place of a generic pattern carried directly from one culture to another. A culturally reflective approach in the delivery of education within our Pentecostal institutions should also follow from her research.

Further, among the challenges which continue to confront Pentecostal educators in Europe and North America in particular is the influence of various modes of secularism. Secularist impulses in education and society at large seem to dominate the landscape ranging from allowance of explanations of reality via transcendence alongside immanence to outright

rejection of any transcendence as explanatory of reality. William Oliverio offers an extended engagement with James K. A. Smith's recent response to the highly influential constructions of Charles Taylor who was himself attempting to offer an alternative account of knowing against the narratives of secularism. Oliverio attempts to engage Taylor via Smith in order to indicate potential opportunities for fruitful engagement with the wider trends of secularism at play and to point toward forms of discourse which align with the Pentecostal understanding of the correlation of both immanence and transcendence in explaining reality.

The trend toward a business model in education was noted in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* by Jack Stripling concerning the impact of Liberty University on the successful development of a business model for higher education.[1] This article was in turn taken up at the Society for Pentecostal Studies annual meeting in Lakeland, FL during a luncheon of the Practical Theology interest group with a panel focusing on trends in higher education. The business model used by Liberty University offers affordable distance education that is streamlined for the student. Their particular business model has led them to be ranked the second largest online institution (only after Phoenix University). It seems that distance education is not an option in today's educational marketplace. The only question is how large of a share will any given institution gain in their distance educational model? While many institutions are facing financial constraints which are dictating down-sizing, consolidation or even potential closure, Liberty continues to gain ground and to find itself in stronger financial standing due in part to its business model for education. While there may be reason to bemoan a corporatization of higher education via online delivery (with such factors as the perceived loss of personal mentoring and a potential shift toward education as strictly information), there are reasons to celebrate the opportunities of internet based delivery of education as well as potentially better financial models for operating our institutions. Though no article in this issue discusses business models or online education, it is hoped that future issues might raise such important questions for research and reflection in order to better equip Pentecostal educators globally to respond to the needs of carrying out the task given to us.

[1] Jack Stripling, "How Liberty U. became an unexpected model for the future of higher education," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Feb. 23, 2015): 1-12, http://chronicle.com/article/How-Liberty-U-Became-an/190247/

Breaking Out of the Immanent Frame: A Review Essay of James K. A. Smith's *How (Not) to be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor*[1]

L. William Oliverio, Jr. [2]

Abstract: James K.A. Smith's *How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* provides a constructive interpretation of one of the most important books on religion so far this century - Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*. Taylor's philosophical account of the emergence of Western secularism provides an alternative account to the "subtraction theories" which narrate that emergence as a series of subtracting unnecessary beliefs about reality until only a genuine material reality is left. Smith's *How (Not) to Be Secular* interprets both Taylor's counternarrative and the secularization theories themselves. Thus, Taylor and Smith are aligned in the narrative quest to break out of "the immanent frame" through which secular modernities construe life. This essay evaluates Taylor and Smith's alternative narratives to the "subtraction theories" and their importance for contemporary Christians, especially Christian educators.

Keywords: secular, Charles Taylor, James K.A. Smith, modernity

In the title essay of his collection of popular writings entitled *The Devil Reads Derrida* (2009), Jamie Smith articulates a trickle-down theory of cultural formation. That essay compared the influence of the French deconstructionist to a theory of cultural influence exemplified in a tense scene in the 2006 film *The Devil Wears Prada*.[3]

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[1] Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014. The book recently garnered *Christianity Today's* 2015 Book Award in its "Christianity and Culture" category.

[2] I would like to thank Jonathan Porter and Rose Hexum for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this essay.

[3] Smith, "The Devil Reads Derrida: Fashion, French Philosophy, and Postmodernism" in *The Devil Reads Derrida: and Other Essays on the University, the Church, Politics, and the Arts* (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2009), 134-136.

In that scene, Miranda (played by Meryl Streep), the tyrannical editor of a fashion magazine (based off of *Vogue*'s Anna Wintour), deconstructs her naïve young assistant, Andy (Anne Hathaway), for referring to fashion as "this stuff." Miranda takes the moment to educate Andy on the formative role of the fashion industry. She informs Andy that despite her naiveté the "people in this room" have made the very fashion that Andy is herself wearing. Andy's "lumpy blue sweater," Miranda chides, is cerulean, "not just blue or turquoise or lapis." Cerulean was the fashion a few years back, she lectures, because of the proclivities and tastes of people in the fashion industry, even if it was later found in the cheap imitation Andy had picked out of some clearance bin at some "tragic Casual Corner." Smugly, Miranda dresses Andy down for being "blithely unaware" – so that "it's sort of comical how you think that you've made a choice that exempts you from the fashion industry when in fact you're wearing a sweater that was selected for you by the people in this room, from a pile of 'stuff.'"[4]

This episode epitomizes a guiding principle for Smith's work as a Christian philosopher and theologian. His work is predicated on the conviction that "philosophical currents…have an impact on the shape of cultural practices."[5] Thus his writings have bridged the depths of the existential and linguistic queries of Continental philosophy in order to span them across to educated and not just academic audiences in a series of texts that have included *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?: Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church*[6] and the first two installments of his planned Cultural Liturgies trilogy – *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* and *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*.[7] In these texts, part of Smith's method is to leave with the gold of Egypt (secular philosophy) to enrich Christian communities (Exodus 12:35-36).

Such a trickle-down theory of cultural formation and understanding presents an answer to the perlocutionary agenda of this short and dense book on a monumental work, Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*.[8] This time, though, Smith draws from an influential Christian philosopher. However, one may consider *A Secular Age* the most important book written on

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[4] *The Devil Wears Prada*, directed by David Frankel (2006; Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox), film, an adaptation of Lauren Weisberger's book, *The Devil Wears Prada* (New York: Broadway Books, 2003).

[5] Smith, "The Devil Reads Derrida," 136.

[6] Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2006.

[7] Respectively, *Cultural Liturgies* (vol. 1; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009) and *Cultural Liturgies* (vol. 2; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013).

[8] Cambridge, MA and London, UK: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007.

religion in the West so far this century. In it, Taylor recounts that our contemporary secular age is here because of a trickle-down of ideas, practices and sensibilities, and Smith provides here a summation and retelling that is itself a trickle-down of Taylor's deconstruction of the standard "subtraction stories" for an alternative genealogy of the secular.

For the Pentecostal educator, Smith's work ought to receive special note since he came from us. Converted as a teenager at a Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada congregation in Ontario, Smith has gone on to make his mark in the Christian academy and in wider scholarly circles – and he has done so as an unashamedly Christian philosopher. Smith has made a turn towards the Reformed tradition, teaching philosophy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Yet deep Pentecostal impulses remain in his work.[9] His 2010 *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* was a foray into the implications of Pentecostal spirituality for Christian philosophy. He was the key figure in founding the Philosophy Interest Group of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (circa 2000) and was its first Interest Group Leader. Most importantly, Smith's continued articulation of the role of the whole person for Christian theological and philosophical understanding displays his charismatic-Pentecostal roots which continue to produce regular intellectual fruit. Smith has been about legitimizing an account of the human that serves as a corrective to modern rationalism.

But why would a leading Christian philosopher write an entire book on a book? Because the trickle down to Christian communities in this case is that important as one could well argue that *A Secular Age* (2007) is that important. A Secular Age could be the most significant book written so far this century on religion in Western culture.[10]

Throughout his career, Taylor has functioned as a subtle and non-defensive apologist for religion in general, and for even what may be

[9] Do we have higher educational institutions in the Pentecostal tradition capable of allowing a Christian philosopher of this caliber to flourish?

[10] Taylor received the Templeton Prize in 2007, largely for his work on *A Secular Age*. The 776 page (before endnotes and indexes) tome from the Canadian Catholic philosopher was published by Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, an imprint known for publishing modern scholarly classics, as the culmination of one of the most important philosophical careers in recent decades. See, also, the collection of essays from prominent scholars addressing *A Secular Age*, edited by Michael Warner, Jonathan VanAntwerpen, and Craig Calhoun, *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

called deep Christian philosophical intuitions about reality.[11] He has provided a sustained defense of the plausibility structures and importance of religious understanding, frequently in an indirect manner. Taylor's philosophical writings have most often come in the form of winding stories about the emergence of sets of ideas. These philosophical narratives, rarely easy reads, are still winsome and illuminating. Truth claims, for Taylor, find adequacy as our best accounts of human experience in the worlds which we inhabit.[12]

Frankly, in my view, every contemporary Western Christian theologian, especially every philosophical theologian or Christian philosopher, should read both Taylor's *Sources of the Self* and *A Secular Age* as essential texts to understanding the contemporary setting for theological work. Pressures on scholars and educators, however, are often quite limiting. Therefore, Smith's *How (Not) to Be Secular* provides a guide and summation of Taylor's important work for those who, may not have the opportunity to attend to the primary text. It could also serve as a supplement or dialogue partner for those who wrestle with Taylor's account of the secular condition of the contemporary West.

Smith does not approach Taylor and *A Secular Age* as some neutral arbiter. As a creative and capable writer, he is strategic in his summarization. It is clear that Smith has been influenced by Taylor's work and is in general sympathy with his agenda. In Smith's reading of Taylor, one can sense care for the latter's ideas and their attending contexts. In fact, Smith's careful attention to detail and subtext in Taylor's agenda may lead the reader to feel as if she is in a seminar on Taylor's book led by the author, she would be on to something. This due to the fact that the text is, in part, a result of a spring 2011 senior level undergraduate philosophy seminar Smith held on *A Secular Age*.[13] Nevertheless, Smith on Taylor is of course more than exposition. Smith's illustrations from contemporary literature and his lengthy footnotes serve as professorial riffs that are quite revealing of Smith's own take on Taylor.[14]

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[11] That Taylor is a philosophical realist, and what kind of realist, will be further articulated in his new and briefer book, with Herbert Dreyfus, *Retrieving Realism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, forthcoming in 2015).

[12] The title of his other monumental work, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Harvard University Press, 1992), is particularly telling of his overall philosophical agenda and its emphasis on philosophical anthropology.

[13] Smith, *How (Nor) to Be Secular*, xii.

[14] The four figures used to illustrate Taylor's account of the secular, like the first on p. 63 of *How (Not) to Be Secular* which shows how the forces of transcendence-immanence and enchantment-disenchantment played on the "buffered self" to create the "nova effect" of the fragmentation of visions of reality in modernity, function as the chalkboard sketches in the seminar he offers readers. The glossary of Taylor's

On another level, Smith's Augustinianism might be understood as the driving force behind his interest in Taylor. *How (Not) to Be Secular* might be understood as a late modern embodiment of Augustine's famous maxim, *credo ut intelligam*, "I believe in order to understand," over and against the canons of modern rationalist epistemologies. Further, Smith's Augustinian emphasis on how our bodies and affections, desires and love, play critical roles in our theological and philosophical understanding finds consonance with Taylor's more romantic (as in Taylor's affinity for 18th and 19th century German Romantics like Herder and Humboldt) and Hegelian (Taylor started out as a Hegel scholar) tendencies.

Smith and Taylor are in general agreement in their stance against Enlightenment rationalism. For instance, in a significant essay from Taylor entitled "Overcoming Epistemology," he takes the canons of modern foundationalist epistemology to task for claiming to hold the proper method of ascertaining true knowledge but not owning up to their deeply held assumptions – spiritual, anthropological, ontological and moral – which betray their supposedly neutral, scientific, mechanistic and mathematical methodology. Augustine, Taylor and Smith are all thus aligned against this sort of epistemic stance to the way the human understands. And this rationalist stance has undergirded the common sense that modern Western people so often have that transcendence is to be ruled out of the domain of genuine knowledge, relegated to the domain of opinion and speculation, and disregarded as an epistemic relic of a bygone age.

In the Preface, Smith tells the reader that he is writing this book for a variety of people – religious and non-religious, though with a certain tending toward those in Christian work amidst the kind of secularism he and Taylor will describe – who need an alternative to the stories about religion and secularity told by those on each side who "retreat to homogenous zones of shared plausibility structures".[15] Rather, as he stresses in the Introduction, "Our Cross-Pressured Present: Inhabiting a Secular Age", we live in an age where *both* belief *and* unbelief are "haunted" by lingering doubts so that "the haunting is mutual."[16] We live in an age where we are "cross pressured" as we face the "simultaneous pressure of various spiritual options" – transcendent and immanent –

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terminology (pp. 140-143), with the terms bolded in the body of the text, saves the reader a task that usually exacts patience in reading Taylor – gradually understanding what he seems to be expressing (and not just referring to or designating) in his use of certain terms. The way words work is important to Taylor, and Smith.

[15] Ibid., xi.

[16] Ibid., 10.

producing the "nova effect" of an explosion of multitudinous options for belief and meaning. So living in this secular age is living in a pluralistic age, though one with some common underlying assumptions.

Taylor's account of the secular takes care to distinguish types of the secular to avoid the conflation of ideas, and resulting equivocations. He does not merely describe the non-religious alongside religious ways of life ("Secularity 1") or public and political secularism that works alongside decreasing religious belief and practice ("Secularity 2"), but he especially focuses on the underlying plausibility structures of belief where religious belief or belief in God has become contestable and often enough assumed to be untrue ("Secularity 3").[17]

These plausibility structures are deep in those tacit assumptions which Taylor refers to as our "unthought." In what has already become a well cited line from *A Secular Age*, Smith quotes Taylor's guiding question for his next 700 plus pages: "Why was it virtually impossible not to believe in God in, say, 1500 in our Western society, while in 2000 many of us find this not only easy, but even inescapable?"[18] Taylor will have to tell a story to unravel this, explaining *how* this happened, and he will do so against the "subtraction stories" which held that "religion and belief withered with scientific exorcism of superstition".[19] An alternative story is needed.

This story is important – for Christian educators, theologians, philosophers and pastors, as well as engineers, teachers, students, homemakers, plumbers, retail store clerks, retirees, and others.

Smith tells Taylor's story of the becoming of our secular age by structuring the five chapters of his book in correlation with the five parts of Taylor's much larger work (139 pages on 776 pages in the bodies of these respective texts). Nevertheless, Smith echoes Taylor's agenda throughout. This is especially the case in their methodological agendas in the sense that both want to reorient the discussion about religion and secularism in the current age, redrawing the contours of the "existential map of our present" when it comes to religion and secularity.[20]

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[17] See Ibid., 20-23, for his explanation of "Taylor's taxonomy of the secular." See Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 1-4.

[18] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 25.

[19] Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 24.

[20] Ibid., 3.

The idea of philosophy as map making draws on one of Smith's favorite metaphors for what he is doing in his writing – cartography.[21] His appreciation for Taylor's skill in this is clear: "It is Taylor's complexity, nuance, and refusal of simplistic reductionisms that make him a reliable cartographer who provides genuine orientation in our secular age. *A Secular Age* is the map of globalized Gotham, a philosophical ethnography of the present".[22]

Smith begins his narration with a critical concept for Taylor – the "immanent frame."[23] This is the social space that is taken as normal in much of Western (or North Atlantic, as Taylor sometimes likes to put it) culture. It frames human life within a purely "natural" framework of immanent causation and precludes "supernatural" reasons as legitimate for public discourse. If you want to speculate on your own time and in the privacy of your own home or house of worship, so be it – that is your right. But the normal social imagination (the "social imaginary"[24] is another important "Taylorism") frames your life within this immanence. Transcendence is a ghost of the past or an unwarranted set of beliefs still defended by those who just cannot let go. According to these "subtraction stories," secularization has been in a long but triumphant journey (at least eventually, with the inevitable ups and downs) of lopping off these past superstitions, "subtracting" until we are left with only genuine reality.

It is just these "subtraction stories" that Taylor's *A Secular Age* contests. Yet it is far from a fundamentalist reaction or the kind of apologetics that accepts the terms of the debate set by modern rationalism. Taylor (and Smith) contest the "subtraction stories" by leveling the playing field. Repeatedly they push the point, that the "subtraction stories" *are* constructive accounts of reality, developed with contingent and historical ideas, which posing as the "true story" of reality. These stories pretend at incontestability. Using political terminology, Taylor speaks of this

[21] Smith also thinks of what Taylor is doing as archeology that works in concert with cartography of the present, "giving us both the lay of the land and a peek at the strata beneath our feet," ibid., 18. Taylor's work is more archeology than cartography while Smith's is proportionately more cartographical.

[22] Ibid., 3.

[23] The importance of Taylor's reframing the terms of the discussion of religion and secularism can be seen in the title of the official blog of the Social Science Research Council of Canada's Program for Religion in the Public Sphere. They began and entitled it "The Immanent Frame" just months after the original publication of *A Secular Age* in 2007. See http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/about/.

[24] See Taylor's *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

approach as "spin" rather than a contestable account of reality, or a "take."[25]

This is how Smith summarizes Taylor on this matter (emphases in italics, here and throughout this essay, are those of the original author):

Taylor is most interested in considering (and contesting) the "spin of closure which is hegemonic in the Academy" (p. 549 [of *A Secular Age*]). This is the spin that is dominant amongst intellectuals and elites who would actually see the "open" take on the immanent frame *as* "spin" and see their own 'closed' take as *just the way things are*. For these secular "fundamentalists," we might say, to construe the immanent frame as closed is to just see it as it *really* is, whereas construing it as "open" is a mode of wishful thinking. In effect they say: we "closed" framers are just facing up to the facts of the case; its "open" framers who are *interpreting* the world *as if* it would be open. The immanent frame is *really* closed even if some persist in *construing* it as open (p. 550 [of *A Secular Age*]). For those adherents of the closed reading, *it's not a "reading."*[26]

In an important sense *A Secular Age* is about undermining the "spin" that the immanent frame is all there is and all there ever will be. Rather, Taylor (and Smith) contend, it is a "take" on what is – itself an ontology.

Ontology, or a philosophical account of what is there, is critical to Taylor's work, even though his philosophical work has sought to avoid strong metaphysical claims about the nature of reality. Smith's approach to this matter is similar. Neither is attempting to construct a great metaphysics nor even a robust ontology, though ontic claims are made and implied throughout the writings of both men. Each often argues, with various degrees of subtlety that Christian intuitions about reality are at least philosophically legitimate, perhaps even compelling.

Both also claim that our "secular age" is one that has been "fragilized." That is, differences in faith commitments in our day – your next door neighbor may hold a very different take on reality than you – tempt not only believers to doubt their faith, but also atheists to doubt their atheistic faith. All shades of belief experience similar questioning given common contemporary plausibility structures.

It is not that this is the state of belief for the entirety of Western culture. Taylor and Smith know it is more complicated than this, that there are

[25] Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 93-97.
[26] Ibid., 95.

zones of largely shared plausibility structures (from a certain kind of Christian college campus to the left-leaning or "progressive" part of town to the Bible Belts), but these multiple and conflicting zones is part of what Taylor, in fact, means by Secular 3. You cannot take belief in God for granted these days because an "exclusive humanism" (that is, a worldview or imaginary that excludes transcendent realities and goals) is plausible today given reigning contemporary plausibility structures. Yet the Catholic Taylor and the Pentecostal become Reformed Smith are both believers in the midst of this secular age.

Taylor's story about the becoming of this age is also one that reveals his defense of particular things against the Enlightenment quest for universals. As Smith puts it, this "reflects Taylor's Hegelian side – a deep appreciation for the contingencies of history. So we can't tell a neat-and-tidy story of deduction from abstract principles."[27] Things could have turned out differently, but the way they did tells us a lot of truth about reality.

Rather than telling the story of secularization as that of lopping superstitions off of a theistic worldview, Taylor accounts for the artifacts of our ideological and cultural history with an archeology that describes the construction of an exclusive humanism from at least initially medieval Christian roots. Those roots begin with the move for "Reform." Part 1 of *A Secular Age* (the first five chapters and 200 pages itself) is thus entitled "The Work of Reform."

Taylor contends that Reform, the movement within high and late medieval Christendom to move from a Christian society where there were various options as to degrees of religious commitment to one where everyone was meant to be a deeply and totally committed Christian, was a driving force behind the rise of secularism. This first part, and sometimes misunderstood, aspect of Taylor's narrative is a detailed account that deals with more facets of the movement of Reform than can be adequately recalled here. However, his thesis is that reform was the engine that, when met with some shifts in intellectual ideas, allowed for the constructions of what will become "exclusive humanism." Reform pushed people and created intolerance for social and individual lapses in the quest for betterment. Smith explains the results succinctly: "If people aren't meeting the bar, you can either focus on helping people reach higher or you can lower the bar. This is why Reform unleashes both Puritanism and the '60s."[28] On the other hand, Reform affirms what Taylor refers to as

[27] Ibid., 25.
[28] Ibid., 37.

"ordinary life," where grace and fulfillment might be found in the normal person's vocational and domestic life, not just in the life of the heroic or religiously dedicated person.

When this movement for Reform combined with that set of intellectual movements, and especially nominalism,[29] which undermined the "enchanted" worldview of medieval Christendom, an important shift occurred. In this "enchanted" ontology, things everywhere functioned semiotically to point to higher truths, exemplified in the Western Platonic-Aristotelian heritage. Beginning with this shift towards disenchantment, meaning was no longer seen as inherent in things but in individuals who are agents that generate knowledge.

This led to profound religious and communal consequences. Smith puts it this way: "Once individuals become the locus of meaning, the social atomism that results means that disbelief no longer has social consequences. 'We' are not a seamless cloth, a tight-knit social body; instead, 'we' are just a collection of individuals – like individual molecules in a social 'gas.'"[30] Religiously, this played out in the disenchantment that was part of the Protestant Reformation – or, as Smith puts this, "the Reformers' rejection of sacramentalism is the beginning of naturalism, or it at least opens the door to its possibility. It is also the beginning of a certain evacuation of the sacred as a *presence* in the world."[31] Sometimes Taylor is misunderstood as being anti-Protestant. Rather, he is against the "excarnation" that, in part, was facilitated by the Protestant Reformation, though funded by nominalism.

The second part of *A Secular Age* ("The Turning Point," two chapters and 80 pages) is often taken by many narrators of secularism as the starting point. The anthropocentrism of the Age of Enlightenment and the emergence of deism are standard in other accounts of secularity as the beginnings of modern secularism. But Taylor emphasizes the ideological

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[29] See Taylor's subtle but important use of Louis Dupre's *Passage to Modernity* on pp. 94 and 144 of *A Secular Age*. For Smith on this, see *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 40-46.

[30] Ibid., 31.

[31] Ibid., 39. Taylor's account of disenchantment is important for understanding the way his account of secularism differs from the "subtraction accounts." For Taylor, disenchantment starts especially with medieval Latin Christendom and Reformation era criticisms of magic. The criticisms lead to a different sense of what is there before a person, and a more flattened and less full ontology. Taylor understands Romanticism as the beginning of a reaction against such a flattening. For a summary of Taylor's account, see David McPherson and Charles Taylor, "Re-Enchanting the World: An Interview with Charles Taylor," *Faith and Philosophy* 24:2 (2012): 275-294.

construction in the process of immanentization that took place and thus its prehistory in medieval Christendom.

This early modern immanentization, however, occurs through four "eclipses."[32] The first is the most important one – the eclipse of a transcendent purpose in favor of immanent ends. The importance of a *telos* beyond "human flourishing" is made optional. Instead, a new providential order is introduced, but with immanent ends. These are human flourishing and mutual benefit, especially economic, as Adam Smith, John Locke and Hugo Grotius introduced a providential understanding of God's ordering of the world.[33] The eclipses of grace (in favor of work), mystery (in favor of perspicuity), and transformation (in favor of therapy) largely result from the first eclipse. It is not a large step, then, to lop off the providential order, or at least make it optional.

Taylor articulates the movement towards an ethics based on an impersonal order, the abstraction of the Christian faith, along with the movement away from embodiment and sacramentality of faith in early modern religion as "excarnation." Religion finds its place in supporting the basic assumptions of society as "civil religion" while society has taken the place of ordering the ends of life in, as Smith puts it, "a civilizational or cultural Pelagianism: the confidence that *we* make *this* world meaningful."[34]

That we make this world meaningful rather than discover meaning in it resulted in a revolution in how we understand our own believing. So now we live in "an age in which the plausibility structures have changed, the conditions of belief have shifted, and theistic belief is not only displaced from being the default, it is positively *contested*. We're not in Christendom anymore."[35] But this does not mean Taylor, or Smith's, storytelling is done.

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[32] Smith, 48-50.

[33] Taylor speaks of this as the "neo-Durkheimian" dispensation, the hinge between the "paleo-Durkheimian" and "post-Durkheimian" dispensations. Named after the sociologist Emile Durkheim who marked the connections between conceptions of divinity and social orders, in *A Secular Age* and other works Taylor marks the movement from the conception of the divine ordering and justifying societal structures altogether (paleo-) to providentially establishing an impersonal order for the benefit of humanity (neo-) to the secularized disjunction between social order and transcendent purpose (post-Durkheimian). See also, Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[34] Smith, How (Not) to Be Secular, 55.

[35] Ibid., 60.

The "nova effect"—also the title of Part 3 for Taylor—and subsequent "supernova" are metaphorical explanations for what happens when the modern self is pressured by alternately enchanted and disenchanted views of the world, and an immanent framework met by a lingering and haunting sense of transcendence. The "nova" is the buffet of beliefs that emerged in the modern world, exemplified by the traditional American mantra: "go to the house of worship of your choice". This is followed by the "supernova," a late-modern explosion of further options for meaning—the blur of multiple visions beyond the varied traditional local options. For example, today in the Upper Midwest of the United States, the options are no longer nominal or devout Lutheran, Catholic, Protestant or pietist; or even later developing options like contemporary Evangelical, modern Pentecostal, late modern educated secularist or the largely areligious working and drinking man; but a secondary explosion from these and other options to new constellations of variants. The new constellations are our neighbors today, resulting from the spiritual "supernova" we currently inhabit.

Taylor is telling his story, and Smith his exposition of it, in order to undermine the inevitability of the "closed world structures" of the "immanent frame." This story is being told to show how the "unthought" of the "immanent frame" is a "take" and not the very truth it purports to be. Taylor and Smith are working a long argument against the "subtraction theories" of secularization, arguing through demonstration that those theories are "begging the question" rather than simply telling us the adult truth about the way reality is. They are politely flipping the table. This is the adult story of secularism told at the adult table, and Dawkins and his ilk (as well as some of the simplistic stories told by religious fundamentalists) are sitting at the kids' table.

Taylor's own work, as I claimed earlier, is subtly apologetic. In *A Secular Age*, and elsewhere, Taylor is challenging his readers to explain the ontology implicit in human agency, our ethics and aesthetic responses. Materialism does not, he strongly implies, account for the "fullness" of reality as we experience it. The tensions involved in modern religious life occur, then, in an "expressive individualist" context where the dilemmas of modern meaning are worked out in a variety of settings within this more general context. Taylor understands three fundamental stances in the typical Western context – those who continue to acknowledge transcendence, exclusive humanists who are nevertheless still committed to the good of humanity, and what he generalizes as neo-Nietzschean anti-humanists.

Though he tells a much more complicated story about this (in the nearly 500 pages of Parts 4 and 5), in the end Taylor sees the religious account of reality as a transcendent and transformative experience essential to the kind of religious life that Christians experience and testify. Smith, for his part, emphasizes this transformationist point to his readers. Smith seems especially concerned that contemporary Evangelicals are tempted to forsake transcendent meaning and the transformationist understanding that is essential to Christian faith, because there is a desire to be relevant to current immanent concerns like the goodness of creation, social justice, and the short attention spans in late modern consumerist culture.[36] Smith is no reactionary, anti-worldly conservative here. He presses this point because he believes in the axis of the incarnation where transcendence embeds itself in immanence, which is at the essence of Christian faith.[37]

Nevertheless, there are things you will be unable to find in Smith's helpful reading of Taylor. Despite the quality of Smith's narration, this text cannot replace Taylor's great book. It will not provide the reader with the same depth of understanding as Taylor's long and winding, yet winsome philosophical storytelling. A key instance would be Taylor's erudite philosophical reading of Western secularism in Part IV, Chapters 12-14 ("The Age of Mobilization," "The Age of Authenticity," "Religion Today"). Many will find themselves, their parents and grandparents in these chapters, along with explanations of those of other ideological approaches to modern life, and Smith's brief summations cannot do justice to a full reading of *A Secular Age*.

And despite the high quality of his text, Smith has largely missed or underemphasized a few key themes. One is Taylor's dialogue with theorists of secularization. The influence of a small cadre of Christian sociologists on Taylor is skimmed over by Smith, even though the influence of the work of David Martin and his ilk on Taylor's account of secularism looms large. Taylor might even be seen as offering a thicker account of Martin's influential sociological work.[38] Taylor's very thick account resources Martin,[39] though we might turn the table and let Martin help us understand what Taylor and Smith are doing.

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[36] See ibid., 49, 138-139 fn10.

[37] See Smith's *Speech and Theology: Language and the Logic of Incarnation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

[38] See Martin's *A General Theory of Secularization* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1978) and *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005). For his work on Pentecostalism, see his *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2002) and his earlier *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1990).

[39] Martin appears 10 times in the index of *A Secular Age*, 864, though the weight of Martin's ideas outstrips what can be counted.

In his *A General Theory of Secularization*, Martin included an assessment of the clerical response to the basic stages of the secularization of societies at large (ideas which encompass Taylor's Secular 1-3).[40] While Taylor is no cleric, his explicit Catholicism (some of his favored iterations of faith include that in the "God of Abraham" and Christian life in the mode of Francis of Assisi) closely resembles two modes of clerical responses which Martin describes as characteristic of the "professional guardians" of religion.

In a deeper phase of secularization, where religion has not only lost its dominance but even its unity as a robust minority position, Martin speaks of "voluntary associations of Christians, segmented and partial in their influence and often concentrating at particular status levels."[41] In this context, Martin's sociological work found several typical responses from the "professional guardians." Two of these may be characterized as responses which translate and transpose meaning. The first emphasizes going out from the religious community to the secular world, using evangelism and apologetics to translate and transpose religious meaning into secular terms. The other is translating and transposing secular terms back into the religious vernacular, showing the authenticity of the religious, over and against the secular. Among those who have tended to take this second approach, Martin sees "the charismatic invocation of the Spirit" as an exemplar. Pentecostals are used to this mode.

Taylor, however, goes both ways with subtlety. Some see his back and forth movement as a betrayal of a deeply Christian ontology, so that Taylor, in the guise of opening up space for religious, and more particularly Christian, faith, ends up as much an apologist for deeply secular convictions.[42] While Taylor's Christian critics may have a point that he does not display a fully adequate Christian ontology in his philosophy, this is a misunderstanding of Taylor's agenda. Rather, Taylor's agenda in *A Secular Age* and elsewhere is much better understood in the form of this back and forth movement. His philosophical work has gone out to the secular world to speak to it so that we might be understood on our own terms, but then also moves back in from the world with the gold from Egypt to rearticulate Christian faith. We might say the same for Smith, though he is a notch or two more explicit in his agenda than Taylor.

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[40] See "Crisis amongst the Professional Guardians of the Sacred," chapter 7 of Martin's *A General Theory of Secularization*, 278-305.

[41] Ibid., 279.

[42] See Matthew Rose's "Tayloring Christianity: Charles Taylor is a Theologian of the Secular Status Quo," *First Things* 248 (December 2014): 25-30.

Taylor's Christian critics are also right to sense in Taylor that he is, in fact, also an advocate for a version of Secular 1 – one where visions of the transcendent do have a place in the public and the political but are nevertheless not allowed to dominate. In this sense, Taylor is also a multiculturalist.[43] Taylor does see the space created between religious and governing visions as a positive achievement. I think we all might get Taylor's primary point here if we envision what our society might look like if the political visions of some of our fundamentalist friends materialized.[44] Thus, rather than approaching Taylor with a hermeneutic of suspicion, one that is not warranted on account of his virtuous philosophical and personal attributes, it is best to see the opening of the immanent frame as the central purpose of Taylor's philosophical agenda. That, and his genuine desire to give the best philosophical account he can concerning our secular age.

As a Christian philosopher, Taylor has achieved a great deal. Smith wants a wider audience, like Pentecostal educators, to understand the importance of the alternative narrative which Taylor offers us concerning secularism. Smith is also at pains to urge contemporary evangelicals to not cut off our emphases on transcendent goods for solely immanent ends, with the attendant Christian understanding of the goodness of creation and the embedding of the spiritual in the material. We are an incarnational not excarnational people.

Finally, for the Pentecostal educator, neither Taylor nor Smith will provide you with a deeply Pentecostal response to secularism (whether in form 3 – or 1 or 2). Their work, however, calls you to such. Smith is full of strong pointers along the away, like his summarization of Taylor's four eclipses of transcendence or his hint at an Augustinian analysis.[45] Rather, Taylor and Smith's work call for deep responses from communities like ours who

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[43] Taylor the multiculturalist is the end of Taylor that some Christian scholars tend to either criticize or shy away from. See his central contribution to Charles Taylor, with K. Anthony Appiah, Jürgen Habermas, Steven C. Rockefeller, Michael Walzer and Susan Wolf, ed. and intr. Amy Gutmann, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994). Taylor has his own Christian grounds for multiculturalism, but he is interested in finding common ground with others who have shared convictions on these political and cultural principles.

[44] Personally, I shudder. This space keeps even rival Christian visions from dominating one another, and forces us to dialogue and respect one another in a space created by common dialogue and the inability to dominate others – even if the waters of current political realities often wash over the bulwark of these ideals embedded in the structures of our contemporary democracies.

[45] See Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 69 fn13, for example.

sense a greater fullness than that of the "immanent frame" – and this ought to lead us to unpack the ontologies implicit in what we claim to have experienced. They have left this task to our communities.[46] The latent and shadowing influence of secularism over Pentecostalism in the West, and the question of its future relation to global Pentecostalism, should lead Pentecostal educators to pay attention to this issue and avoid the mistakes of which Smith and Taylor warn.

[46] Smith's *Thinking in Tongues* has offered some philosophical starting points for Pentecostals.

Discipleship Distinctions: A Comparison of Graduate Student Discipleship Plans in the United States with those in Central America

Lisa Long

Abstract: Discipleship plans and models in the United States seem to be quite similar with regard to issues, solutions, and programs. Often, educators and practitioners in the United States export our discipleship plans and models to other countries and cultures without regard for cultural distinctions. Is this a good idea? Are the differences so distinct that similar plans or models are rendered ineffective? In an attempt to answer these questions, this article compares discipleship plans created by graduate students in North America with those created by graduate students in Central America.

Keywords: Discipleship, Contextual Discipleship, Latin America, Christian Formation

Establishing Foundations

Introduction

Discipleship plans and models in the United States seem to be quite similar with regard to issues, solutions, and programs. Often, educators and practitioners in the United States export our discipleship plans and models to other countries and cultures without regard for cultural distinctions. Is this a good idea? Are the differences so distinct that similar plans or models are rendered ineffective? In an attempt to answer these questions, this paper will compare discipleship plans created by graduate students in North America with those created by graduate students in Central America. Evaluations are made based on coursework in a master's level course, Christian Spirituality and Ministry, offered in both the United States and Central America. The results have been analyzed for recurring terms, themes and issues in an attempt to find both similarities and differences.

Essential Concepts

Before one can accurately analyze cultural distinctions in discipleship, one must have a clear understanding of essential concepts. This paper begins with an examination of the terms "culture" and "context". It then moves toward an understanding of the importance of culture and context in educational theory and practice. The section concludes with the exploration of contextual issues relevant to this project, specifically with regard to contextual discipleship in Central America and within Pentecostalism.

Culture

Wilkerson describes culture as focusing on a group's "distinctive values and ways of viewing reality"[1] as opposed to a more anthropological view of culture as referencing artifacts, customs, clothing, etc.[2] Cresswell offers a more nuanced depiction of culture as inferred by words and actions observed by the researcher.[3] "It consists of looking for what people do (behaviors), what they say (language), and some tension between what they really do and what they ought to do as well as what they make and use (artifacts)."[4] This integrated understanding of the constant movement between beliefs and behaviors provides the purview of culture utilized in this paper, a perspective further expounded by Conde-Frazier, *et al*:

> Culture can be described as an integrated system of ideas, feelings, and values and their associated patterns of behavior and products (i.e., learned behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, values, and ideals) shared by a group of people (i.e., a particular society or population). Culture organizes and regulates what the group thinks, feels, and does. Human social life involves ceaseless interactions between beliefs and behavior. In this continuous and complex process of dialogical interaction, not only do beliefs guide behavior, but the reverse is also true, especially in the long

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[1] Barbara Wilkerson, "Introduction," *Multicultural Religious Education* ed. Barbara Wilkerson (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1997), 3.

[2] It should be noted that the anthropological view of culture is primary in the literature and is based upon E.B. Tylor's 1870 definition of culture. See Pamela Erwin, *A Critical Approach to Youth Culture: Its Influence and Implications for Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 17.

[3] John Cresswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Traditions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 59.

[4] Cresswell, 59.

> run…. In short, human social life shapes culture and is profoundly shaped by culture.[5]

Rogoff moves the discussion further toward ideas of spiritual development or formation, stating that, "people develop as participants in cultural communities. Their development can be understood only in light of the cultural practices and circumstances of their communities…"[6] What Rogoff refers to as cultural communities is often called context.

Context

Context points to more specific circumstances or situations than broader term of culture. For example, within Latin American culture, there are numerous, more particular contexts, such as various countries, areas within a country, local communities, and individual families. As implied above, Rogoff sees the more specific contexts as powerful agents of development. Groome, noted for his views on the contextual nature of Christian formation, offers more insight, exploring both "the formative power of the social-cultural context," and "the community context most desirable for Christian formation."[7]

> We are formed to be who we are through interaction with our social and cultural context. In other words, self-identity is socially mediated and maintained. This claim is now considered a truism among contemporary sociologists, anthropologists, and psychologists.… Christian faith is the expression of a Christian self. But if one's self-identity is shaped in large part by one's social and cultural context, then the process of coming to Christian self-identity, and thus lived Christian faith, requires a Christian social context. In other words, to come to be and remain Christian requires a process of socialization in the midst of a Christian faith community.[8]

Recognizing the essential role of context illuminates the importance of the faith community in Christian formation. Miller defines a community as "a group of persons sharing common commitments, norms of behavior,

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[5] Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Elizabeth Kang, Steve Kang and Gary Parrott, *A Many Colored Kingdom: Multicultural Dynamics for Spiritual Formation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 18.

[6] Barbara Rogoff, *The Cultural Nature of Human Development* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3-4.

[7] Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing our Story and Vision* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1980), 107.

[8] Groome, 107-8.

symbolic culture, and living within a shared environment."[9] He further describes the faith community.

> Like every community, a community of faith is a group of interacting persons sharing a commitment to norms and symbols within a shared place. What distinguishes a community of faith is that its commitments, norms, and symbols are related to and affected by the widest horizon of meaning, the final center of value, its ultimate concern, and the sense of absolute dependence – by faith in God. A faith community is one in which the widest horizon of meaning is symbolized … the final center of value is acknowledged … and the story of God's will and providence is the subject of the community's symbolic culture. To some extent every community has a common story, a common ethos, and a common loyalty. In a faith community, the sense of the ultimate is at the center of these three.[10]

The research upon which this paper is based must be viewed through the lens of culture (Central American culture and North American culture). More significantly, however, it must be viewed through the multiple lenses of specific contexts. The students whose work constitutes the qualitative study are from seven Central American countries and from every region of the United States. They are from urban, suburban and rural areas, large cities and small towns. The importance of culture and context seemingly cannot be overlooked in the analysis of their discipleship programs. Or can it? This references the original questions asked in the introduction. Does it matter whether or not our discipleship plans, programs, and efforts are culturally and contextually sensitive? Educational theory and sound pedagogy seem to indicate that it matters a great deal.

Culture and Context in Educational Theory and Practice

There exists a plethora of books on the subjects of culturally relevant teaching and multicultural education issues, theory and practices. While there are some among the many that approach the topic from a discipleship or Christian education perspective[11] most are concerned with secular education. The academic discipline of Christian education finds much of its theory base in secular education, thereby establishing a standard of reliance upon experts outside the strict parameters of Christian education.

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[9] Donald E. Miller, *Story and Context: An Introduction to Christian Education* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 18.

[10] Miller, 20.

[11] See Bibliography – Section 2 for a partial list.

Gay eloquently articulates the importance of culturally sensitive education.

> The first premise is that culture is at the heart of all we do in the name of education, whether that is curriculum, instruction, administration, or performance assessment. As used here, *culture* refers to a dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, worldviews, and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives as well as the lives of others (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991). Even without our being consciously aware of it, culture determines how we think, believe, and behave, and these, in turn, affect how we teach and learn. As Pai, Adler and Shadiow (2006) explain, "There is no escaping the fact that education is a sociocultural process. Hence, a critical examination of the role of culture in human life is indispensable to the understanding and control of the education process.[12]

Culturally responsive pedagogy, Gay's preferred term of reference, syncs well with Christian education's reliance upon the word pedagogy, as should thoughts on what she means by the term. She lists the following descriptors (followed by summaries of her explanations).

- Culturally responsive pedagogy is validating. By using known frames of reference, experiences, and learning styles, the value of the particular context is recognized and those living and learning in the context recognize their own worth.
- Culturally responsive pedagogy is comprehensive. To understand the context of the learners, the teacher must become aware of contextual values and attitudes, in addition to knowledge or skills. As a result, teaching revolves around intellectual, social, emotional, and even political knowledge.
- Culturally responsive pedagogy is multidimensional. By removing the sole focus from the content (although content remains important), the culturally responsive teacher becomes more aware of the immediate learning context, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, class management and effective assessment.
- Culturally responsive pedagogy is empowering. Because students recognize that they (and their culture) are valued, they become empowered to achieve academic competency and self-confidence.

[12] Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice*, (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2010), 8-9.

- Culturally responsive pedagogy is transformative. Strengths and accomplishments of individual students are recognized and enhanced in the learning experience. As a result, individual students are able to view themselves as successful rather than as failures. Their attitudes and perceptions of self are transformed.
- Culturally responsive pedagogy is emancipatory. Quite simply, students are liberated from the requirements of having to learn in ways that do not fit their culture.[13]

The descriptions and benefits Gay describes easily translate to thoughts of discipleship. One could readily substitute "discipleship" for "culturally responsive pedagogy" and experts in the field of Christian formation would eagerly engage the ideas. Certainly, we would applaud the notion that discipleship is validating, comprehensive (or holistic), multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. Indeed, these are terms frequently used in discipleship literature. The issue at hand, however, is that in order for discipleship to be these things it must be culturally responsive. While there are many aspects of culture and context that are pertinent to this project, it seems particularly important to offer a preliminary understanding of Central American discipleship and Pentecostal discipleship.

Central American Discipleship

The terms Central America and Central American culture are preferable to the students who participated in this study. However, most of the literature uses Hispanic, Central American and Latin American interchangeably, with the latter being predominant. Therefore, when referencing literature that is specific, the specific term will be used, otherwise, the preferential term will be Central America(n). Lack of expertise and limited personal insight into Central or Latin American culture necessitates the consultation of trusted experts. The following relies heavily upon five such experts: Esperanza Ginoris, Orbelina Eguizabal, Octavio Javier Esqueda, Sergio Matviuk, and Miguel Alvarez.

Ginoris provides insight in Hispanic culture in a general sense. She notes that, although Hispanic culture is existent in several countries, it still exhibits distinct characteristics, due in large part to the "extended family concept," described as the perception that every person is regarded as a brother or sister, a concept which influences laws, regulations, communication, religious devotions, and even the understanding of time.[14] She explains that this "tribal concept" is considered a gift and ensures that

[13] Gay, 31-34.

[14] Esperanza Ginoris, "Hispanic Religious Education," *Multicultural Religious Education,* ed. Barbara Wilkerson (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1997), 235.

everyone has a place and a role.[15] Hispanic culture is depicted as "intuitive, affective, personal, sensorial, present-time oriented, traditional, philosophical, and emotional – all with a strong sense of community."[16] She cites as helpful the knowledge that "Hispanics generally respond best to person- and family-centered activities such as blessings, celebrations, and similar means of making newcomers feel welcome in the group," and that the importance of "relatives and friends, an orientation toward personal relationships, and emphasis on cooperation" make Hispanics more likely to participate in discipleship activities if they have a personal relationship with someone in the group.[17] Religious experience, she contends, is "central to Hispanic identity. In general, Hispanics are a religious people…. Hispanic spirituality puts a strong emphasis on the humanity of Jesus, especially his suffering, his passion, and his death. It is a notably devotional spirituality; holy places and practices are very important."[18] Regarding contextual pedagogy, Ginoris delineates three areas of need: 1) Pedagogy that utilizes the strong sense of community to strengthen the experience of faith; 2) Pedagogy that places the doctrine of salvation at its center; 3) Pedagogy that recognizes and uses the teachable moments embedded in everyday life and culture.[19]

Eguizabal's insight is more particularly relevant to this project in that she offers an overview of the educational ministry of the Church (most specifically evangelical churches) in Latin America. While not within the scope of this paper, she provides an excellent overview of the history of Christianity in Latin America. This overview concludes with the following:

> Statistics about Christians in Latin America vary from country to country and because of a tendency to inflate percentages, one needs to be cautious about drawing conclusions. However, there is ample evidence that the evangelical church continues to experience massive growth. This is especially true among Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches. It is said that one of five people in Latin America is a Christian. New congregations often appear and begin growing in size in terms of months. This growth is happening from the most remote villages and rural areas to the urban areas. This growth can be attributed

[15] Ginoris, 236.
[16] Ginoris, 240.
[17] Ginoris, 237.
[18] Ginoris, 243.
[19] Ginoris, 245.

> to the Latin American search for better ways to practice their faith.[20]

Common forms of Christian education or discipleship offered in Latin America include Sunday school, what Eguizabal describes as the main form of Christian education, groups for youth and women, with limited numbers of groups for men, cell groups designed to meet in homes and attract non-believers, discipleship programs for new converts, leadership training, and child-focused events such as vacation Bible school.[21] There are definite needs and challenges in Latin American educational ministries. A primary issue is teachers who lack educational training (presumably a lack of training in scripture and theology, although Eguizabal doesn't clearly state this).[22] Other areas of need include contextualized educational philosophy, contextualized curriculum, and leadership development.[23]

Esqueda, Matviuk and Alvarez each focus on an aspect of Pentecostalism in Latin America. Their insight is especially beneficial in that all the Central American students adhere to Pentecostal doctrine and practice. Alvarez offers general insight into the Pentecostal movement in Latin America. He describes the context as follows:

> In recent years, Latin American Pentecostals have lived in a region in crisis – a continent where political, economic, cultural, social and spiritual factors conspired to create instability, uncontrolled change, violence and chaos. But they have also been participants in a scenario of God's providence; with Pentecostals on the move, evangelizing and establishing new churches mostly in remote and marginalized areas. They have been committed in their own hermeneutics, to obedience to the great commission of Jesus Christ.[24]

He denotes ten characteristics of Latin American Pentecostals, characteristics that are beneficial in the analysis of Central American students' discipleship plans. These characteristics are:

1. A background of Christian knowledge already acquired in the Roman Catholic tradition

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[20] Orbelina Eguizabal, "Perspectives on the Educational Ministry of the Christian Church in Latin America," *Christian Education Journal* 3:10-S (2013): 22-3.

[21] Eguizabal, 24-25.

[22] Eguizabal, 24.

[23] Eguizabal, 26.

[24] Miguel Alvarez, "The South and the Latin American Paradigm of the Pentecostal Movement," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5:1 (2002): 139.

2. A worldview that accepts the supernatural and is not overrationalized
3. Disenchantment with the Roman Catholic Church and search for other alternatives
4. Expression of religious liberty in a religious space not used to pluralism
5. Poverty and insecurity about the future which lead to a search for ultimate answers
6. The use of mass media to communicate the Gospel
7. A church structure providing lay participation at all levels
8. Mobilization of all believers in obedience to Christ
9. Faith in God's power to perform miracles and in the gifts of the Spirit
10. Contextualizing of the Gospel and Church community[25]

The more complete explanation provided for the tenth characteristic is particularly important in developing an understanding of Latin American Pentecostalism and is included in its entirety.

> The baptism in the Holy Spirit fills the believer with the love of God for lost humanity, and makes her or him able to leave home, friends and all to share the gospel with his immediate community. When the believer receives the Pentecostal power she or he is enabled to carry the gospel to the hungry, the poor, the needy and the lost. This thrust emerges as a natural consequence of the Pentecostal experience and the message is quit [sic] straightforward, "solo Cristo salva." However, along with their strengths, Latin American Pentecostals have observed their own weaknesses. There are notable shortcomings, some of which most of them acknowledge. The lack of well-trained leadership is noticeable. They also bear the problem of numerical growth without the proper biblical teaching and discipleship. In some areas they also tend to center too much power in authoritarian leaders. Therefore, an artificial spirituality may develop, particularly in the charismatic circles. In addition, their liturgy, if there is one, becomes redundant, and there is also a tendency to develop a spirit of legalism in the Christian life.[26]

Esqueda examines the growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America for the purpose of assessing its impact on Latin American Christian education. He contends that Pentecostalism has become an influential force in Latin America and that "Christian educators in this region of the world,

[25] Alvarez, 141-145.
[26] Alvarez, 144-145.

regardless of their denominational affiliation, need to consider the importance of key Pentecostal values as they continue their labor of helping believers mature in the faith."[27] He continues, "Spitter (1998) argues that five implicit Pentecostal values direct their mission efforts and spirituality: 1) a strong emphasis on their personal religious experience; 2) a preference for oral communication; 3) spontaneity in their conduct and corporate worship; 4) otherworldliness or their strong belief in the spiritual and supernatural; and 5) a strong belief in biblical authority."[28]

As with Ginoris, Esqueda notes the importance of family in Latin American culture, specifically as it relates to Pentecostalism's emphasis and reliance on community (e.g. the faith community).

> Latin Americans are communal societies with a strong value for the family ("*la familia*")…. Therefore, the importance of the family among evangelicals in general and Pentecostals in particular, provides a foundation for stability and growth (Cook, 1990). All believers are encouraged to reach out to their family members as their first mission field. The local church also becomes a family for believers, and many find there the support they need because of broken family relations. The church is not only a place to worship and receive instruction, but is an important social network for encouragement and emotional support…. Small groups in Pentecostal churches go beyond the merely instructional focus and attempt to serve as an evangelistic tool to reach out to neighbors and friends.[29]

Additionally, Esqueda contends that indigenous leadership development is a key factor in the rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America.[30] This practice, based on the belief that the Spirit equips and empowers all believers, can be an enticing prospect for a people group who might not otherwise be viewed as leaders.

Matviuk also sees the belief in the availability of Spirit-given power for all believers, combined with the Latin American Pentecostal's commitment to the mission of the church, as vital to understanding the development of leaders (an aspect of discipleship) in Latin American contexts.[31] There is,

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[27] Octavio Javier Esqueda, "The Growth and Impact of Pentecostalism in Latin America," *Christian Education Journal* 3:10-S (2013): 32.

[28] Esqueda, 33.

[29] Esqueda, 35-36.

[30] Esqueda, 34.

[31] Sergio Matviuk, "Pentecostal Leadership Development and Church Growth in Latin America," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5:1 (2002): 158.

he asserts, a "particular style of leadership training and development" that has been deemed an "apprentices system."[32]

> This leadership development system allows new members to publicly testify about their faith immediately after their baptism. In this way the prospective leaders develop speech skills and gain the congregation's recognition. Those who demonstrate capability to lead are soon assigned to new tasks, such as the direction of the church's worship and participation in evangelism tasks, in which all members are supposed to participate. In this system of leadership development younger leaders have the opportunity of progressively performing more complex tasks by positively fulfilling growing responsibilities. The next step for prospective leaders is to take leadership responsibilities in the local church, such as teaching in a Sunday school class and preaching in the weekday services. Those members who show loyalty and commitment within the local church and demonstrate leadership skills soon are ready to assume the direction of home Bible studies. Meanwhile they receive some basic instruction from their pastors to help them in the exercise of their leadership. In this way new leadership is formed with a strong practical basis and some basic theoretical instruction. The result is men and women formed from inside the Pentecostal group and who represent in a singular way the social and economic context in which they serve. This means that Latin American Pentecostal leadership is fully contextual and deeply native, which are the requisites to offer a ministry at the popular level.[33]

In addition to the indigenous or apprentice system of leadership development, Matviuk notes that the common use of small groups, especially among people groups he depicts as having a "collectivist character" are an important factor of not only rapid church growth, but also of discipleship, in that they serve to develop identity and sense of community.[34] This collectivism could easily be equated to the understanding of the importance of family espoused by Ginoris and Esqueda.

The findings in this section have revealed several essential aspects of Central American culture, and, more specifically, Pentecostalism in

[32] Matviuk, 164.
[33] Matviuk, 164-165.
[34] Matviuk, 167.

Central American culture. While perhaps overly general, they may be summarized as follows:

- The importance of family and the concept of extended family
- The preference for personal relationship and personal contact
- A people who value religious experience
- A people who are not overly rational
- The belief in miracles and the gifts of the Spirit
- Commitment to the mission of the Church as the evangelization of the world (beginning with the family group)
- The common use and training of indigenous leadership

Pentecostal Discipleship

Pentecostalism, and to some extent, Pentecostal discipleship, has been addressed from within the Central American context. To better analyze the distinctions between Central American plans of discipleship and North American plans of discipleship, one must take a more general, and to some extent, a North American look at Pentecostal discipleship.

Pentecostals view knowledge as transrational,[35] not locked in reason and logic, but in a dialectical relationship with experience and Scripture. Johns and Johns liken this way of knowing to the Old Testament understanding of knowledge as *yada*, which they describe as a "dynamic, experiential, relational knowledge."[36] Such a way of knowing is a work of the Holy Spirit as depicted in the Paraclete passages of John's Gospel and, note Johns and Johns, Pentecostals learn about God through encounter with God, via the Holy Spirit. "The Holy Spirit is the presence of God, the means of encounter. The church as community of the Spirit forms the context of the encounter. The Scriptures are objective, conceptual, personal word of God and as such govern the process by which he is known."[37]

A Pentecostal hermeneutic is a hermeneutic of dialog. This dialog occurs within the community of faith, and is a conversation not only between persons, but also between experience and Scripture. The dialog is contextual, recognizing that, for this global movement, truth of God remains fixed but application of truth varies between cultures. One constant of a Pentecostal hermeneutic is an orientation toward praxis. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is never the goal. Rather, the goal is transformation – transformation of self and society.

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[35] Jackie David Johns, "Pentecostalism and the Postmodern Worldview," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3:7 (1995): 89.

[36] Jackie David Johns and Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Yielding to the Spirit: A Pentecostal Approach to Group Bible Study," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1:1 (1993): 112.

[37] Johns and Johns, 119.

Not only do Pentecostals view community as the primary context of learning, they view community[38] as an essential source of transmission of the reality of Spirit-filled life. The community shares its common story, the story of God, along with the individual stories of members of the community. The stories of experience and confession then shape the identity and experience of others in the community. The exchange of stories occurs in communal life activities, in small groups, and in worship services via songs, testimonies and sermons.

Pentecostal Christian education also utilizes a formal approach, much like most Protestant churches. Sunday school is a time of education in biblical knowledge and tends to be age-specific. Small groups are utilized as means of connection, accountability and acquisition of both biblical and life-focused knowledge. Many churches offer gender-specific educational ministry to adults, often depicted as Women's Ministry and Men's Ministry. In the mid-20th century, Wednesday nights were often dedicated to preparation for ministry, considered an essential aspect of Christian formation in light of the movement's understanding that all believers, regardless of vocation or age, are called to spread the message of redemption and deliverance in anticipation of a soon-returning Savior. Much of the attention toward midweek ministry training has given way to programs typical of many Protestant Evangelical congregations. Christian education of children frequently utilizes a club format. Especially prominent in Pentecostal Christian education are the Mpact girls clubs (formerly known as Missionettes) and Royal Rangers boys clubs. The Christian education of youth has also abandoned the training model and is, for the most part, no different from non-Pentecostal churches. Most churches offer some sort of discipleship or leadership training for women and men. In many respects, 21st century North American Pentecostalism's approach to Christian education is not particularly different from that provided by non-Pentecostal congregations. This is a troublesome issue to many Pentecostal scholars who contend that the Pentecostal worldview and the subsequent Spirit-filled life require educational efforts (programs and curriculum) reflective of the distinctives of Pentecostalism.[39] Efforts are underway to develop a pedagogy that is reflective of Pentecostalism

[38] For additional insight see R. Jerome Boone, "Community and Worship: The Key Components of Pentecostal Formation," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 4:8 (1996).

[39] See Allan Anderson, "The Fury and the Wonder? Pentecostal-Charismatic Spirituality in Theological Education," *Pneuma* 23:2 (2001): 287-302; Miguel Alvarez, "Distinctives of Pentecostal Education," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3:2 (2001): 281-293; James S. Bowers, "A Wesleyan-Pentecostal Approach to Christian Formation," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3:6 (1995): 55-86; Jeffrey S. Hittenberger, "Toward a Pentecostal Philosophy of Education," *Pneuma* 23:2 (2001): 217-44.

but also utilizes the significant advances of Christian education philosophy and methodology present in the 21st century Church.

The Project

The project analyzed in this paper is an assignment in a Masters in Ministry Studies course offered by Lee University and taught by the paper's author. The course, Christian Spirituality and Ministry, equips men and women for a ministry of leading God's people into a life of Christian maturing. It is designed to provide students with the knowledge, resources and approaches for fostering spiritual formation in faith communities. The course explores the biblical and theological foundations of Christian spirituality, the role of the social sciences in better understanding spiritual development, and the integration of traditional Christian practices in the formation and discipleship process. The final course assignment is the creation of a plan for Christian formation that is relevant to the student's ministry context. The student's plan must incorporate ten specific growth areas covered in class lecture or assigned reading: Lordship of Christ; Identity in Christ; Worship; Emotional and relational health; Scripture; Prayer; Church; Fellowship; Social justice; Outreach.[40]

The Students

The students whose projects were analyzed comprise three primary groups: students who attended class on the Lee University campus (n=17); students who participated in an online course (n=21); students who attended an intensive seminar-type class at the Lee University international campus at SEBIPCA (Pentecostal Seminary of Central America) in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala (n=30). All participants in the online course are located in North America, so for the purposes of analysis the Lee campus and the online students are grouped together (n=38).

Regarding the North American students, there is a wide disparity in age, ethnic background, and geographic location, with gender being fairly evenly distributed. They are also disparate in their denominational or religious tradition adherence, containing a mix of Pentecostal, Southern Baptist, and independent congregations (both Pentecostal/Charismatic and non-Pentecostal/Charismatic). Representing seven countries (Guatemala, Costa Rica, Mexico, Honduras, Panama, Belize, and El Salvador), the Central American students all describe themselves as of Hispanic descent. All are native Spanish speakers and few speak English beyond simple phrases. All are Pentecostal and most are affiliated with the Church of God. Two of the thirty Central American students whose work comprises the analysis are women. The students come from a diverse range of ministry contexts, from extremely rural settings to large urban centers,

[40] Jeff Nikkel, "Growing Christlike Together" *Directions* 35:1 (2006): 178-179.

with church sizes ranging from the teens to over five thousand. Comparisons in the following analysis are between the North American student projects and the Central American student projects.

Analysis

North American Plans

Those targeted for discipleship by the North American student projects include families, young adults, single mothers, worship teams, youth, children, incarcerated women, women recently released from prison, covenant groups, youth from single parent and impoverished homes, young married couples, college-aged women, children's ministry teams, college students, Korean-American families, and entire congregations of churches from new church plants to long-established churches. With such diversity among targets, it is reasonable to expect diversity in all aspects measured by the plan (these include target, context, duration, goals, types of gatherings, and specific activities). As previously noted, the context varies greatly, including the following examples: a Dallas-Fort Worth area congregation that is primarily Caucasian and middle class; a suburban church of 500 in the New England area; small rural churches in the northern Georgia area; a church plant in central Oregon that consists primarily of unchurched people; a Salvation Army coffeehouse; women's prisons; a half-way house; mid-size churches in suburban areas in Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina; youth living in impoverished rural areas of Kentucky; a mid-sized church in a suburban area of the East Coast; newly converted youth on the island of Oahu, Hawaii; urban areas of the Western United States; youth outreach in Nazareth, Israel; college campuses; a shape-note hymnal urban church in middle Ohio (one of the most intriguing descriptions of context). Duration of the programs range from ten weeks to thirteen months, with three months being the most common duration (n=9), followed closely by one year (n=7).

There were numerous stated goals. Many of these were reflective of the ten areas of growth noted previously, but few stated the goals using the specific language of the ten areas of growth. Recurring themes emerging from the goals include: personal ownership of one's spiritual formation; lifelong spiritual growth; becoming more Christlike; holistic change; deepened understanding of one's ministry gifts; growing relationship with Christ; disciples engaged in ministry; disciples concerned about issues of injustice; equipped and empowered students; development of leaders; setting captive spirits free; developing disciples who produce disciples; fulfilling the Great Commission; understanding one's identity in Christ. Of these, the themes of becoming more Christlike, developing a growing relationship with Christ, lifelong spiritual growth, spiritual formation as

holistic, and personal ownership of one's spiritual formation are most reflective of spiritual formation as presented by course lectures and assigned readings. Perhaps the most surprisingly understated goal is anything to do with evangelism, with only six students including goals that connect with sharing the Gospel with the lost (specifically, they reference bringing someone to faith in Christ, bringing potential converts to Christ, inviting those who don't know Christ to home-based small groups, handing out tracks, providing opportunities for evangelism, and spreading the news of hope in Christ). This is all the more surprising due to Nikkel's clear articulation of outreach – one of the required ten growth areas – as flowing from a longing "for others to experience life in Christ."[41] It seems that many of the students interpreted "outreach" as something akin to community aid rather than evangelism.

As anticipated with thirty-eight discipleship plans, there are quite a few types of gatherings designed to facilitate discipleship. These include: Sunday morning service (also denoted as corporate worship); weekly small group meetings; weekly classes; weekly prayer services; age-specific worship (e.g. children's church and youth services); accountability groups; outreach opportunities; fellowship/fun events; Sunday school; new member classes; preparation for baptism; service/benevolence opportunities; holiday/seasonal celebrations. These gatherings seem rather generic, in that most, if not all, could be utilized within any of the contexts and types of ministries previously outlined. One program, however, included gatherings particularly specific to its context. The plan of ministry for incarcerated women included weekly meetings at the prison, and specifically noted that this would need to be quite flexible to adjust to changing prison regulations and schedules. This plan also included a picnic at the prison every six months for inmates and their families, illuminating the understanding that relaxed family-oriented fellowship is a rarity for inmates, their husbands and children.

The students were very intentional with regard to specific activities they plan to use to facilitate spiritual growth in their ministry contexts. Forty-two distinct activities were included in the plans, with multiple variations on many of the named activities. The table below denotes the activities. It is little surprise that those activities involving teaching/studying/training, journaling, prayer and scripture reading were the most common. It is, however, somewhat surprising that activities often deemed essential for spiritual growth (e.g. Bible study techniques, scripture memorization and accountability) were included five or fewer times. Given the content of the course lectures, it is also surprising that the practice of spiritual disciplines (not including the disciplines of prayer and study) were only mentioned five times. Equally disturbing, again, given the content of course lectures and assigned readings, is the low occurrence of any mention of

[41] Nikkel, 17.

sacramental observances (baptism, Holy Communion, and washing the saints' feet).

Table 1: Activities to Facilitate Spiritual Formation
North America

Teaching/Studying (n=22)	Journaling (n=18)	Reading Scripture (n=18)
Prayer (n=14)	Outreach/Service (n=14)	Worship (n=10)
Testimonies (n=8)	Daily Devotions (n=7)	Mentoring (n=6)
Spiritual Disciplines (n=5)	Social Justice Issues (n=5)	Bible Study Techniques (n=5)
Retreats (n=4)	Holy Communion (n=4)	Professional Counseling (n=4)
Sermons (n=4)	Fellowship (n=3)	Scripture Memorization (n=3)
Ministry Involvement (n=3)	Group Discussion (n=3)	Use of Social Media (n=3)
Workbooks (n=2)	Baptism (n=2)	Life/Work Skills (n=2)
Music Lessons (n=2)	Accountability Partners (n=2)	Prayer Partners (n=1)
Daily Challenge (n=1)	Physical Disciplines (n=1)	Personality Tests (n=1)
Partner with Non-Profits (n=1)	Q & A Time (n=1)	Praise Dancing (n=1)
Faith & Film Movies (n=1)	Resource Library (n=1)	Church Newsletter (n=1)
Drama Team (n=1)	Season of Advent (n=1)	Stations of the Cross (n=1)
Lectio Divina (n=1)	Washing Saints' Feet (n=1)	Mission Trip (n=1)

Central American Plans

Programs of discipleship in the Central American student projects include ministry to youth (primarily not gender specific), existing small group ministry, ministry to men, ministry to school leaders and parents, new converts, praise and worship teams, potential leaders, women's ministry leaders, district churches, and entire congregations. The contexts of ministry are less clearly specified and typically only include the country and, in approximately one half of the plans a note that the congregation is Church of God. Two of the churches are denoted as district churches, and their plans relate to the larger district rather than the local church. One plan is presented in the context of a Church of God children's school. Plan

duration ranged from three months to one year, with three months being the most prominent (n=9). It should be noted that seven plans included no definitive duration.

There were a great many stated goals. Recurring themes emerging from the goals include: spiritual growth; integration of disciples into Christ's service; all participants accepting Christ as Lord; disciples winning others to Christ; disciples who disciple others; representing Christ in daily living; making worship services evangelistic events; developing a fervent spirituality in those who care for children; teaching new believers to behave in obedience; strengthening the faith of the members; disciples accepting responsibility for their own spiritual growth; developing biblical knowledge; developing understanding of spiritual practices; growth in the group through conversions; fulfilling the Great Commission; growth reflected in the way Christ is shared with others; disciples living in the power of the Holy Spirit to God's service; serving with excellence; transformation that is contagious so others might become Christians; equipping leaders to experience transformation; spiritual growth as evidence of life; pursuit of spiritual practices. Converse to the North American plans, there is clear evidence throughout the goals of the importance of evangelism (Nikkel's depiction of outreach). An emphasis on personally winning others to Christ is readily evident in the vast majority of the analyzed plans, whether in the goals, the gatherings, or the specific activities.

Types of gatherings used to facilitate spiritual formation include weekly meetings, small groups, worship services, workshops, Sunday services, reading groups, retreats, cell groups, monthly training and planning sessions, rehearsals, and age-specific classes. Most need no further explanation, but it is important to distinguish between small groups and cell groups. Small groups serve the purposes of accountability, support, and growth in knowledge, much as they do in North America. They can be found in homes and on the church campus. Cell groups, however, are distinctly different. They meet in the homes of individual Christians. Those invited to attend the cell group are most likely not Christians. The cell group's primary function is evangelistic in nature.

Twenty-four distinct activities are denoted in the students' plans. The majority of these activities are only mentioned once or twice, with a few mentioned four to six times. Table 2 lists all categories of activities. By far, the most frequently named activities are in the categories of teaching/training/studying and evangelism. Teaching tends toward topics related to Nikkel's ten areas of growth, general doctrinal topics, and godly lifestyle. Often presented in conjunction with teaching or training is evangelism (i.e. training in how to evangelize). Evangelism as a distinct activity is denoted in general terms and is also more fully described as:

door to door evangelism, evangelism via media, Emmaus Road lifestyle evangelism, personal visits to the unsaved, house to house evangelism, and evangelistic dramas. The language within the plans indicates that these activities, rather than being optional and casual, are mandatory, requiring intensity and commitment.

There is no mention of sacramental observances as activities that contribute to spiritual formation, other than two references to Baptism-related instruction, even though an entire unit of study was devoted to the topic. The minimal inclusion of the spiritual disciplines as practices of formation is even more troublesome as the students had a reading and presentation assignment based on Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline.* The students were engaged during the class sessions that addressed both sacramental observances and spiritual disciplines, so the question must be asked why nothing more was included. Perhaps this is an issue of culture and context, but it may also be an unwillingness to address discipleship in ways outside of teaching, training or studying. In light of the overwhelming propensity to focus the planned activities on teaching, training, studying and evangelism, it seems that the latter is a likely explanation. One final note regarding teaching, which is reflective of Eguizabal's concern for contextual curriculum: Those plans that denoted specific teaching materials relied quite heavily on course textbooks and denominational (Church of God) pre-planned discipleship programs. While the course textbooks were printed in Spanish, they were all by North American authors and from a North American perspective. (It should be noted that books on the topic of spiritual formation written from a Latin American perspective are almost entirely from the Roman Catholic tradition.) Clearly, this finding supports the need for Central American Pentecostal leaders to develop contextually sound spiritual formation curriculum and texts.

Table 2 – Activities to Facilitate Spiritual Formation
Central America

Teaching/Studying (n=15)	Evangelism (n=13)	Prayer (n=6)
Fellowship (n=6)	Worship (n=5)	Scripture Reading (n=4)
Fasting (n=3)	Workshops (n=3)	Discussion / Q & A (n=3)
Journaling (n=3)	Retreats (n=2)	Sporting Events (n=2)
Spiritual Disciplines (n=2)	Assigned Readings (n=2)	Sermons (n=2)
Testimonies (n=2)	Personal Assessment (n=2)	Community Service (n=2)
Vigils (n=1)	Drama (n=1)	Bible Reading Competition (n=1)
Devotions (n=1)	Visitation (n=1)	Social Networking (n=1)

Comparisons Between Contextual Plans
Similarities

Perhaps the most obvious likeness between the North American and Central American spiritual formation plans is that both sets reflect the assigned requirements of clearly defined context, stated goals, and a definitive action plan to accomplish spiritual formation over a specified period of time. They are similar in that the plans were required to incorporate, on some level, Nikkel's ten growth areas. Even beyond the requirements, however, there are notable similarities. Both sets favor durations of three months and one year, even though no ideal duration was presented in the course content. While there is a great deal of variety in the goals presented by both sets of plans, existent within the variety are several shared themes:

- That all experience an intimate relationship with Christ
- That each disciple takes personal responsibility for her/his relationship with Christ
- That all participate in activities that promote continued spiritual growth
- That all would fulfill the Great Commission
- That disciples produce disciples
- That leaders will be equipped and developed

There are similarities in the types of gatherings used to facilitate spiritual growth. Both sets rely upon the regularly scheduled Church services, classes, and associated meetings. Both also utilize small groups for a variety of purposes including accountability, encouragement and teaching.

The most obvious parallel with regard to specific activities is the reliance upon teaching, training and study as the primary category of activity.

An unexpected and unfortunate resemblance is that neither group evidences a strong Pentecostal approach to their discipleship plans. (Certainly, this lack is only applicable to those North American plans that are delineated as being Pentecostal.) There are few mentions of the equipping power of the Holy Spirit, the role of the Spirit in the discipleship process, or the understanding of experiential knowledge (*yada*) deemed an essential in Pentecostal epistemology. While there is evident an emphasis on family and the community as the place of shared experiences and resulting transformation, these are not overtly connected to a Pentecostal belief system or an intentional hermeneutic. Rather, they seem to better reflect the current evangelical focus on family. Finally, there are only occasional references to the utilization of curriculum and other resources that are reflective of a Pentecostal worldview.

Differences

There are differences between the two sets in every category assessed, but two areas are particularly significant. First and most easily notable is attention to evangelism. As previously noted, there are very few North American plans that address evangelism, focusing instead on a more generic or aid-based understanding of outreach. Not so with the Central American plans. As a group, evangelism is a clear priority of spiritual growth. The mature Christian evangelizes his family, her friends, his neighborhood, and her coworkers. Discipleship involves not only teaching the importance of evangelism, but offers training in evangelism. Certainly there are corporate events aimed at evangelism, but the primary thrust of evangelistic efforts is personal. Even the terminology utilized in the plans' references to evangelism is different between the two sets. The North American plans that addressed evangelism frequently couched it in terms more subtle than evangelize the lost, witness to those who aren't saved, etc. Instead they referenced bringing someone to faith in Christ, bringing potential converts to Christ, and spreading the news of hope. There is not necessarily anything wrong with this subtle, and perhaps more contextually appropriate terminology, but it is distinctly different from the ways in which the Central American plans addressed evangelism.

A second significant difference between the plans of the two sets is within the category of activities utilized to facilitate spiritual formation. While both shared teaching and studying as the primary activity, it was the sole shared activity with more than five mentions by either group. Perhaps the most fascinating finding with regard to specified activities is the lack of reliance upon prayer and scripture reading in the Central American plans. These are so essential to North American ideas of spiritual growth that it

seems almost unthinkable to not include them. One wonders if this was an oversight in the Central American plans – if they assumed these activities would be included. Perhaps, but it might also be an issue of culture. Esqueda refers to the problem of biblical illiteracy in Latin American culture, particularly among Pentecostals, stating that many "use the Scriptures as a fetish rather than a source for doctrinal and spiritual nourishment."[42] One must then ask whether this might be a contextual issue that needs to be addressed. While not as significant, it is interesting to note that the North American plans frequently included journaling, a recognized staple in discipleship plans, as an activity to facilitate spiritual growth. In the Central American plans, only three of the thirty mention journaling.

Conclusions

Reflections of Context

Certainly, the differences between the two sets of plans reflect contextual issues. The evangelism issue previously examined is perhaps the strongest reflection of the differences between the two primary contexts. It is indicative of the Latin American fervor for evangelism as presented by Ginoris, Eguizabal, Alvarez, Esqueda and Matviuk. The plans validate Ginoris' portrait of Hispanic culture as being sensitive to family and its inclusion of everyone as family. Many of the Central American plans rely on intimate, more personal settings (e.g. small groups and cell groups) as opposed to the larger worship service setting frequently referenced in the North American plans. It might also be argued that the aforementioned lack of "new" ideas reflects what Ginoris describes as a culture that values the traditional.[43]

The primary shared context, other than Christianity and participation in the same master's course, is Pentecostalism. Both sets evidenced some characteristics of Pentecostal hermeneutics, particularly with regard to praxis orientation, a goal of transformation and the importance of providing opportunities for shared experiences. Neither set was notably demonstrative of reliance upon the Holy Spirit, a stronger expectation of the miraculous intervention into the believer's life, and a transrational approach to thinking and learning. Certainly the works of Alvarez, Esqueda and Matviuk intimated this should be evident in the Central American plans. Based on Alvarez's and Matviuk's examinations of leadership among Latin American Pentecostals, one would also expect to see the idea of indigenous leadership more prominent in the SEBIPCA student's plans. While there were hints of this, it wasn't evident at the anticipated levels given the contextual research examined. Indeed, it was

[42] Esqueda, 36.
[43] Ginoris, 240.

equally evident within the North American plans and the Central American plans.

Questions Asked and Answered

This paper began with questions of context. Is it a good idea to export discipleship plans and models to other countries and cultures without regard for cultural distinctions? Are the differences in cultures so distinct that similar plans or models are virtually ineffective? A definitive answer to one or both questions was the goal of this study; however, such is not possible. Certainly there are differences in the developed plans and these are likely due to contextual differences. But there are also many similarities. Perhaps these are due to correlations of context. It could be that the qualitative research undergirding this paper is too narrow and that additional studies would help determine a definitive answer.

Even without answers based on the study, I remain firmly convinced that issues of context do matter. Educational theory and pedagogical practice prohibit me from thinking otherwise. I conclude with thoughts from Erickson: "In a sense, everything in education relates to culture – to its acquisition, its transmission, and its invention. Culture is in us and all around us, just as the air we breathe. In its scope and distribution it is personal, familial, communal, institutional, societal, and global."[44]

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BOOK REVIEWS

Goldingay, John. *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2014. 158 pp. $18.00. Paperback. ISBN: 9780830840397.

John Goldingay's brief volume, *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah*, introduces both the theology in Isaiah and Goldingay's earlier works on Isaiah. The book is written for people who are comfortable with exegesis and want to move from interpreting passages to constructing a biblical theology of a biblical book. The book defines terms like "chiasm" (p. 14) and prints Hebrew terms in English (with diacritical marks). The result is accessible to non-specialists. The book is very readable, almost conversational in tone. Occasionally there are awkward phrases. "YHWH Armies" shows up several times, and people "can again fruit upward" (p. 118).

The "Acknowledgments" refer readers to Goldingay's earlier publications for fuller arguments supporting the positions he takes in this book (p. 9). Occasional footnotes provide citations to other authors. Goldingay warns against two frequent assumptions that make understanding Isaiah difficult. One assumption is that "the book will unfold in a clearly logical and coherent way" (p. 11). The other is "that the entire book was written by Isaiah ben Amoz" (p. 11).

A two part examination of Isaiah follows. In Part One, "The Theologies in Isaiah," Goldingay examines the five (or six) main units of Isaiah (chapters 1-12; 13-27; 28-39; 40-55 and 56-66; sometimes he divides chapters 13-27 between chapters 23 and 24). Five chapters each discuss four to eight theological themes. The Introduction and chapters 1 through 5 contain simple but helpful graphics composed of arrows and text-boxes that give a visual representation of the argument Goldingay sees in Isaiah. These help readers quickly grasp Goldingay's argument. There are no graphics in Part Two.

"A Note on Isaiah's Role in the New Testament" concludes the final section of Chapter 1. Focusing on Matthew and including passages from all of Isaiah rather than just chapters 1-12, Goldingay concludes "Matthew uses the words of Isaiah in a way that ignores their meaning in their context" (p. 33). Goldingay notes that starting from the NT and working backward yields different results than starting with the HB/OT and moving forward. He also distinguishes between the "God-given *meaning*" a text had for the original audience, and the "further *significance* for people who read it later" (p. 35).

Part One contains discussions many students will find useful. Examples include elaboration on two Hebrew puns in Isa 5:7 (pp. 20-22, 101, 104). Brief descriptions of Hebrew vocabulary should help students understand the Hebrew text's likely impact on the original audience (e.g., 58-59). Many students should benefit from the discussion of trust during Hezekiah's reign (pp. 59-60). Chapter 5's discussion of "the neatest chiasm" in Isaiah 56-66 draws many helpful connections between the parallel sections of these chapters (p. 75).

Part Two, "The Theology that Emerges from Isaiah," develops the theology of Isaiah as a whole (p. 89). Here Goldingay's discussion moves from textual to topical with Chapter 6's focus on how each section of Isaiah develops the theme of "Revelation." Chapter 7 discusses the significance of God's titles in Isaiah. Chapter 8 examines God's attributes. In addition to holy and majestic, Isaiah presents God as restorer/deliverer, and as creator of Israel. Isaiah's pictures include God as family member and covenant partner. Chapter 9 explores political Judah as theological Israel, empowered to serve God.

Chapter 10 treats unfaithful Jerusalem as punished but preserved through the remnant who escape. Chapter 11 argues that those who escape must return to God. Chapter 12 lays out Isaiah's ambiguity regarding whether those who escape will necessarily return to God. Chapter 13 discusses the role of Gentiles in Isaiah. Chapter 14 develops Isaiah's picture of God using empires to accomplish the divine purpose, even if the political rulers are unaware of God's activity.

Chapter 15 argues that "Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility" in Isaiah is "a subtler affair than it at first seems. It is a dialectic relationship . . . between divine decision making and human decision making" (p. 133). Chapter 16 discusses human planners who fail to regard the divine plans. This failure leads to consideration of the role of "David"

in Isaiah in Chapter 17. *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* then concludes with chapter 18's discussion of the eschaton in Isaiah.

The Theology of the Book of Isaiah provides readers with a quick summary of much of Goldingay's earlier work on the book of Isaiah. This gives readers the fruit of his significant work, but without letting students see much of the labor that led Goldingay to his conclusions.

Little about the book seems especially appropriate to or inappropriate for Pentecostals. Perhaps most beneficial for many in our camp would be Chapter 10's discussion of the "mismatch between the fervency of their worship and the life . . . lived outside worship" (p. 111). Some Pentecostals may struggle because *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* begins with the current academic consensus regarding authorship of Isaiah, and that his support for this opinion is found elsewhere. Since Goldingay follows the academic consensus, and lets readers know where they can find a fuller discussion, I cannot fault the book for this. Authors are entitled to build from the majority opinion and to select which questions or issues they want to address. (However, authors who rely on minority opinions should demonstrate that they understand the majority view and articulate why they find that view unpersuasive.)

As I read this book, I tried to imagine how I might use it in a classroom. This book is not a commentary that reacts with a history of interpretation. It does not discuss the range of opinions that is an important part of the historical discussion or an active part of the current discussion of the meaning of Isaiah and its theology. Goldingay occasionally cites other authors who support his conclusions, but does not significantly interact with other authors or their opinions.

Instead, this book is an introduction to Goldingay's understanding of the theological emphases in Isaiah**.** Moving from the teaching of the main sections of a biblical book to a synthesis of that book's theology as a whole is a wonderful goal to put before students. Too often one reads exegesis wondering whether the passage has any legitimate theological use, or reads theology wondering whether it has any exegetical foundation.

If I were to use this book in a classroom, it would be at the end of a class covering exegetical tools and methods. In the last weeks of the term I would shift from exegetical results to theological synthesis using this book as a model for: 1) identifying the main units of a book, 2) defining the theological emphasis of the main units, and then 3) integrating those emphases into a biblical theology of the book. Like any good book other than the Good Book, I would use it at times as guide and at times as foil,

but as an overall good model of how to begin moving from the interpretive task to the theological one.

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Newsom, Carol A. with Brennan W. Breed. *Daniel*. The Old Testament Library. Edited by William P. Brown, Carol A. Newsom, and Brent A. Strawn. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2014. vii + 416 pages. $50.00. Hardcover. ISBN: 9780664220808

Carol A. Newsom's commentary on the book of Daniel focuses on the historical context of Daniel from both literary and theological perspectives. She begins her commentary with a list of figures, a preface, acknowledgements and credits, abbreviations, and bibliography. She introduces the Masoretic Text, Qumran, and Septuagint versions of Daniel as well as other Danielic compositions and discusses various literary genres and socio-historical concerns addressed in the Court tales of Daniel 1-6 and the apocalyptic dream visions of Daniel 7-12. She also includes a history of Daniel's reception from ancient times through the present, which is authored by Brennan W. Breed. A commentary of Daniel 1-6 and 7-12 is provided, which concludes with an index of primary and secondary sources up through Reformation times as well as an index of subjects and authors.

The commentary portion provides an overview of the longer sections (chs. 1-6 and 7-12) and an overview of each smaller section (1:1-4:37, 5:1-6:28 (29), 7:1-9:27, and 10:1-12:13), followed by the translation of each individual chapter (with a detailed explanation of people, places, terms, and phrases), an overview (including the, genre, structure, literary features, provenance and potential compositional issues), an outline of the chapter, and comments on each verse. Comments focus on genre, potential sources used to compose Daniel, purposes for writing, connections with other literature from the Ancient Near East and the Second Temple Period, literary structures, linguistic concerns, socio-historical-cultural connections, and redactional activity. Each chapter includes a section on the history of Daniel's reception that explains how Daniel has been understood and interpreted throughout history. The only exception is

Daniel 10-12, in which the historical reception is provided at the end of the section.

Newsom focuses on the historical context, including the relationship between power and resistance in both religious and secular contexts, in the court tales of Daniel and his friends in Daniel 1-6. Daniel 7-12 expresses first person accounts of revelatory encounters, mysterious visions, and apocalypses that focus on the emergence of the kingdom of Alexander the Great and his successors, who led the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Syria. Most of Daniel 7-12 focuses on the events of 167-164 BCE, when a crisis between Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Seleucia and the Jews of Judea resulted in mass violence, including the ravaging of Jerusalem and the desecration of the Temple.

Brennan Breed aptly describes how the apocalypses of Daniel were later interpreted to refer to Roman suppression in the first century CE, including the Jewish Revolt that began in 66 CE and the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE. He also expresses that this apocalyptic literature has continued to be reinterpreted throughout history to refer to events concurrent with whoever is interpreting the book of Daniel.

Excurses within the book include: the Origin and Development of the Four-Kingdom Schema in Daniel 2; the Harran B Inscription commissioned by Nabonidus in Daniel 4; the *Prayer of Nabonidus* (4Q242), also in Daniel 4; the Divine Throne, Judgment Scenes, and Daniel 7:9-10, which compares Daniel 7 with *1 Enoch* 14:18-23, 90:20, and *Giants* [4Q530); a chart designed by Clarence Larkin in 1919 that depicts dispensational theology as based on Daniel 2, 7, and other key prophecies and another chart that coordinates the "seventy weeks of years" from Daniel 9 with the statue of the four kingdoms and other related biblical texts; the angel, Michael, in Daniel 10; and a skeleton outline that explains the connections between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires and Daniel 11.

In addition to the Excurses, Newsom also compares and contrasts the tale of Daniel 3 (Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego) with Daniel 6 (Daniel in the lion's den). She shows how the author of Daniel 7 reworked Nebuchadnezzar's dream to reflect on divine and human sovereignties and explains how Daniel 8 alludes to chapter 7 by recasting its symbolism and using a different pattern to understand history. Daniel 10-12 develop the clash between the Seleucids and Ptolemies that was expressed in Daniel 8 while Daniel 9 features a prayer of penitence as a structure to interpret history and predict the future.

Newsom's commentary on the book of Daniel is vital for Pentecostal communities as it brings clarity in regards to how and why Daniel was originally written and to the historical people and events alluded to in the court tales and apocalyptic visions. The reception history at the end of each section of commentary is also helpful as it provides an explanation of how different portions of Daniel have been understood throughout history, which sets a foundation for understanding how and why Pentecostals understand and interpret the book of Daniel the way they do. This commentary is also beneficial for those who study linguistics, Ancient Near Eastern cultures and literature, Biblical and historical hermeneutics, the New Testament, the reception of the Old Testament/Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament, and church history.

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Stuckenbruck, Loren T. *The Myth of Rebellious Angels: Studies in Second Temple Judaism and New Testament Texts.* Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 335. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. xxi + 427 pp. €149.00. Hardcover. ISBN: 9783161530241.

The Myth of Rebellious Angels is a compilation of fourteen essays published by Stuckenbruck between 2001 and 2014 primarily oriented around Second Temple Jewish apocalyptic texts. Though each essay stands alone with a self-contained argument, certain central claims run like threads throughout the book. Among them are: 1) this literature that seems outlandish at times, is not the product of fanciful speculation but rather deeply theological and exegetical reflection, and 2) the mythological complexes espoused in these compositions underlie many of the texts in the canonical Old and New Testaments—even if they are not explicitly quoted. Stuckenbruck's essays display control of a wide array of Second Temple literature and include deep forays into Enochic texts, Jubilees and other Jewish Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, Philo, the deuterocanonical books, as well as sections of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Ancient Near Eastern epics, early rabbinical and Christian works, Manichaean, Targumic, and some Greco-Roman classical materials also inform Stuckenbruck's arguments.

Throughout these essays, basic familiarity with much of this literature (particularly Second Temple Jewish works) is presumed, making *The Myth of Rebellious Angels* a book primarily for readers familiar with the field. However, for those who know the literature (or those willing to do the primary source reading), Stuckenbruck presents a number of rewarding perspectives, especially for anyone invested in learning more about the origins and development of the texts of the Bible. Some of these essays are introduced below.

Chapter one serves as an introduction to the mythical complex of "rebellious" or "fallen" angels as presented in numerous Second Temple

Jewish works. Stuckenbruck notes the influential role played by creative exegesis of Genesis 6:1-4. In the Masoretic text, the "sons of God" *bĕnē hāʾĕlōhîm* see that the "daughters of men" *bĕnôt hāʾādām* are "good" *ṭōbōt* and take them as wives (v. 2). The entire cryptic passage is full of potentially generative unanswered questions. As Stuckenbruck shows, numerous Second Temple texts attempted to answer these questions, sometimes hedging their answers with other biblical texts, and often depending on and responding to one another.

Chapter two looks at one such answer: the giant offspring of angels and human women as explicated in the enochic Book of Giants. These composite (and thus corrupt) beings bore the names of famous ancient near eastern figures and thus betray knowledge of Mesopotamian traditions. Mythological imagination sees the transformation of these creatures through their destruction in the flood. They lose their human form but persist as spirits to torment humanity. Among the more provocative implications of this myth is the assertion that eventually this disembodied state came to be understood as the reason why demons are so intent on entering and possessing the bodies of humans. This etiology of evil spirits proves foundational for Struckenbruck's arguments in later chapters.

Chapter four is a helpful summary on the theme of demons in the Dead Sea scrolls. To aid organization, Stuckenbruck divides this broad and diverse literature loosely into three categories: 1) earlier, pre-sectarian literature, 2) proto-sectarian texts that seem to anticipate the interests of the *Yaḥad*, and finally 3) the literature of the sectarian *Yaḥad* itself. Stuckenbruck offers an overview on the use of various terms for evil divine beings (e.g. *šed, ruaḥ, malʾak*) as well as specific figures (e.g. Melki-resaʿ, The Angel of Darkness, Satan, Mastema, and Belial). Through the discussion, he traces various diachronic developments. Earlier texts were less likely to use proper names and later texts often incorporated apotropaic liturgies. Throughout these texts, the presence of evil spirits was seen as a reality to be managed through various practices until their eventual defeat. In many instances, the demonology of the Dead Sea scrolls seems to flesh out worldviews and practices that are assumed but not detailed in the New Testament.

Chapter eight discusses accounts of Jesus' birth in the New Testament and brings to bear many of the insights on pre-Christian literature discussed in chapters 1-7. Stuckenbruck notes the prominent role given to the Holy Spirit in both Matthew's (1:18; 20) and Luke's (1:35) accounts of Jesus' conception and birth but draws attention to its absence in the earlier Pauline witnesses (Gal 4:4; Rom 1:3). Leaning on the prominent Jewish

myths already laid out in the book, Stuckenbruck argues that this was an intentional, apologetic emphasis: "those devotees of Jesus from whom the gospels received the birth stories would have wanted to ensure that Jesus' birth, mysterious and open to suspicion as it was, *[could not] in any way be linked with a popular myth about women being impregnated by prominent, disobedient angelic beings"* (p. 155, emphasis original). A similar concern is witnessed in the traditions surrounding Noah's birth (ch. 3) preserved in the Genesis Apocryphon and 1 Enoch 106-107.

Chapter nine, "The Human Being and Demonic Invasion: Therapeutic Models in Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts" will undoubtedly interest many Pentecostal readers. This rich essay attempts to take seriously the exorcistic claims of Jesus' ministry as described in the gospels while at the same time acknowledging modern strides in understanding mental health. Stuckenbruck helpfully locates Jesus' confrontations with the demonic in an apocalyptic and eschatological framework, thus preventing the false conflation of exorcism and mental health as pre-modern and modern equivalents. This cosmological framework is provided by Second Temple Jewish mythological texts and assumed in Jesus' ministry. Stuckenbruck shows how this model leads to more therapeutic understandings of exorcistic ministry where, for example, the dignity of a possessed person is preserved by identifying evil as a foreign, invasive (and ultimately defeated) force.

A similarly interesting essay is chapter 10, "The Need for Protection from the Evil One and John's Gospel." Stuckenbruck looks closely at prayers for protection from evil in Second Temple Judaism, either contained in liturgies or recited by founding figures (e.g. Abram) revealing not only their literary but also pietistic characters. Stuckenbruck argues that John 17 contains a similar model prayer intended for practice among Jesus' followers. Crucially, these Second Temple Jewish texts supply the foundational apocalyptic idea, echoed in the New Testament, that "evil, however dominant or overwhelming it may seem to be in the present, is but a defeated power whose time is marked" (p. 215).

Throughout these discussions of Second Temple literature, Stuckenbruck's primary direction of analysis is forward towards the New Testament, and regrettably he only hints at how these myths and compositions also influenced the Hebrew Bible (many of its texts likely reaching their final forms around the same time and in the same circles). But this small complaint is not to detract from what is an impressively thorough analysis from one of the world's leading scholars of Second Temple literature. While some readers may be uncomfortable with Stuckenbruck's arguments regarding the origins and motivations behind certain cherished

traditions in the New Testament, overall, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels* is a well-argued, sympathetic, and illuminating exposition of some of the biblical emphases Pentecostals hold most dear—including the necessity of eschatological hope, the reality of demonic activity, and the potency of apocalyptic imagination.

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Miller, Patrick D. *The Lord of the Psalms*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013. xiv + 116 pp. $25.00. Paperback. ISBN: 9780664239275

The Lord of the Psalms is the product of the collected Stone Lectures delivered by Professor Miller at Princeton Theological Seminary. As such his study is less a methodical, developed argument and more a collection of freestanding theological reflections. The more relaxed structure of the book is also underscored by the regular inclusion of personal anecdotes and frequent connections drawn between psalm texts and passages throughout the Bible, so that *The Lord of the Psalms* is best suited to supplement a more methodical introduction to the theology of the Psalter. Miller's study is appropriate for graduate students, while remaining accessible and useful for the serious undergraduate student or pastor.

In chapter one, "The Reality of God," Miller considers the question of God's existence as explored in the Psalms. In the lament psalms both the psalmist and the wicked confront the same evidence of God's neglect, but the psalmists "go on not only to appeal to and petition God but also to make powerful claims *against the apparent evidence*" (p. 8). In considering our knowledge of God, Miller points to the prophets where knowledge is tied to acts of covenant obedience, that is, knowing is tied to responding to what we know. He then looks at God's knowledge of his people which is not portrayed as a static body of information, but is something that God discovers as he tests and examines the human heart. Miller concludes that "Divine omniscience is qualified at what may be the most crucial point: knowledge of the human heart" (p. 15).

Chapter two, "God Among the Gods," centers on Psalm 82 which Miller says "is the foundation on which most of it [the Psalter] rests" (p. 25). That which distinguishes a true or living god from a false or dying god, from an idol, is the exercise of justice for the poor and powerless. Miller finds this core concept echoed both in the Enthronement Psalms (Pss 93-99) which extol the true nature of divinity and in the Royal Psalms, most

particularly Psalm 72, which find in the human king a conduit for the divine exercise of justice.

The third chapter, "The Body of God," turns to language used to describe God in the Psalter. Miller explores five categories of God-talk: body, name, voice & speech, space & place, and temporality as the means of describing the ways in which God is experienced by the psalm writers. God's face is the dominant body image in the Psalter, where psalmists use it to consider both God's presence and his hiddenness. God's name mirrors his character and reputation, and is alluded to in both praise and lament. When the Lord speaks in the Psalter, his voice comforts and displays his power as creator. Spatially God is associated with Zion and the tabernacle, while temporally it is not God's self, but rather his mercy and steadfast love that are most often acknowledged in the Psalms as eternal.

Chapter four, "Maker of Heaven and Earth," takes up the theme of God as creator. Miller contrasts Psalm 104 with its broad celebration of creation with Psalm 8 and its emphasis on the particular role of humans in the created order. God's creation, Miller argues, is entwined with his lordship over that which he creates. "Creation of this universe involves its rule: the two are commensurate" (p. 54). Miller then gives attention to the close ties between Psalms 103 and 104 that together "are a kind of mini-theology, lifting up both redemption and creation as the ground for extravagant praise of the Lord" (p. 59).

In the fifth chapter, "To Glorify His Name," Miller focuses on the theme of God's *hesed* or "steadfast love," particularly in the echoes found throughout the Psalms of the creedal declaration in Deuteronomy 34:6-7. He argues that even the apparent counter-testimony of the lament psalms can, in point of fact, be considered part of Israel's core testimony because of their frequent appeal to God's steadfast love.

Chapter six, entitled "Tender Mercies," provides a close reading of Psalm 103 in which Miller synthesizes themes introduced in the preceding two chapters. He reads Psalm 103 in light of the declaration of God's character as loving and merciful in Exodus 34:6-7, which is first cited in verse 8 and then expounded on and explained in the verses that follow. Miller considers Psalms 102-104 to function as a unit, with the lament of 102 raising the questions that are then addressed in 103 and 104.

In his final chapter, "The First Catechism Question and the Theology of the Psalter," Miller offers the chief end of humanity, "to glorify God, and enjoy him forever" as a framing theme for the Psalter as a whole. He attends to the structure of the book, specifically the trajectories just

lordship, righteousness, and the Torah set in the opening two psalms and the climatic call to praise and enjoy God in the six psalms that conclude the Psalms. Particular attention is directed toward the reign of the Lord which is set out in Psalm 2 and which reaches its climax in Psalms 93-99.

Among the strengths of *The Lord of the Psalms* is the way in which Miller consistently addresses his observations to a broader Christian audience, rather than directing his insights more narrowly to Psalms scholars. He frequently draws connections between the Psalms and the larger canon, as well as suggesting applications for Christian faith and practice. A limit of his study is its somewhat loose unity of form and focus. Individual chapters vary in their structure and approach. So, for example, while his chapter on "The Body of God" moves freely throughout the Bible tracing key themes to demonstrate the breadth of a range of metaphors, his chapter on "Tender Mercies" is an orderly exegetic study of a single psalm with limited references to the canon as a whole. Additionally, while Miller suggests a unifying theme in the title of his work, the freestanding nature of each lecture at times results in a less clear development of that theme. As a result, *The Lord of the Psalms* is a useful supplement to a more methodical consideration of the theology of the Psalter.

The Pentecostal educator will find much in Miller's book to commend it. Miller's anecdotal approach lets the reader know at the beginning of each chapter not simply what the chapter is about, but why its content matter's to the author. Miller's readiness to trace the themes of the Psalter broadly throughout the Bible and in Christian thought and practice means that the fruits of his study are more readily applicable to student and minister alike. Finally, Miller's emphasis on the experience of God and the centrality of his covenant mercy resonates with the experiential accent that is central to Pentecostal readings of scripture. In summary, professor Miller offers in his book the fruits of a lifetime spent in the study and application of the Psalms.

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Chan, Simon. *Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014. 217 pages. $18.00. ISBN 9780830840489.

In his 2014 *Grassroots Asian Theology* book, Simon Chan develops an Asian theology on several Christian doctrines, through a methodical approach that retrieves and appropriates Asian "grassroots" cultural resources while engaging the broader tradition of the Church catholic. Chan's purpose is twofold. The first is to demonstrate weaknesses to common methodological approaches to Asian theology. The second is to demonstrate how his methodology fosters contextual Asian theologies better informed by Asian grassroots Christian experience, while seeking continuity with the "larger Christian tradition" (pp. 7-8, 11). Chan makes numerous analogical references to grassroots Pentecostalism. However, he aims this book for the broader worldwide Evangelical audience as a contribution to global theology (pp. 7-8, 204).

Chan begins by delineating a theological method ("Preface" and ch. 1) that programmatically shapes his doctrinal exposition (chs. 2-6 and "Epilogue"). He characterizes this method as a healthy balance between the two Roman Catholic theological processes of "*ressourcement*" (retrieving ancient or long-standing Christian sources) and "*aggiornamento*" (adaptation to new contexts) (p. 8). In chapter two Chan correlates this two-pronged methodology to two insisted theological resources. The first is "ecclesial experience," comprising the liturgical practices and experiences of the gathered church, which Chan prioritizes over "cultural experience" (pp. 15-18). The second resource is "folk Christianity," which he describes as the "lived reality" of the church, yet as it hybridizes "folk" social and religious practices (pp. 30-33). Chan argues that this method infers as an "organizing principle" or "center" for Asian theology, a "doctrine of the triune God as the divine family" (p. 42).

Chapter 2 ("God in Asian Contexts") serves to frame all other theological themes as Trinitarian-informed theology. Chan develops his doctrine of God as the "divine family" in response to observed theistic beliefs and themes in the Islamic, Hindu, Chinese religion(s), and primal religious contexts (pp. 48-62). In contrast to egalitarian nuanced conceptions, in chapter 3 ("Humanity and Sin") Chan appropriates his doctrine of God to a proleptic vision of humanity as a rightly "ordered relationship" based on a monarchal understanding of the Trinity (pp. 75-76). Hence, Chan conceives sin as primarily a matter of shame and dishonor emerging from disordered filial relationships that fall short of the rightly ordered "divine family," comprising God and redeemed humanity (pp. 84, 90, 203).

In chapter 4 ("Christ and Salvation") Chan delineates a salvific-themed Spirit-Christology that reflects Pentecostal sensibilities and grassroots soteriological experience (pp. 105-108). Here Chan uniquely parallels Pentecostal healing and *Christus Victor* motifs (pp. 108-113) to an understanding of Jesus' salvific role as "mediator-ancestor" and "ancestor-priest" (pp. 113-117, 204). Chan thus stresses how this ancestral understanding of Jesus deeply responds to Asian and African primal religious concerns with their stress on ancestral veneration (pp. 126-127).

Chapter 5 ("The Holy Spirit and Spirituality") synthesizes all the preceding themes towards an ecclesial-bounded pneumatology and Christian spirituality, which has long characterized Chan's broader theological project. Repudiating theological explorations on the Spirit's role or presence within creation and history, Chan stresses the Spirit's identity as the Spirit "*of the church*" (italics his; p. 136). Chan uses Orthodox language to argue that the Spirit's primary role is to hypostatize humans to their intended reality (p. 143). Only from this trajectory does Chan consider the Spirit's work within or towards creation. Hence, it is only through the Church that the Spirit pursues the "hypostatization . . . [of] nonhuman creation" (pp. 45, 143-144, 156). In his concluding chapter, Chan argues that the Asian familial-religious orientation coupled with varied degrees of ancestral veneration necessitates a stronger doctrine of the Church as the "communion of saints" (pp. 188-197, 202). In contrast to common Protestant thinking, Chan proposes an understanding of "communion" comprising present and ontological fellowship with believers no longer bodily living in this present life (pp. 174, 190, 193-197).

I shall now point out several strengths and weakness of Chan's work. First, Chan provides ample illustrations on retrieving theological resources from the broad Christian tradition (including Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy), and from the grassroots of lived Christian experience

within a local "folk" and primal-religious context. However, I find it important to note that Chan's references to Pentecostal grassroots experience is primarily by way of analogy, and mostly drawn from sociological studies on Pentecostalism, rather than from Pentecostal theological reflections. To this project's detriment, Chan never engages Pentecostal theological scholarship even in the relevant areas of commonly identified theological and epistemic resources emerging from Pentecostal experience and hermeneutical assumptions.

Another area I would raise concern pertains to how Chan's book represents an Asian Evangelical theology in manners that mirror a Confucian philosophical orientation. He uses Confucian concerns for societal-hierarchal order to strengthen his robust ecclesiology rooted in a monarchal doctrine of the trinity. Yet Confucianism is a Chinese orientation not shared by all Asians. Moreover, across Southeast Asia, over the past several decades both the Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist traditions have increased in religious and philosophical influence, whereas interest in philosophical Confucianism has declined. I find it therefore unfortunate that Chan makes no engagement with Buddhist beliefs or philosophy. Doing so may evoke other highly beneficial constructions of Asian theology—though in manners possibly quite different from Chan's envisioning of "Asian theology."

Another notable strength to Chan's book is his methodological stress on retrieving "grassroots" Christian folk-experience as a theological resource. This is commendable and helpful. Yet in non-congenial terms, he consistently categorizes mainline Asian theologians as "elitist theologians," and generally dismisses their inter-disciplinary approaches (pp. 7, 24-26, 30, 35). In manners that reflect his unique mix of Confucian philosophical ideals with Barthian and Hauerwasian theological trajectories, Chan thus consistently faults their common interest in social-economic justice, post-colonial interpretation, retrievals of marginalized voices, and any methodologies reflecting Paul Tillich's "method of correlation." Hence, I feel that by framing his project so tightly within a polemical posture, he hamstrings the greater ecumenical outcomes that his project can achieve. Moreover, Chan's negative posture reflects his long established refrain from exploring how the Holy Spirit may be soteriologically active outside the Church. Unfortunately, he therefore misconstrues the *Missio Dei* concept to solely what God is doing within the Church (p. 45), whereas the phrases' greater historical usage refers to God's mission towards creation, albeit including the Church.

Chan has long projected a strong ecclesiological concern. Yet what I see emerging from his *Grassroots Asian Theology* is a weak pneumatology

and doctrine of history—and worse, an overly triumphalistic understanding of the Church and Christian life. While I appreciate his stress on the *ressourcement* process within Pentecostal tradition, I find his project lacking adequate appreciation on God's mission towards creation. Hence, his theological project may too easily foster a rather bourgeois kind of Christian life devoid of prophetic concern—which I find intrinsic to robust Pentecostal spirituality.

Notwithstanding my raised concerns, Pentecostal educators can find Chan's book helpful in several ways. First, his "grassroots" methodology may be easily integrated with other more inter-disciplinary informed methodologies. Second, his methodology provides direction on how we might retrieve resources from the broader Church tradition in manners that foster Pentecostal spirituality. Finally, his analogies to Asian Pentecostal "grassroots" experience provide windows for envisioning the contextual possibilities of Pentecostal theology within local contexts. *Asian Grassroots Theology* is therefore a valuable graduate level textbook in the areas of Asian, contextual, and global theology.

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Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World, Vol. 1: Christ and Reconciliation*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2013. xiv + 453 pp. $40.00. Paperback: 9780802868534.

This is the first volume of a projected five-volume systematics by Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, professor of systematic theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, and docent of ecumenics at the University of Helsinki. Unlike more traditional treatments of systematic loci that first address topics like God, creation, or revelation, this volume focuses on Christ and reconciliation, after some opening methodological reflections.

Kärkkäinen begins his introductory chapter by observing that there is no single theological method, but a plurality of methods. In fact, theologians at times become preoccupied with methodology as they attempt to navigate all of the options. Kärkkäinen contrasts two 20th/21st-century giants in systematics, Wolfhart Pannenberg and Jürgen Moltmann. Pannenberg was intentional and deliberate about method from the beginning, and Moltmann turned explicitly to method only at the end of his contributions to systematic theology. By comparison, Kärkkäinen states that he will not begin his constructive theology with an exhaustive deliberation of method. Instead, he outlines some major approaches before turning to the method of Christology specifically. After briefly reviewing classical liberalism and postliberalism, Kärkkäinen discusses postfoundationalism as articulated by J. Wentzel van Huyssteen and F. Leron Shults.

Kärkkäinen describes systematic/constructive theology as "an integrative discipline that continuously searches for a coherent, balanced understanding of Christian truth and faith in light of Christian tradition (biblical and historical) and in the context of the historical and contemporary thoughts, cultures, and living faiths. It aims at a coherent, inclusive, dialogical, and hospitable vision" (p. 13). "Integrative" refers to drawing on multiple sub-disciplines within theology in addition to systematics, as well as drawing on academic disciplines outside religious studies. "Systematic/constructive" refers to a need for theological statements to be coherent, but not at the expense of the characteristic of correspondence. That is, theological claims should avoid both internal

contradiction and conform to realities external to the system of thought itself.

For Kärkkäinen, attending to external realities in systematic theology requires an engagement with non-Christian religions, particularly through the sub-field of comparative theology. Comparative theology involves taking the theological beliefs of a single faith tradition as the point of departure and exploring the beliefs of another faith tradition comparatively in the hopes of achieving the articulation of a theological belief informed by both the faith tradition in which the comparative theologian is situated and the newly explored faith tradition. This procedure requires the comparative theologian to have faith commitments to a particular tradition; it does not rule them out. Kärkkäinen states that his project will make use of both comparative theology and Christian theology of religions. He closes his methodological considerations by observing that theology should be understood as an expression of hospitality and mutual exchange since it both receives insights from other traditions and contexts and shares its own convictions by humbly and respectfully arguing for the truth of its claims.

Turning to Christology proper, Kärkkäinen points out that there is no universal agreement on the proper method of Christology either. He traces the differences between "from above" approaches and "from below" approaches to Christology and ultimately concludes that the two are not mutually exclusive and should be used in conjunction with each other. In search of a Christology that is dynamic, Kärkkäinen states his intentions to include in his Christology detailed consideration of Jesus' life, teachings, and ministry, not only his death and resurrection. This will show that reconciliation involves both the spiritual salvation of individuals and holistic healing in communal dimensions, such as equality, justice, and economics. Nonetheless, Kärkkäinen does not displace historical questions about the metaphysics of Christology altogether; he does not wish to consider Jesus entirely apart from ontology. Issues like incarnation, pre-existence, and natures, he says, can have a place in Christology without becoming hopelessly abstract. He also contends that Spirit Christology and Logos Christology are not mutually exclusive and states his intentions to incorporate both while giving priority to Logos Christology because of its dominance in the Christian tradition.

Central to the book are Kärkkäinen's claims that the person and work of Jesus Christ should not be dichotomized. Surely this is part of the impetus for treating Christology and reconciliation in the same volume of his systematics. Thus, he discusses issues from the identity of Jesus Christ to traditional atonement models, from some of the details of Chalcedonian

Christology to the church as an agent of reconciliation in the world, from preexistence and incarnation to the relationship of Christ's death to violence and sacrifice. Another key theme is Kärkkäinen's insistence to broaden the scope of "the work of Jesus Christ" beyond Jesus death to include also his life and ministry, resurrection, and ascension. This leads to lengthy considerations of Jesus as a teacher and miracle worker, the resurrection as the key to understanding his person and work, and Jewish notions of "messiah."

Some readers may want a more substantial justification of why Kärkkäinen places Christology and reconciliation first in his systematics, as opposed to other topics traditionally treated earlier, such as God, creation, and revelation. He says little more than that the approach is justified in light of the centrality of Christ to Christianity and the plurality of non-Christian religions, in conversation with whom Christian theological reflection on Jesus Christ should take place. To Kärkkäinen's credit, his extensive exercises in comparative theology and Christian theology of religions are likely the most informative portions of the book. He exposes readers to Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu traditions on several topics. And yet, the prominence of comparative theology and Christian theology of religions invites further the question of why to begin systematics with Christology, as opposed to other topics that might be less divisive between Christianity and other religions. By giving voice in this first volume to such fundamental disagreements over Jesus and salvation, the chapter "Christian Salvation among Religions" in particular may undermine the argument to skeptics that comparative theology and Christian theology of religions are not only worthy ventures but necessary parts of systematic theology in the 21st century.

On the whole, the book is thorough and insightful and exposes all interested readers to a variety of global traditions and academic sources. It is virtually impossible to read it without learning something significant. Kärkkäinen has succeeded in whetting an appetite for the remaining volumes in the series, which are scheduled to take up Trinity and revelation, creation and humanity, Spirit and salvation, and community and future. This volume and this entire series will have many readers.

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Yong, Amos, and Jonathan A. Anderson. *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014. xxiv + 453 pp. $49.95. Paperback. ISBN: 9781602587618.

Renewing Christian Theology offers an overview of the central Christian doctrines in an *order* (i.e., chapter arrangement) and *viewpoint* that are informed by a "renewalist" perspective. "Renewal/ist" is used throughout the work to refer to pentecostal and charismatic global forms of Christianity. The intended audience is second year theology students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The book utilizes the Statement of Faith (SF) from the World Assemblies of God Fellowship (WAGF)—which constitutes one of the largest international fellowships of renewal churches—as a template for its systematic constructions. However, in order to mitigate against the tendency to adopt evangelical theology and then tack on additional renewalist distinctives, Yong has reversed the order of the WAGF SF in order to allow the distinctives of renewal theology to come to the forefront of the text. Therefore, *Renewing Christian Theology* devotes chapters to the following loci in this order: eschatology, pneumatology (charisms, baptism of the Holy Spirit, and sanctification), ecclesiology (sacraments and mission of the church), healing, soteriology, creation, trinity, and scripture. It is the hope of Yong that this reversal of the traditional order is more consistent with Christian life and experience, moving from practical areas (orthopraxy) to those that are more abstract (orthodoxy). The intention of the order is not to displace the traditional order of topics, but to foster theological renewal.

After the Introduction, each of the remaining chapters all follow a similar structure and contain four main components. First, there is a short narrative reflection on a scriptural person, which seeks to explore how scripture can open up ways of viewing the given dogmatic theme. Second, each theological locus is situated historically, ecumenically, and globally,

which serves to survey the contextual considerations of the topic at hand. Third, scripture is further explicated in relation to the topic under consideration, which provides the scriptural foundation. Fourth, each chapter offers a constructive proposal by providing a restatement of the doctrine that seeks to integrate the preceding material discussed in the chapter, as well as recommend an application of the material in contemporary Christian life. Each chapter concludes with several discussion questions and an abbreviated reading list related to the topic reviewed. Throughout the book various images with explanatory commentary appear. Two appendices and a glossary complete the text.

There is much to commend in *Renewing Christian Theology*. The book covers a great deal of theological ground in a way that is interesting and accessible to a variety of readers. At various places it intersects theology with other disciplines, like modern science (chapter on creation and fall) and interreligious studies (chapter on the trinity), in informed and thought provoking ways. It is faithful to its subtitle, as throughout there is repeated mention of the ways in which *global* Christianity informs the contemporary conversation. The text also consistently makes intentional connections between the theological loci and scriptural narratives, using the latter to bring light to the former rather than limiting scriptural input on these issues merely to propositional statements.

A more subtle but rich enhancement of the text are the fifty-four color images that are included with their subsequent commentary, which are provided by Jonathan Anderson. For this feature alone, the book is worth owning. The images vary, from traditional depictions to modern interpretations, but all serve to provide an alternative approach to the content under discussion in a manner that is imaginative, affective, and embodied. Even with familiar images (e.g., Rublev's icon of the Trinity), Anderson connects the artist's techniques with theological content that may be overlooked by a viewer without a trained eye. As one reads through the chapters, this feature of the book enlivens the content.

Then there are also the obvious benefits because of the adopted renewalist approach. Three chapters are explicitly devoted to covering pneumatology and a whole chapter is devoted to discussing divine healing. These chapters are not just parochial approaches to stereotypical renewalist topics, but explore the areas in nuanced ways. For example, in the chapter on Spirit baptism, Yong highlights the distinctions in global understandings of Spirit baptism both in its interpretation and expression. And in the chapter on healing, Yong dialogues with disability studies and goes beyond the physical dimensions of health and wholeness to explore the social dimensions, too. Additionally, the book is infused with a

pneumatological—and, therefore, also eschatological—outlook from beginning to end. Readers will not just be exposed to this renewalist distinctive in a few select chapters, but will be continually exposed to the ways in which this theological locus intersects with and enriches the others.

However, a source of the book's strength is also its weakness. In order to make room for new content, in places traditional subjects are truncated. For example, absent in the Christology portions is extended talk about the hypostatic union, but included is attention to Spirit christologies. And in the chapter on the trinity prolonged attention to traditional trinitarian categories like nature and substance are missing, but included is a rich dialogue about Oneness pentecostalism.

Another potential drawback of the text is the order of the chapters. While the arrangement is intentional and constitutes an overarching thesis of the book, one wonders how helpful it might be in the classroom to discuss ordinances and sacraments before talking about the church proper. Or raise issues of salvation before discussing creation and sin? Admittedly Yong acknowledges that the chapters can be read in a different sequence from the one established, and some will find this feature of the text helpful and a tool for raising methodological questions with their students. But others may find it more problematic than beneficial, at least pedagogically.

Nevertheless, *Renewing Christian Theology* is a refreshing change from traditional theology textbooks for all the reasons stated above. If one is looking for a text that explicitly connects with students' renewalist spirituality, probes their experiences in more formal ways, and pushes them to consider their Christian faith in the context of global Christianity, then this is the book to use.

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Uytanlet, Samson. *Luke-Acts and Jewish Historiography: A Study on the Theology, Literature, and Ideology of Luke-Acts*. Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. xviii + 327pp. £84.00. Softcover. ISBN 9783161530906.

The book herein reviewed is a revised version of a doctoral thesis by Samson Uytanlet. This thesis was submitted to the London School of Theology (Middlesex University, UK) in 2012 and successfully defended in 2013. Joel B. Green was Uytanlet's doctoral supervisor. Frederick J. Long and luminaries such as Loveday Alexander, Conrad Gempf, and Markus Bockmuehl provided feedback, helpful suggestions, and/or recommendations in the writing or revising process. The revised thesis is published as number 366 in *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 2*, *Reihe* by Mohr Siebeck. At the time of publication Dr. Samson Uytanlet was associated with the Biblical Seminary of the Philippines, Manila.

Luke-Acts and Jewish Historiography has all of the requisite features of a (revised) published thesis. These begin with a Preface, and a List of Charts and Abbreviations. The main text of the book is divided into five parts: Part 1 Introduction, Part 2 Divine Involvement in Ancient Historical Accounts, Part 3 Literary Parallels and Succession Narratives in Ancient Historical Narratives, Part 4 Land, Genealogies and the Reign of the Gods in Ancient Historical Accounts, and Part 5 Summary and Conclusion. A twenty-three page Bibliography follows, and then the book concludes with seven indices: Scripture, Greco-Roman Writings, Jewish Writings, Hellenistic Jewish Writings, Other Jewish Writings and Modern Authors; a subject Index closes out the book.

Part 1 of the book is a survey of modern scholarship of Luke-Acts, focusing on the fields of "Theology, History, and Ideology." Referencing the earlier studies of Gasque, Green and McKeever, and Bovon, Uytanlet's "aim is not to provide a comprehensive review of works that discuss Lukan history and historiography, but to locate this work in relation to earlier writings" (p. 4). The new look in Lukan studies comes with the

work of Dibelius (speeches in Acts) and Conzelmann (interrelated epochs) (pp. 5-6). In the 70's, I. Howard Marshall and Martin Hengel rehabilitated Luke as a "theological historian" (pp. 6-7). Shauf and Bovon recognized that Luke wove the works of God into his narrative (pp. 8-9), and Jervell emphasized that Luke's idea of the "people of God" is grounded in Israel's Scriptures. In addition, Stronstad demonstrates that Luke's writings about the Spirit are based on the charismatic motifs as read in the LXX (p. 11). And so, in turn, the names which are associated with contemporary Lukan scholarship pile up, guiding the newcomer to Lukan studies to an ever-growing body of literature.

Uytanlet's methodology for Parts 2-4 of his monograph, "[is to] undertake a comparative study between Luke's work and those of the Greco-Roman and Jewish writers" (p. 23). This study focuses on three areas: 1) Luke's idea of divine involvement, 2) the use of parallels as a literary feature, and 3) Luke's stance concerning God's sovereign rule. In Part 2, chapters 2-4, Uytanlet, "examines the ancient historians' concepts of divine involvement in history and how they incorporate this into their historical narratives" (p. 23). His aim is to demonstrate that Luke's theology is best understood in light of the Jewish scriptures rather than in the light of Greco-Roman narratives (p. 24). In Part 3, chapters 5-7, Uytanlet examines how ancient Greco-Roman and Jewish historians used parallels as a literary device. His aim is to show that Luke's narratives about the succession from Jesus to Peter and Paul is best understood by the two succession narratives in the Jewish Scriptures, namely, those of Moses to Joshua and of Elijah to Elisha (p. 24). Finally, in Part 4, chapters 8-10, Uytanlet examines the ancient historians' conceptualizations of divine sovereignty and its relationship with land and territories. His aim is to show that Luke presents Jesus as God's co-regent of all the land under Rome's jurisdiction and even beyond (p. 24). As expected, in Part 5, Uytanlet briefly concludes his study.

Samson Uytanlet begins and ends his study with a twofold observation: 1) in the modern era Luke's *theology* is studied in connection with earlier Jewish beliefs, but 2) Luke's *literary features* are often studied in the light of ancient Hellenistic works (pp. 1, 257). After examining much of the most relevant and Jewish historical literature, he rightly (in the reviewer's estimation) concludes, "whether we are talking about Luke's theology or *literature,* his works can best be understood in relation with earlier Jewish writings." For those who have eyes to see it, and ears to hear it, he makes a convincing case for his conclusion.

Having effectively proven his thesis Uytanlet spoils some of his good work in chapter 7, "Literary Parallels," and in Part 4, "Land, Genealogies

and the Reign of the Gods." His writing, here, is characterized by exaggeration, trying to prove the unprovable. To illustrate: in chapter 7, Uytanlet exaggerates the power or status of the two apostles, Peter and Paul. Rightly drawing attention to the parallels between Jesus, Peter and Paul in the giving of the Spirit (i.e., the "succession" narrative) he concludes, "the only persons given the authority to bestow the Spirit were Peter and Paul (p. 149). But Luke's narratives do not support this conclusion. For example, he brushes aside the role of John, Peter's companion in the giving of the Spirit in Samaria (Acts 8:14-17). Further, he ignores the Cornelius narrative where the Holy Spirit is given apart from any human agency (10:44-48). In addition, the giving of the Spirit to the Ephesian believers (19:6) echoes the Pentecost narrative (2:4, 17), where there is no human agency. Further, it ignores the function of writing selective history. In this case, for example, though Luke reports that many miracles were done in Jerusalem at the hands of the apostles (2:43), he reports only some examples of Peter. These miracles (e.g., the healing of the lame man [3:1-9]) typify all of the wonders and signs which were performed by the other eleven apostles. In addition, Luke's report about the two deacons, Stephen and Philip, typify the kind of Spirit-filled, charismatic ministry of the other five deacons. More importantly, the whole idea of a special "authority" which is possessed exclusively by Peter and Paul is misguided. Just as Jesus is *always* the healer and *never* Peter (4:5-12), so Jesus is *always* the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:4-5; 11:15-17), and *never* Peter or Paul.

Second, Uytanlet also exaggerates the "Kingdom of God" theme in Part 4 of his book. Using a combination of methodological techniques, he reduces the message of Luke-Acts to the "Kingdom of God" theme. At best, this is a serious exaggeration of Luke's data. In fact, Luke actually downplayed the Kingdom of God theme. Thus, in the Gospel narratives, the theme is mainly absent from Luke 3:23-18:43. So, his "Galilee" and "On the Road" narratives are, in their entirety, about Jesus' Spirit-anointed, Spiritful, Spirit-led, and Spirit-empowered prophethood (Luke 24:19). Similarly, according to Uytanlet, the ministry of Jesus' followers in Acts is about the, "Kingdom of God." But Luke uses the term only half a dozen times in Acts. Rather, in the Acts narratives the primary theme is the Spirit-baptized, Spirit-empowered, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-led prophethood of Jesus' followers. Thus, neither Luke nor Acts is primarily about the "Kingdom of God," as Uytanlet proposes, but it is primarily about the eschatological manifestation of prophethood in the lives of Jesus and his followers.

Apart from the weaknesses noted, this monograph is a solid and sound study of Luke-Acts and Jewish historiography. It will be of interest to

every interpreter of Luke-Acts, and of particular benefit to those scholars and students who are doing research in the field of Lukan and/or Jewish historiography.

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