Network Church:
A Pentecostal Ecclesiology Shaped by Mission

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis develops a pentecostal ecclesiology using the structure of networks that leads to a fresh approach to contextualisation. It addresses the neglect in pentecostal scholarship of church structures beyond the congregation and of critical approaches to contextualisation. The pentecostal systematic methodology of Amos Yong is utilized, based on the synthesis of discerned experience (Spirit), biblical studies (Word) and the traditions of systematic and mission theology (Community). A trinitarian understanding of networks is developed and linked with an approach to the catholicity of the church that has a common essence and mission movement. This is shaped by the missionary nature of pentecostalism and rooted in an understanding of a church marked by Spirit baptism. The character of networks is defined in terms of partnership, a term with a rich mission understanding and seen also in the pentecostal tradition. A three-fold approach to contextualisation arises from the overlap between networks within and outside the church which is based on hospitality. Significantly, this thesis is the first in pentecostal ecclesiology to utilise a pentecostal methodology, to focus on structural and contextual issues and to develop a trinitarian network ecclesiology. It provides a fresh approach to catholicity, Spirit baptism, partnership and contextualisation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Journals

AF	Apostolic Faith
AfR	Anglicans for Renewal
AJPS	Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies
ATR	Anglican Theological Review
CC	Christian Century
CSR	Christian Scholar's Review
Cyber	Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research
ER	Ecumenical Review
ERT	Evangelical Review of Theology
HJ	Heythrop Journal
IBMR	International Bulletin of Missionary Research
IJST	International Journal of Systematic Theology
IRM	International Review of Mission
ITQ	Irish Theological Quarterly
JAAR	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JAS	Journal of Anglican Studies
JEPTA	Journal of European Pentecostal Theological Association
JPT	Journal of Pentecostal Theology
MS	Mission Studies
MT	Modern Theology
PE	Pentecostal Evangel
PNEUMA	Journal of Society for Pentecostal Studies
Reviews	Reviews in Religion and Theology
RSR	Religious Studies Review
TS	Theological Studies

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Pentecostal churches represent one of the fastest growing movements of the last century with one study suggesting there were over 523 million "Pentecostal/charismatics" in the world in 2001.[1] The numbers might be debated but it is clear that so far these movements have had limited impact on the study of ecclesiology. The movements have helped encourage the increasing focus on the work of the Holy Spirit in systematic theology but tend to be peripheral to ecclesial discussions.[2] Admittedly, pentecostalism has been described as "an experience looking for a theology" and so the development of pentecostal scholarship that might contribute to ecclesiology has been limited.[3] But this is changing and the last forty years have seen the establishment of a number of societies and journals such as the Society of Pentecostal Studies with its journal *PNEUMA* and the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*.[4] There is a need for research projects building on such scholarship to develop pentecostal ecclesiologies that interact with and contribute to systematic reflections from outside the pentecostal tradition.

It is becoming more recognised that questions of ecclesiology have been a part of pentecostalism since its earliest years. In this the experience of Spirit baptism within local assemblies has been important, building on the story of Pentecost within Luke-Acts. Local

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[1]David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson, "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2003," *IBMR* 27, no. 1 (2003): 24–25.

[2]Evidence for the impact of the movements on study of the Holy Spirit can be seen in the recent summary article of Michael Welker, "The Holy Spirit," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 236–48.

[3]The quote was referred to, amongst others, by Gary B. McGee, "Historical Background," in *Systematic Theology* (Springfield, Missouri: Logion Press, 2007), 9 Note that I am using "pentecostalism" rather than "Pentecostalism" to describe the movement as a whole – see the discussion in 1.1 below.

[4]See also the analysis of pentecostal theological development in Frank D. Macchia, "The Struggle for Global Witness: Shifting Paradigms in Pentecostal Theology," in *The Globlization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Carlisle: Regnum Books, 1999), 8–29 and the trajectories identified by Martin William Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts in the Pentecostal Tradition* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2010), 11–16.

churches were formed around Spirit baptism, spiritual gifts, Scripture, holiness and mission within a framework of eschatological urgency. More recently it has been recognised that the concerns for contextualisation and unity have been present in pentecostal ecclesiology, if often left undeveloped. Pentecostal adaptation for the cultural contexts in which churches are set has been vital to the movements growth, and how the resulting diversity has (or has not) been held together in a loving unity has been an important part of pentecostal history. Also present in pentecostalism have been interactions with the other Christian churches, notably in the life of David Du Plessis who was involved in the ecumenical movement and in the thirty year dialogue between pentecostal scholars and the Roman Catholic church.[5] Although pentecostals have often kept apart from other traditions there has been an ecumenical thread running throughout. It is important for pentecostal scholarship that the often implicit elements in their ecclesiology are made more explicit through detailed research. In particular, systematic research into existing implicit approaches to context, wider church structures and unity is needed within the pentecostal tradition. Currently there have been two doctoral studies of pentecostal ecclesiology drawing on churches in Australia and these have both had a practical focus.[6] Whilst these practical methods fit with the often experiential focus of pentecostalism I want to argue the need for a systematic theological approach.

The nature of the discipline of systematic theology remains open to discussion, as a recent issue of the *International Journal of Systematic Theology* demonstrates in four articles devoted to the subject. One concern raised there was the relationship of what Nicholas Healy calls "official" and "ordinary" systematic theologies – those involving critical, theoretical reflection and those arising from the practice of faith.[7] He argues for a greater interaction between these kinds of systematic theology, stressing the need for relationality between

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[5]R.P. Spittler, "Du Plessis, David Johannes," in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 589–93.
[6]Shane J. Clifton, *Pentecostal Churches in Transition: Analysing the Development of the Assemblies of God in Australia*, Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, Vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2009); David Morgan, "Priesthood, Prophethood and Spirit-Led Community: A Practical-Prophetic Pentecostal Ecclesiology," PhD Thesis (UK: Durham University, 2007).
[7]Nicholas M. Healy, "What is Systematic Theology," *IJST* 11, no. 1 (2009): 24–39.

different approaches and disciplines. Earlier, Healy developed an approach to ecclesiology that stresses the "ordinary" or concrete over against the "official" or blueprint ecclesiologies.[8] Such an interaction between disciplines is a feature of pentecostal ecclesial life: church is seen to draw experience, Scripture and tradition together within a missionary movement. Pentecostalism pays particular attention to concrete experience and it not surprising that the two pentecostal doctoral studies devote much space to analysing experience, one using Healy's methodology. Yet it is possible to approach systematic ecclesiology from a mix of disciplines that include but are not so devoted to analysis of present ecclesial experience. There is a need for further research within a systematic methodology of pentecostal ecclesiology that includes a mix of disciplines and is influenced by but not dominated by experience. The development of such pentecostal systematic methodologies has been limited and such methods have not yet been applied in detail to ecclesiology.

It is clear that mission has played a vital role in the self-understanding of the pentecostal movement and its various ecclesiologies. Mission studies has seen the value of systematic theology as the recent survey of Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder illustrates.[9] Yet it is not so often that systematic theology is found shaped by issues that arise in mission studies. There remains much to be done in developing ecclesiologies shaped by mission studies and in this regard David Bosch noted the need to develop a "missionary theology" in which mission concerns shape all theological reflection.[10] Having said this, there are many such concerns that might be chosen – some concerns within the discipline of mission studies and others arising out of particular social contexts. Pertinent to the concerns already mentioned are issues relating to contextualisation and mission structures for growth and unity. In terms of social context one of most significant factors in so-called "postmodern" Western culture has been the importance of networks to ways people relate. The work of Manuel Castells has been

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[8]Nicholas M. Healy, *Church, World and the Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[9]Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (New York: Orbis Books, 2004).

[10]David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis, 1991), 492–96.

significant in analysing the rise of the network culture.[11] Networks offer possibilities for rethinking the structures of existing and new churches. Such thoughts are beginning to affect thinking on ecclesiology, as seen in a recent report from the Church of England and in approaches to mission such as Mid-Sized Communities.[12] This theme, largely explored in practical approaches, is worthy of further theological research as an image of the church to inform future ecclesiology.

In short, existing pentecostal scholarship raises the question: *how might a pentecostal ecclesiology that is structured and contextual be constructed?* This research project advances the thesis that *networks contribute a new structure to pentecostal ecclesiology, one that enables a fresh approach to contextualisation* and gives a positive answer to this research question. The discipline in which the project is to be conducted is that of systematic theology, utilising a pentecostal methodology within this discipline. Insights from mission studies will contribute to the project at relevant points and the project will advance the body of pentecostal scholarship. Before turning to this project it is important to address a number of initial concerns relating to the nature of pentecostalism, mission and systematic theology.

1.1 Pentecostal Identity

Wolfgang Vondey has noted the "neglect of developing a coherent *identity* of Pentecostalism" and the need for such an identity for better discipleship.[13] He feels this is a central issue and symptomatic of a "crisis in Pentecostalism."[14] Vondey argues for a vision of identity which is spiritual, theological, renewing and unifying. The question of finding a unifying pentecostal identity is a difficult one given the numbers and variety within the movement. Allan Anderson, in his introduction to pentecostalism, starts with visions of the "multifaceted

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[11]Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society, 2nd Ed.* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).
[12]Archbishops Council, *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context* (London: Church House Publishing, 2004); Bob Hopkins and Mike Breen, *Clusters: Creative Mid-Sized Missional Communities* (3DM, 2007), 40–41.
[13]Wolfgang Vondey, "Pentecostal Identity and Christian Discipleship," *Cyber* 6 (1999): 3.
[14]Ibid., 5.

variety" of the pentecostal and charismatic movements.[15] He concludes that it is better to speak about a "range of Pentecostalisms" rather than attempting any one definition that can cover all the possibilities although he does suggest the gifts of the Spirit and the contextual nature of the movement as distinctive.[16] More recently he has suggested that mission is at the heart of pentecostal nature.[17] William Kay summarises approaches to pentecostal identity in terms of doctrine, history and ritual, noting how definitions have become "progressively less specific" over time as the movement has grown and diversified.[18] David Morgan explores pentecostal identity in terms of the multi-faceted dimensions suggested by Ninian Smart in his study of Christianity: ritual, mythological, doctrinal, ethical, social and experiential.[19] Walter J. Hollenweger notes four groups within pentecostalism: classical Pentecostal churches; non-white Indigenous churches; the charismatic movement; and neo-pentecostal churches.[20] Despite the present variety, which he outlines in relation to Birmingham, Hollenweger sees pentecostal identity as inescapably formed by its early years and stresses the black roots of the movement. In this he raises the debate over the influence of Charles Parham and W.J. Seymour in the founding of American pentecostalism at Azusa Street.[21] Cecil M. Robeck has written a more detailed study of the significance of Azusa Street with a focus on Seymour, arguing that the events in early pentecostal history are still formational for the movement's identity today.[22] Anderson would agree with the importance of the early history but argues that the movement's roots lie in a number of places rather than just Azusa Street.[23]

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[15]Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1.
[16]Ibid., 10,13–14.
[17]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM, 2007), 1.
[18]William K. Kay, *Pentecostalism*, SCM Core Text (London: SCM, 2009), 6.
[19]Morgan, "Priesthood, Prophethood," 35–38; Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (London: Fount Paperbacks, 1977).
[20]W.J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1997), 2. A similar categorization can be found in S.M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), xvii-xxiii.
[21]Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, Chapter 1.
[22]Cecil M. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006).
[23]Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 35–38.

There is much to debate on each of these points but I want to suggest that pentecostal identity will have a number of influencing factors that prevent a unified identity suitable for all contexts. The range of pentecostalisms and the difficulty of scholars in defining the movement in ways acceptable to all seem to force this conclusion. Hence I prefer to talk about "pentecostalism" as embracing all the different groupings mentioned by Hollenweger and Anderson, and use the term "Pentecostal" to refer to the classical Pentecostal tradition within the wider movement.[24] The early years of the movement clearly continue to exert a significant influence on the shape of pentecostalism and yet even in the early years there was a mix of possibilities. Aimee Semple McPherson compared the early movement "to a pot of stew boiling away over the cookfire of the Spirit" when considering how the different theological visions behind the movement were at work to form something new.[25] This is a positive image of people gathered round a fire, each contributing to the theological conversation (the stew) in a way that produces something good and wholesome. It is an image of a hospitable theology in which much is shared and brought together to form new thinking and practice, as the Spirit enables. Rather than come up with my own study of pentecostal identity I want to build on existing studies to suggest that pentecostal identity is always shaped by a mix of influences, with the mix being different in different contexts. At this point I could focus on one particular context and pentecostal identity, but I suggested above the value of exploring ecclesiology in more general terms. Although influenced by the particular contextual issue of networks this work should provoke further research across a range of contexts. Not all would agree with my stress on a mix within pentecostalism and some would argue for a more distinctive approach. For example, John Carpenter has argued that a departure from pentecostalism's evangelical roots is "the most significant threat to the future of the Pentecostal movement."[26] He sees

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[24]This is in line with my earlier approach, Andrew M. Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission: A Holistic Charismatic Missiology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005), 2–4.

[25]Aimee Semple McPherson, *This is That: Personal Experiences, Sermons and Writings* (Los Angeles: Echo Park Evangelistic Association, 1923), 749; quoted in Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 17.

[26]John B. Carpenter, "Genuine Pentecostal Traditioning: Rooting Pentecostalism in Its Evangelical Soil: A Reply to Simon Chan," *AJPS* 6, no. 2 (2003): 325, quoting Douglas A. Oss, *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today* (Leicester: IVP, 1996), 87.

Simon Chan's appreciation of the contribution of Roman Catholic mysticism to pentecostal traditioning as such a threat.[27] Yet it seems hard to exclude the Roman Catholic influence on pentecostalism that exists if only indirectly through the Wesleyan roots of the movement in Hollenweger's analysis.[28] Also there is a significant move away from an identity based solely on an evangelical basis given the way evangelical involvements have influenced the movement away from its roots.[29] I would rather stand with Seymour who stated in the first issue of *Apostolic Faith* that the movement "stood for 'Christian unity everywhere,'" more inclusive than exclusive.[30]

It is important to reflect briefly on the elements that influence pentecostal identity as they are also vital to any pentecostal theological methodology. I want to suggest that there are at least five constituent elements that take their place in the "cookfire of the Spirit": experience, doctrine, the Scriptures, spirituality and mission. From outside the movement, Harvey Cox has argued that 'primal' experience is key to understanding pentecostalism, rather than doctrinal beliefs.[31] This provides a link with wider religious movements and, for Cox, helps explain pentecostal growth. In contrast, classical Pentecostals would commonly want to stress the particular experience of Spirit baptism. Frank Macchia has recently argued for a rediscovery of Spirit baptism as the central pentecostal distinctive.[32] His argument rests on an understanding of Spirit baptism both as a shared pentecostal experience and also as a distinctive pentecostal doctrine. In this he reflects a wider interest in seeking theological roots for pentecostalism and in this the work of Donald Dayton remains significant.[33] Dayton argued that experience alone was not sufficient and suggests from the early literature that

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[27]Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*, JPTSup, vol. 21 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000).

[28]Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 2.

[29]Paul Gifford, "Recurring Issues in Researching Pentecostalism," paper presented at Glopent Conference (Birmingham, 2009).

[30]Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 249; William J. Seymour, "Apostolic Faith Movement," *AF* 1, no. 1 (1906): 9.

[31]Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the 21st Century* (London: Cassell, 1996), 57,71–72.

[32]Frank D. Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 19–28.

[33]Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, Studies in Evangelicalism, no. 5 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987).

pentecostalism centres on the theological theme of Christology where Jesus is seen as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, Baptizer in the Spirit and Coming King. D. William Faupel develops Dayton's work in examining the importance of eschatology in understanding the pentecostal message and thinking.[34] Here I am suggesting that both doctrine and experience are elements influencing pentecostal identity, even if some groups would mix them differently. This is in line with the thinking of Mark Cartledge who places charismatic encounters with the Spirit alongside a theological framework where the themes of kingdom, holiness, speech and praise are prominent.[35]

It is not possible to consider pentecostal experience or doctrine without realising the central importance of the story of Pentecost in Acts. Robeck details how at Azusa Street, prior to the revival, the prayer group that included Seymour "planned a ten-day fast, during which they would study Acts 2:1-4 and pray each evening until they had the same experience described in this text."[36] The "Pentecostal blessing" was not comprehensible apart from the Scriptures, especially the narrative of Acts. Amos Yong suggests that "for pentecostals, Luke-Acts has served somewhat as a template allowing readers to enter into the world of the early church."[37] To this might be added the importance of the Pauline texts on spiritual gifts and prophetic passages linked to eschatology. As is implied here, the influence of the Scriptures is linked with the everyday life of pentecostals through narrative. Steven J. Land has focused on pentecostal spirituality as vital to understanding and re-visioning pentecostal identity. He reads the early pentecostal narratives in terms of "participating in the story of God" and suggests that the affections of gratitude, compassion and courage form a "distinctive Pentecostal ethos."[38] Spirituality is also central for Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen who links it with

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[34]D. William Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

[35]Mark J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition* (London: DLT, 2006), 19–32.

[36]Robeck, *Azusa Street*, 66.

[37]Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 27.

[38]Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, JPT Sup, vol. 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 71–81,138–139.

the Christology of Dayton.[39] Pentecostal identity is also influenced by the missionary nature of pentecostalism. This is often implicitly assumed in pentecostal literature but does need to be made explicit for any understanding of pentecostalism. Anderson states that the early image of fire was central to pentecostal convictions – that "Spirit baptism was a 'fire' that would spread all over the world."[40] Pentecostalism is "fundamentally a missionary movement" that built on various antecedents to develop its "missionary spirit." Such a missionary spirit, for Anderson, leads to a contextualisation or "incarnation" of "the gospel in different cultural forms."[41]

These five elements in what I have called the "cookfire of the Spirit" overlap and can be found in different ways in various contexts and scholarly understandings. I want to suggest that pentecostal identity must be shaped by all five and not simply reduced to any one or two influences. Of course, these influences are in general terms shared by many other Christian traditions and it is important to note what might constitute a distinctively pentecostal identity. In this regard we have recognized experienced encounters with the Holy Spirit, a Christological and eschatological focus in doctrine, a narrative approach to Luke-Acts, a spirituality of gratitude, compassion and courage, and an inbuilt fire for mission. These do mark distinctive emphases in the pentecostal tradition that mixed together help distinguish it from other traditions.

Having considered pentecostal identity in general, it is important to comment on this author's pentecostal identity in terms of the way it influences this research. My own faith journey has been shaped by the charismatic movement in Britain generally and within the Church of England in particular. This is a tradition shaped by leaders such as David Watson, David Pytches, Mark Stibbe, Ray Simpson, Robert Warren, Michael Mitton and Graham

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[39]Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Pentecostalism and Pentecostal Theology in the Third Millennium: Taking Stock of the Contemporary Global Situation," in *The Spirit in the World: Emerging Pentecostal Theologies in Global Contexts*, ed. Veli-Matt Kärkkäinen (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 2009), xvii.
[40]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 3.
[41]Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 14.

Cray.[42] My encounters with the Spirit during the 1980s have been inseparable from a growing desire to engage in mission within the world and a deepening love of Scripture and theology. Questions about the nature of the church abound within the Anglican Communion and within local settings – I serve as the leader of three churches affected by changing cultures and the challenges are considerable. For me, encountering the Spirit has led on to an adventure of practical, biblical and theological explorations shaped by a mission desire to engage with the world. I have previously served as a mission encourager for the Church Mission Society (CMS), an Anglican evangelical mission agency and have written a charismatic theology of mission.[43] Although I have chosen for this research not to focus on one pentecostal narrative the themes of networks, contextualisation and partnership have been significant in my encounters with CMS and Church of England thinking. The recent *Mission-Shaped Church* report of the Church of England has stimulated much creative ecclesial thinking and has nudged me in various directions. Yet the aim has been to bring such particular influences from my narrative into a creative mix with much wider pentecostal, systematic, biblical and mission thinking in ways that do justice to the wider debates.

1.2 Importance of Mission

I have suggested that it is impossible to think of pentecostal identity without considering its missionary heart. Anderson notes that within twenty years of the movement's starting, pentecostal missionaries were found in at least 42 countries outside of North America and Europe.[44] This growth built on existing missionary networks but, for Anderson, it shows that world pentecostalism is "both transnational and migratory, or 'missionary' in its fundamental

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[42]From the many possible references, the following are significant influences on my thinking: David Watson, *I Believe in the Church, 2nd Ed.* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1982); David Pytches, *Come, Holy Spirit, 2nd Ed.* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995); Mark Stibbe, *Revival*, Thinking Clearly Series (Crowborough: Monarch, 1998); Ray Simpson, *Exploring Celtic Spirituality: Historic Roots for Our Future* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1995); Michael Mitton, *The Sounds of God: Hearing the Voice of God*, Exploring Prayer (Guildford: Eagle, 1993); Robert Warren, *Being Human, Being Church* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1995); Graham Cray, *From Here to Where? - the Culture of the Nineties*, Board of Mission Occasional Paper, no. 3 (London: Board of Mission, 1992).

[43]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*.

[44]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*.

nature."[45] Grant McClung summarises this early movement's understanding of mission in terms of Seymour's injunction to "Try to get people saved."[46] He argues that evangelism, experiences of the Spirit and an eschatological outlook were key to early pentecostal mission. McClung suggests that the movement's understanding of mission developed through an appreciation of the indigenous nature of the church and in this the work of Melvin Hodges has been very influential.[47] Later it was influenced by the church growth movement and Paul Pomerville's book provided a significant pentecostal contribution to mission studies based on some of the church growth ideas.[48] More recently cultural and social concerns have been more prominent in pentecostal mission thinking. McClung suggests that pentecostal understanding of mission needs to be diversified and yet keep an evangelistic focus.[49]

The focus of the present work is ecclesiology and yet this cannot be considered from a pentecostal perspective without considering the influence of mission. A choice is needed as to which understanding of mission to work with, one that is pentecostal and informed by the developments in thinking sketched above. There are many threads in the exploration of a holistic pentecostal theology of mission that take seriously evangelism, social concern, indigenous practices and eschatological thinking. Yet there is an absence of book-length treatments of such theology apart from those mentioned by Hodges and Pomerville. It was this absence that motivated my own attempt to bring together the different threads in *Spirit-Shaped Mission: a Holistic Charismatic Missiology*.[50] Howard Foltz described this as a "breakthrough work" in the discussions over "what Spirit-shaped holistic mission actually means."[51] Yong comments on how the work springs from praxis and develops a positive

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[45]Ibid., 292.

[46]L. Grant McClung Jr., "'Try to Get People Saved' : Revisiting the Paradigm of an Urgent Pentecostal Missiology," in *The Globilization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Carlisle: Regnum Books, 1999), 30.

[47]Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church, 3rd Ed.* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1976).

[48]Paul A. Pomerville, *The Third Force in Missions* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1985).

[49]L. Grant McClung Jr., "Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspectives on a Missiology for the Twenty-First Century," *PNEUMA* 16 (Spring 1994): 11–21.

[50]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*.

[51]Howard Foltz, "Review of *Spirit-Shaped Mission*," *PNEUMA* 29, no. 1 (2007): 142.

theology to inform pentecostal praxis.[52] It makes sense to choose this understanding of mission in this present work – because there are so few such theological studies and as this project can be seen to develop my previous work in line with existing pentecostal mission thinking. A criticism of my outlook, and of a general trend in pentecostal mission thinking, has come from David Garrard who argues against incarnational models of mission and reinforces a focus on evangelistic missionaries who are to continue "until Jesus comes."[53] I responded with an appreciation of the wider developments in mission thinking but Garrard remained unconvinced, largely responding from his many years experience as a pentecostal missionary and challenging the biblical roots of my thinking.[54] There are a number of areas of contention, but for me a vital question is whether mission is largely evangelism spread from the church into the world or whether mission needs also to positively embrace God's more holistic working both within and outside the church – Garrard would stress the former and I have sought to develop a theological and biblical rationale for the latter.

In terms of ecclesiology we can see that a church shaped by evangelism can look different to one shaped by a holistic understanding of mission. There is value in exploring both these forms of church in regard to pentecostal understandings, but for this project I will utilise the holistic approach to mission from *Spirit-Shaped Mission* and leave it for others to develop different approaches. The present work aims to build on *Spirit-Shaped Mission* and so will not address in depth the issues of eschatology, the kingdom of God, spirituality or the mission of the Spirit which were addressed there. For the purposes of this project it is enough here to summarise the understanding of mission assumed and then to develop particular aspects during this research. From an exploration of the biblical nature of the eschatological, the coming kingdom, I suggested that mission has a number of dimensions: evangelistic, healing, social, reconciling and ecological. Mission is also inseparable from Christian

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[52]Amos Yong, "Review of *Spirit-Shaped Mission*," *RSR* 32, no. 1 (2006): 50.

[53]David J. Garrard, "Questionable Assumptions in the Theory and Practice of Mission," *JEPTA* 26, no. 2 (2006): 102–12.

[54]Andrew M. Lord, "Incarnational Partnership in Mission: A Response to Questionable Assumptions," *JEPTA* 26, no. 2 (2006): 113–19; David J. Garrard, "A Response to Andy Lord's Critique," *JEPTA* 26, no. 2 (2006): 120–26.

spirituality, character and relationships. These dimensions of holistic mission relate well to the mission of Jesus in Luke-Acts, a mission that is driven by the activity of the Holy Spirit. It is the mission of the Spirit that moves individuals and church communities out into the rest of creation in holistic mission. This mission of the Spirit is also in evidence in the world outside of the church as individuals and communities are drawn towards Christ and His kingdom. Thus there are two movements of the Spirit that I suggest are vital to mission: from the church outwards; and in the world towards Christ. These movements are by nature both "life-giving" and "critical-prophetic" – affirming and challenging the world and church as they currently are in the light of the eschatological kingdom. The movements can also be seen as full of blessings and yearnings, the blessings of the coming kingdom seen in life today and yet the yearning for more where the kingdom seems absent. Contextualisation arises out of the presence of both movements that force an interaction between God revealed both inside and outside the church, through cultural contexts that affect all communities.

The communal nature of such mission movements was reflected on in *Spirit-Shaped Mission* through the practice of voluntary mission agencies and their links with pentecostal experience. Also, comments were made on the place of mission structures given the Spirit-inspired movements. Such reflections provide a link between the understanding of mission and ecclesiology through the emphasis on community. Yet *Spirit-Shaped Mission* arose out of concerns in mission studies which then drew on some systematic concerns, whereas here we start with more systematic ecclesiology and then draw mission issues into the discussion as appropriate. Of course, it should not be possible to separate ecclesiology and mission – all ecclesiology should be mission-inspired and all mission should be ecclesial. Yet it has to be admitted that mission studies often does not engage with ecclesiological studies and many ecclesiologies omit engagement with mission studies. Missiologists Bevans and Schroeder suggest that "all of the Christian traditions rediscovered a mission ecclesiology during the twentieth century," although I would suggest that the dialogue between mission and

ecclesiological disciplines remains limited.[55] Bosch challenged systematic theology to enter into dialogue with mission disciplines and this remains a challenge which this research seeks to respond to.[56]

The mission concern for contextualisation links with the concern for the concrete in ecclesiology.[57] There are many contextual issues which bear upon any ecclesiology and a decision always has to be made as to which to engage with. As suggested earlier, the choice here is to engage with the particular contextual issue of networks which is apparent in Western and so-called "postmodern" cultural thinking. We are engaging this issue with the question as to how such a mission concern might shape a pentecostal ecclesiology. There are other ways of approaching this issue, with two more obvious possibilities being through practical theology or through a sociological-theological dialogue. Rather than introducing two further disciplines to this research, which already spans a number, the choice is to stay with a mission engagement with networks. This would of course benefit from deeper practical-theological and sociological studies but these will remain areas for future study. What a focus on networks will enable us to do here is to link ecclesiological discussion on the structure of the church with mission experience and reflection on structures for mission. Thus they become a bridge between mission and ecclesiological studies even as they aim practically to bridge differing communities in the world.

1.3 Systematic Theology

A recent survey of modern theology suggests that there are "two fundamental approaches to theology in its response to modernity.[58] These are theologies of "correlation" and theologies of "confession" that seek either to respond positively or negatively to a dialogue between theology and modern thought. The desire to "bring into dialogue" and the desire for "clarity of

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[55]Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 275.
[56]Bosch, *Mission*, 495–96.
[57]More background to the term contextualisation is given in Chapter 7.1.
[58]James C. Livingston, et al., *Modern Christian Thought: The Twentieth Century, 2nd Ed.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 493.

Christian confession" seem to mark two broad approaches to theology and ecclesiology. These are admittedly more tendencies than distinct ways of approaching theology, but it is important to clarify the tendencies assumed in this research. Within systematic theology, the latter tendency can be illustrated by John Webster who in an introduction to a recent survey volume speaks of how the discipline has as its subject matter "Christian teaching" and seeks to unify the different elements of Christian doctrine.[59] Webster speaks elsewhere of the vital importance of the Word and reason to the task of systematic theology.[60] This resonates well with pentecostal approaches in which "biblical revelation" is the authority that is served by reason in the creation of systematic theology.[61] Yet the mix of the "cookfire of the Spirit" mentioned above resonates more with a desire for dialogue in the sources and disciplines that make up systematic theology. I want to suggest that the mix that influences pentecostal identity influences a pentecostal theological methodology. It is a correlation approach, if one that springs from a pentecostal confession of the Spirit. It is important to reflect further on the nature of pentecostal systematic theology but first I want to sketch relevant background about the nature of correlation approaches to systematic theology and ecclesiology within this.

1.3.1 Systematic Theology as a Mix of Conversations

The suggested approach resonates well with David Ford's placing of theology in the context of the multiple overwhelming in the world today. For him, theology considers questions of life from within religious traditions and "flourishes best when it can learn from and contribute to various disciplines, faith communities, and debates on matters of public importance."[62] Ford argues for approaches to theology rooted in and contributing to social contexts and pursued "through a range of academic disciplines."[63] More recently, he has highlighted aspects of

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[59]John Webster, "Introduction: Systematic Theology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2.

[60]John Webster, "Principles of Systematic Theology," *IJST* 11, no. 1 (2009): 56–71.

[61]so James H. Railey Jr. and Benny C. Aker, "Theological Foundations," in *Systematic Theology, Revised Ed.*, ed. Stanley M. Horton (Springfield, Missouri: Logion Press, 2007), 39–60.

[62]David F. Ford, *Theology: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19.

[63]Ibid., 28.

contexts that are seen in the "cries" of "joy, suffering, recognition, wonder, bewilderment, gratitude, expectation or acclamation."[64] He outlines an understanding of theology as wisdom which "seeks to do justice to many contexts, levels, voices, moods, genres, systems and responsibilities" through practices of conversation and friendship.[65] Along with Ford I am suggesting that it is important for our theological method to embrace a mix of disciplines that are brought into conversation. Such an approach embraces but goes beyond correlation approaches that bring contemporary culture and the traditions of the church into dialogue. For example, Peter Hodgson developed a correlation approach in his theological system *Winds of the Spirit*, one that driven by the Spirit "is always pressing towards wholeness and mutual transformation."[66] For Hodgson disciplines and histories are brought into conversation, or dialogue, with the assumption that a single unity will result. In contrast, Ford acknowledges correlation approaches as one possible way but argues for a range of resulting theologies that remain hospitable to one another. Central to Ford's approach is a focus on Christian doctrines, Scriptural texts and discerned experience that shape his theological approach that aims at developing Christian wisdom in life.[67] Although these themes are understood differently to the pentecostal influences they resonate sufficiently to support a mixed "cookfire" approach to systematic theology.

Two key elements of this mix – doctrine and Scripture – have often been kept firmly apart. Joel Green and Max Turner have commented that "in the last century or two, biblical exegetes have had little traffic with systematic theologians."[68] Green traces the roots of this division to the formation of the "modern period" in which "history" and "text" were treated

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[64]David F. Ford, *Christian Wisdom: Desiring God and Learning in Love*, Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 5.
[65]Ibid., 4.
[66]Peter C. Hodgson, *Winds of the Spirit: A Constructive Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1994), 99.
[67]For example, we can see the themes of dialogue, the doctrine of salvation, biblical studies and the discerned experience of Christian living in David F. Ford, *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[68]Joel B. Green and Max Turner, eds., *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich. ; Cambridge: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1.

separately.[69] Scripture was seen bound to early church history rather than also engaged with history since. Obviously there are exceptions, and Green mentions Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, but he suggests the need for ways forward that involve a "conversation" within "communities of interpretation."[70] Such a conversation between biblical studies and systematic theology has been developing, but our discussion of pentecostal influences and Ford's method give rise to the question of where experience fits in such a conversation. Religious experience as a source for theology is a subject of extended debate, often around questions relating to whether and how such experience is to be interpreted.[71] Positively, experience links faith with contemporary cultural questions that can otherwise be missed. Anthony Thiselton has argued for the need to move from an understanding of systematic theology as relating to "free-floating 'problems'" to an engagement with "questions that arise" in particular contexts.[72] He argues for "two horizons" that relate to "points of engagement" and aspects of "otherness."[73] In terms of the discussion here, Thiselton's careful argument suggests that a discernment of experience needs to be brought together with systematic and biblical studies. When exploring ecclesiology he asks pertinent questions for contemporary contexts by means of a re-reading of biblical texts and appreciation of systematic theologians.[74]

If we grant experience a voice in the conversations of systematic theology there remain many questions regarding its definition, how we discern what "Christian experience" is and whether its use leads to positive ends. Ellen Charry suggests that experience is a "slippery" word that has been used to justify a variety of competing political movements.[75] She argues

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[69]Joel B. Green, "Scripture and Theology: Uniting the Two So Long Divided," in *Between Two Horizons*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2000), 24–29.

[70]Ibid., 43.

[71]On this see the general introduction of Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction, 2nd Ed.* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 223–31. See also the discussion of Christian existentialism in the 20th century in Livingston, et al., *Modern Christian Thought*, 133–64.

[72]Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Hermeneutics of Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007), 3.

[73]Ibid., xx,177–85.

[74]Ibid., 479–99.

[75]Ellen T. Charry, "Experience," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 414–16.

for a positive appreciation of experience within systematic theology, but is careful to limit the kind of experience that can join systematic conversations. Charry speaks of "Christian theological experience" (CTE), a "careful definition of experience" defined as "knowledge of the God Christians worship, received as a gift of grace or divine illumination, frequently attributed to the Holy Spirit."[76] She sees such experience within systematics as a prophetic corrective to approaches that deny experience a voice and hence become supportive of the status quo.[77] Charry admits that her definition of CTE might preclude experiences that relate to the sciences and does not comment on experiences that relate to those of other faiths. These leave strangely open the question of how systematic theology might address such concerns, but for our purposes here it is sufficient to note that there is good precedent for including some discerning approach to experience within the conversations of systematic theology.

1.3.2 Issues in Ecclesiology

Having outlined some of the current concerns in systematic theology, it is important to see how these resonate with current issues in ecclesiology, the focus of this research project. Here I want to explore issues raised by Nicholas Healy and Roger Haight, two scholars with whom pentecostals have engaged. Earlier I mentioned that Healy has contrasted "official" and "ordinary" approaches to systematic theology and this links with his contrast between "blueprint" and "concrete" ecclesiologies. Healy suggests five methodological elements seen in approaches to ecclesiology over the last century: (1) the focus on a single word or phrase and (2) a bipartite structure to the church, leading to (3) a "systematic and theoretical form of normative ecclesiology"; (4) a "tendency to reflect on the church abstracted from its concrete identity," leading to (5) "idealized accounts of the church."[78] Approaches of this form he labels and critiques as "blueprint ecclesiologies," a critique that is particularly applied to Avery Dulles's *Models of the Church*, a work which has formed the basis for much

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[76]Ibid., 424,419.
[77]Ibid., 424.
[78]Healy, *Church*, 26.

ecclesiological reflection.[79] Healy feels that such models, or even super-models, are "untenable and unfitting" because of the plurality of ways of talking about the church and the need to address the imperfect concrete church and not just a perfect, idealised form of church.[80] Hence he argues for concrete ecclesiologies that are "practical-prophetic" by means of a methodology that takes seriously the "ecclesiological context."[81]

Healy is arguing for the need to take seriously ecclesial context, the ways in which images and concepts have been interpreted in "the church's history and its present concrete shape."[82] However, his use of the term "context" is different to that assumed in mission studies or practical theology. Healy agrees with the need to engage with "non-theological disciplines" but within "a thoroughly theological horizon."[83] For this he suggests a "theodramatic horizon" that draws on the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar and some of the critiques of other approaches given by John Milbank.[84] Healy distances himself from "correlation" theologies and yet is arguing against theoretical "confessional" theologies. This represents a mixed approach that draws on Scripture, tradition and aspects of context within a distinctively "Christian metanarrative."[85] Rather than enter into a detailed critique of Healy, at this point I simply want to note that his challenge reflects a wider need to take seriously the concrete, the discerned experience, within any study of ecclesiology. In this his arguments resonate with pentecostal motivations and it is not surprising to see David Morgan turning to Healy for a methodology for his pentecostal ecclesiological research. For Morgan, Healy's methodology offers a way into addressing "the church that actually exists" in order to

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[79]Ibid., 27–28; Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church, Expanded Ed.* (New York: Random House, 2002).
[80]Healy, *Church*, 35,37.
[81]Ibid., 50–51.
[82]Ibid., 46.
[83]Ibid., 49–50.
[84]On Balthasar see Healy, *Church*, Ch.3. Healy refers to John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) on a number of occasions and seems to follow Milbank's assumptions, although Healy feels that Milbank goes too far in reinterpreting society in Christian terms as he sees the existence of non-Christian society with which the church interacts, Healy, *Church*, 167.
[85]The three elements of the mix are most clearly seen in his criteria for evaluating theology, Healy, *Church*, 52. His aim at a metanarrative puts him at odds with much postmodern thinking and he turns to Milbank in support of this, *Church*, 53,111–115.

challenge it "to be more faithful to its own disciple making and witness bearing."[86] For this Morgan adapts Healy by focusing on the concrete pentecostal practices of priesthood and prophethood within the local historical ecclesial context of two Australian churches. These contexts are explored through a study of their narrative histories against the wider narrative of the pentecostal movement. Central to Morgan's concern is for a concrete rather than blueprint ecclesiology although this is a tendency rather than an exclusive concern. As a counter example, Morgan suggests a single definition of a local pentecostal church rooted in priesthood and prophethood which comes before his practical study of the two churches – something more in line with blueprint ecclesiology.[87]

The tendency to focus on the concrete can also be seen in the study of pentecostal ecclesiology by Shane Clifton who also points to Healy for inspiration.[88] He is interested in "concrete church praxis" rather than what he terms biblicist, theological or dialogical approaches to ecclesiology seen as characteristic of existing pentecostal approaches.[89] Rather than adapt Healy's method, Clifton prefers to work with the heuristic method of Joseph Komonchak alongside insights from Neil Ormerod.[90] These scholars have been shaped by the theological method of Bernard Lonergan, which Clifton sees in a positive light. Clifton's methodology utilises the historical narrative structure of the church and carefully considered sociological insights, although not in the direction of Milbank, to consider the developing ecclesiology of the Assemblies of God in Australia. He concludes by stressing the value of a concrete rather than an idealist approach, whilst appreciating the theological analysis that was required in concrete approaches.[91]

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[86]Morgan, "Priesthood, Prophethood," 21.

[87]Ibid., 160.

[88]Clifton, *Pentecostal Churches*, 12.

[89]Which he links with Michael Dusing, Miroslav Volf and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen in his dissertation, summarised in the published version, Shane J. Clifton, "An Analysis of the Developing Ecclesiology of the Assemblies of God in Australia," PhD Thesis (Australia: Australian Catholic University, 2005), 15–47; Clifton, *Pentecostal Churches*, 10–11.

[90]Joseph A. Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology*, Lonergan Workshop, vol. 11 (Supplement); (Boston, Mass: Boston College, 1995); Neil Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," *TS* 63 (2002): 3–30.

[91]Clifton, *Pentecostal Churches*, 220–21.

Tommy Davidsson has questioned whether Clifton's approach relies on too uniform an understanding of pentecostal ecclesiology, and leads to a better appreciation of the church as it exists concretely at the expense of "any constructive means of shaping its future trajectory."[92] Davidsson is at an early stage in a research project that looks at Lewi Pethrus and Swedish pentecostal ecclesiology, but he points to the methodological work of Roger Haight who has produced a significant three-volume study of ecclesiology through Christian history. Haight highlights a contrast that, on the surface, is similar to that of Healy: between "church from above" and "church from below" approaches to ecclesiology.[93] Haight suggests that many studies are a-historical, focus on specific churches, rely on authorities and doctrines, are Christocentric and value hierarchical structures – hence churches seen "from above." Instead of this, he advocates approaches that are historical, founded in experience and practice, value pluralism, are pneumatocentric and value community structures. Haight points to Komonchak in recognising the "anthropological turn in ecclesiology" that his approach reflects.[94] His study can be seen as rooted in history and correlation, in a valuing of the concrete and the kind of dialogue that he sees contemporary postmodern culture as requiring – an approach that differs to that of Healy.[95] Haight provides a significant study of the church and its engagement with culture throughout its history, concluding his survey by briefly stressing the need to recognise pluralism and pointing to the pentecostal experience of tongues as a model of plurality within unity.[96] This plurality can be seen as linked with Paul Minear's influential work on *Images of the Church in the New Testament*.[97] He argues that the plurality of images

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[92]Thomas Davidsson, "Toward a Pentecostal Contextualisaed Indicative-Imperative Model: Bridging the Gap Between Concrete and Idealised Ecclesiological Methods," Paper presented to, Centre for Pentecostal & Charismatic Studies Seminar (University of Birmingham, 2009), 2.

[93]Roger Haight, *Christian Community in History. Vol. 1, Historical Ecclesiology* (New York ; London: Continuum, 2004), 18–25,56–65.

[94]Ibid., 3.

[95]There is thus an ecclesial issue, the "anthropological turn" which Haight sees in terms of a historical need, and a cultural-contextual issue, the pluralism, globalisation and growing interdependence which for Haight necessitates dialogue.

[96]Roger Haight, *Christian Community in History. Vol. 2, Comparative Ecclesiology* (New York ; London: Continuum, 2005), 490.

[97]Paul S. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament*, reprint, 1960, The New Testament Library (Louisville: WJK, 2004).

enables whatever form of church currently exists can be challenged and renewed, helping "cure blindness" in churches that tend to limit the understanding of "the creative and redemptive work of the Triune God."[98] Minear argues the need for renewing a "vital communal imagination" through revisiting images, and what is being attempted here can be seen as the development of the image of "network" in order to renew the church's imagination as to the working of the Triune God.

We might conclude from this brief survey of ecclesiological method within wider moves in systematic methodology that contemporary approaches require a variety of elements to interact, including those of the concrete, the experiential and the historical. This represents a tendency towards the correlational rather than the confessional, although the survey mentioned earlier outlines significant confessional approaches in contemporary theology.[99] It can be suggested that the danger with confessional approaches is that they can dismiss experience seen as outside Christian faith.[100] From the perspective of mission being taken here, such approaches can seem dangerously close to those criticised as being imperialistic and insensitive to local cultures. They also seem to neglect the cultural lens that all Christians have and which become clear through missionary experience.[101] Yet correlation approaches can be criticised for letting those outside the Christian tradition "set the rules of the game" for Christian theology, thus downplaying the role of the Christian Scriptures and witness of Jesus.[102] A methodology based on a "cookfire of the Spirit" model that values each element in the mix without letting one dominate the others appears a helpful approach. There is a conversation of equals, if one rooted in the reality and confession of the Spirit. It can be that certain mixes move more towards the concrete and others towards the blueprint, but I would suggest that a pure concrete or pure blueprint ecclesiology is rarely found. There are underlying questions about epistemology that will be addressed in the next chapter. Having

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[98]Ibid., 250.

[99]Livingston, et al., *Modern Christian Thought*, 511–26. They mention the Wittgensteinian and postliberal trajectories in contemporary theology.

[100]a criticism made of D.Z. Phillips, Livingston, et al., *Modern Christian Thought*, 518.

[101]on this see Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 230–31.

[102]Livingston, et al., *Modern Christian Thought*, 515.

sketched a general picture it is important to consider the development of pentecostal systematic theology against this backdrop.

1.3.3 Pentecostal Systematic Theology

As was mentioned at the start, pentecostal theology has been slow in developing yet we should not neglect a consideration of pentecostal methodology. I want to argue that it is time to explore how a pentecostal methodology might be utilised in ecclesiology. Some of the most detailed studies of early pentecostal methodology have been undertaken by Douglas Jacobsen. He argues that from its earliest days, pentecostalism has "wedded together... experience and theology."[103] What pentecostal leaders were suspicious of was not so much theology in general but rather "theology done in the traditional way."[104] For them theology had lost touch with the Spirit and yet experience alone was considered dangerous. It was the teaching of the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit by Charles Parham that had an impact on Seymour and other students, encouraging them on the way to experiencing the doctrine. Later the experience needed evaluating and so doctrinal debate, and division, ensued throughout early pentecostalism. Although early pentecostal theologians may have been "amateur" they took their task seriously and their desire to bring together experience of the Spirit with theology seems strangely contemporary.[105]

In Jacobsen's study of the theological approaches within the Assemblies of God from 1930 to 1955, "the years of second-generation Pentecostalism," he argues that the "best way to characterize this period of Pentecostal theological history is to call it an age of Pentecostal scholasticism... Pentecostal leaders sought to domesticate, codify, and complete (and, in the process, modify) the creative, but also varied and sometimes strange, theological legacy handed down by the movement's founders."[106] A classic example of this is the 1937 text of

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[103]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 2.
[104]Ibid.
[105]On their "amateur" nature, in its positive and negative connotations see Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 8.
[106]Douglas Jacobsen, "Knowing the Doctrines of Pentecostals: The Scholastic Theology of the Assemblies of God, 1930–55," in *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism*, ed. Edith L. Blumhofer, Russell P. Spittler, and Grant A. Wacker (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 90.

Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* which is still in print. Pearlman understands Christian doctrine as "the fundamental truths of the Bible arranged in systematic form."[107] For Myer, theology is equivalent to doctrine and is a systematic and logical science which is valuable in developing Christian character and as a safeguard against error. Myer presents what he sees as "Biblical and systematic theology" with the latter being a topical arrangement of the former.[108] In undertaking this task Myer does not explicitly refer to many references from the founders of pentecostalism, or indeed from any other theological traditions. It certainly seems that he is using an understanding from elsewhere rather than developing a pentecostal or Spirit-inspired model.

There remained a need for interaction with wider theological thinking and Macchia points to the 1970s for the beginning of such interactions with the founding of the *Society for Pentecostal Studies* and other bodies.[109] In terms of systematic theology this led to a significant collection of articles in 1994 (revised twice since) to enable pentecostal students to better interact with other traditions from a place of appreciating their own.[110] Rather than a single unified system for theology this collection aims at addressing a wider range of theological topics, with notably five chapters addressing the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts and healing. All contributors engage with theological debate and biblical commentaries and so engage with a wider mix of voices than earlier approaches. Yet the importance and authority of the Bible in theological method remains, with "good theology... written by those who are careful to allow their perspectives to be shaped by the biblical revelation."[111] The development of theological systems needs to be done "very carefully" taking into account biblical contexts, the views of theologians who come from different perspectives, the work of the Holy Spirit and pentecostal experience.[112] Here is a mix of Scripture, tradition and

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[107]Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible, 2nd Ed.* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1981), 8.
[108]Ibid., 12.
[109]Macchia, "Struggle," 10–13.
[110]Stanley M. Horton, ed., *Systematic Theology, Revised Ed.* (Springfield, Mo.: Logion Press, 2007), 7.
[111]Railey Jr. and Aker, "Theological Foundations," 39.
[112]Ibid., 39–40.

experience with an emphasis on pentecostal traditions and experience. A narrative, critical approach to the Bible provides the authoritative, but not dominating, guide in the systematic process.[113]

From a charismatic perspective, J.Rodman Williams published a three-volume systematic theology between 1988 and 1992. He understands theology as "the contents of the Christian faith as set forth in orderly exposition by the Christian community."[114] Essential to this task is a seeking of the Holy Spirit, a reliance on the Scriptures "as inspired by God," an awareness of church history and contemporary society, and Christian experience, particularly in prayer, reverence, purity of heart, love and a desire for the glory of God.[115] Williams sees these elements as related to one another and a theological task being the articulation of such relationships.[116] He is a Presbyterian charismatic theologian and his approach follows a Reformed and Presbyterian approach to systematic theology, as William Menzies notes.[117] Yet his approach goes beyond his roots and his appreciation of ecclesiology includes a positive valuing of the ecumenical movement.[118] Again the elements of Scripture (as primary guide), experience (pentecostal, of the Holy Spirit and in prayer), and traditions (church history, theological and mission traditions) can be seen. These three elements are understood slightly differently by different authors but provide a useful summary of the contents of the pentecostal mix in pentecostal systematic theology. Williams represents an evangelical-pentecostal mix and the historical interactions between the evangelical and pentecostal traditions are the subject of much study, with the latter sometimes seen within the former. Here I want to follow Terry Cross, and others, in arguing for a distinctively pentecostal systematic method that is not simply evangelical with a few extras.[119]

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[113]On this see Railey Jr. and Aker, "Theological Foundations," 52–58.

[114]J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996), 15.

[115]Ibid., 21–28.

[116]Ibid., 16.

[117]William W. Menzies, "The Reformed Roots of Pentecostalism," *PentecoStudies* 6 (2007).

[118]J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology Vol. 3: The Church, the Kingdom and Last Things* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 43–48.

[119]Terry L. Cross, "The Rich Feast of Theology: Can Pentecostals Bring the Main Course or Only the Relish?" *JPT* 16 (2000): 27–47.

Looking at more recent work we can see two distinctively pentecostal methodologies, differing in their approach to the elements mentioned: Ken Archer and Amos Yong have developed hermeneutical methodologies rooted in different understandings of the three elements. Archer develops a distinctively pentecostal hermeneutical strategy that based on that found in the narrative of the early pentecostal movement in America but "retrieved and critically reappropriated within the current postmodern context."[120] He is concerned to define a narrative pentecostal strategy that is distinctively different from evangelical approaches.[121] For this Archer develops an integrative approach based on Spirit, Scripture and Community to develop a hermeneutics that produces a "praxis-oriented theology."[122] Experiences of the Spirit need testing but contribute to theology, both within the church and as experienced in mission by those outside the church.[123] A narrative, "text centered and reader oriented interpretive" approach to Scripture is taken developing what Archer sees as the Bible Reading Method of early pentecostalism.[124] The local pentecostal Community is "an important and necessary component" in the method and here it is the present (rather than past) community that is in focus. Archer sees "an interdependent tridactic dialogue" between these three elements "resulting in a creative negotiated meaning."[125] Yong's method also involves a triadic dialogue, between Spirit, Word and Community. Yet from the start Yong's concern goes beyond pentecostal traditions to "draw from across the spectrum of Christian traditions."[126] He starts from pneumatology and pentecostal experience in a way that requires a trinitarian approach to theological hermeneutics and method. Yong is keen for theology to address "the totality of human experience... from a perspective that is specifically and

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[120]Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community, 2nd Ed.* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2009), 3.
[121]On this see Kenneth J. Archer, "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner," *IJST* 9, no. 3 (July 2007): 301–9.
[122]Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, ix.
[123]Here I am summarising greatly the material in Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, Ch.6.
[124]Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 214.
[125]Ibid., 260.
[126]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 1.

explicitly informed by faith."[127] This leads him into issues of metaphysics as he develops a "foundational pneumatology" and provides a basis for the triadic method of Spirit, Word and Community which relate to discerned experience, Scripture and the variety of theological traditions, pentecostal and otherwise. Such a method is sustained by and leads to a transformed "pneumatological imagination" that bridges "the orders of knowing and of being."[128] Yong is more correlational and Archer more confessional but both derive from a pentecostal starting point.

This very brief survey suggests that there have been developing pentecostal approaches to systematic theology that hold in common variations on three elements that form a "mix" within the suggested "cookfire of the Spirit." There is a need to apply such pentecostal methodologies to a wider range of theological concerns so as to better appreciate their value. The methods of Archer and Yong are the most articulated and hence the obvious choices for future work. For our purposes here it is important to have a method that allows us to engage with wider discussions in ecclesiology and with a mission concern that embraces experiences of God beyond the church, and for this Yong is the most obvious choice.

1.4 Summary

To summarise, this research project aims to test the thesis that *networks contribute a new structure to pentecostal ecclesiology, one that enables a fresh approach to contextualisation.* Thus to give a positive response to the research question, *how might a pentecostal ecclesiology that is structured and contextual be constructed?* The way this project will be undertaken is by means of a distinctively pentecostal systematic methodology, that of Yong. This is a methodology that resonates with pentecostal systematic thinking and also with wider thinking in systematic theology. The systematic mix will reflect on discerned pentecostal experience, on the mission narrative of Acts in the Bible, and on pentecostal, ecclesiological

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[127]Ibid., 6.
[128]Ibid., 120.

and missiological communities of scholarship. The mix will address the concrete structure of the network but will be more blueprint in emphasis, in contrast to two previous pentecostal projects in ecclesiology. The research will represent an original contribution to the body of pentecostal research.

This approach is based on a mix of disciplines requires some clarity as to what is not being attempted in this project. I have already attempted a study in the theology of mission and here we will not be reconsidering issues dealt with there. As we will see, most pentecostal approaches to ecclesiology focus on individual pentecostal fellowships whereas this project addresses wider structural issues. The aim is not to repeat the good work of scholars who have examined in depth issues related to the Pentecost narrative, spiritual gifts and holiness. Given the variety within pentecostalism it is also clear that any one attempt at ecclesiology cannot be appropriate for every form of pentecostalism. This project has chosen to address pentecostal structural concerns by way of networks, yet all approaches to ecclesiology face structural questions and it is hoped that this study might encourage others to address such questions from within their contexts. Despite these limitations due to the focus of the project it still seems appropriate to entitle the result a "pentecostal ecclesiology" rather than "contributions to a pentecostal ecclesiology" since most of the significant areas of ecclesiology will be touched on.

Turning to consider how this project will proceed, let us consider the flow of argument through the forthcoming chapters. Given the recent nature of the development of pentecostal methodologies and the limited applications they have been given it is important that we devote space to examine the methodology chosen for this project. Chapter 2 provides a critical overview of Yong's approach in the light of wider pentecostal and mission thinking. We need to build on existing pentecostal thinking and the previous studies of Morgan and Clifton provide a limited appreciation of pentecostal ecclesiology, in line with the common belief that little has been done. In contrast, I want to suggest that there has been more relevant scholarship than is usually acknowledged and so Chapter 3 provides a more detailed overview

of pentecostal ecclesiology. Chapter 4 suggests that network structures have been important to pentecostal experience of growth and resonate well with the growth of the early church in Acts. Pentecostals, like other scholars, are moving in directions informed by trinitarian thought and I suggest that network structures pose questions about an appropriate trinitarian basis for ecclesiology. Any church structure provokes questions regarding the catholicity of the church and this study is no exception. Thus Chapter 5 seeks to develop an approach to catholicity that is trinitarian and that has a common essence and mission movement, reflecting both the settled nature of the church and its dynamic missionary movement. Along the way this will involve a consideration of the sacramental nature of the church and Spirit baptism. This study in turn raises questions as to how such catholicity might be practised and for this we turn to the mission understanding of "partnership." This is an issue that pentecostals have been provoked to think over and arises naturally out of our consideration of catholicity. Little has been done and so Chapter 6 will represent a significant new pentecostal consideration of an important topic in ecclesiology and mission studies. Although issues regarding networks, catholicity and partnership tend to be focused on the church our aim requires us to think about how they also relate to the world beyond the church. In Chapter 7 we seek to engage with mission studies on contextualisation in a way that contributes to the ecclesiology being developed. An outline of a concrete pentecostal practice of contextualisation is also suggested.

In short, this study seeks to construct an ecclesiology entitled "network church" that builds on a pentecostal methodology and existing pentecostal scholarship, is trinitarian and is shaped by mission and systematic thinking on catholicity, partnership and contextualisation. As such the project will contribute something fresh to pentecostal and wider systematic and mission thinking in ecclesiology.

Chapter 2

PENTECOSTAL METHODOLOGY

It is important to explore the application of a pentecostal systematic methodology to the task of developing a pentecostal ecclesiology. The review of pentecostal methodologies in the last chapter recognised that they are still at an early stage and more space is needed to critically examine such a methodology. The methodology chosen has been that proposed by Amos Yong, a pentecostal scholar and minister, who has written a number of books and articles that explore a distinctively pentecostal approach to theology with a particular interest in Christian interaction with those of other faiths. Yong's methodology is attractive here because it is distinctly pentecostal and yet seeks a form that can engage with and contribute to the wider Christian debate. It is also trinitarian, community-focused and desiring to engage with God's working in the world. This chapter seeks to introduce and critically examine Yong's methodology.

2.1 Introduction to the Methodology of Amos Yong

Yong presents his methodology most comprehensively in his book *Spirit-Word-Community* which aims at a consensual approach that can commend support across theological boundaries and amidst the many proposals currently being suggested.[1] Central to this methodology is a triadic of "Spirit-Word-Community" that arises out of his consideration of the Trinity that seeks distinctiveness, mutuality and reciprocity (rather than subordination), and *perichoresis* between Spirit, Son and Father.[2] There is a trinitarian model for the concepts of Spirit, Word and Community that is multi-dimensional in nature without simply equating these concepts

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[1] Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 1–2.
[2] Ibid., 49–81.

with members of the Trinity. For the purposes of this project we can summarise the three concepts or "moments" as Yong calls them as follows:[3]

(1) *Spirit*. This moment focuses on praxis, experience and the act of interpretation. God reveals himself through our subjective experience, and discernment is fundamental to interpreting our experience. Such discerned truth helps form our theology.

(2) *Word*. This moment focuses on thoughts and objects that are the givens of interpretation. Of particular importance here is the encounter with Christ through the Scriptures, an encounter with the objective "other" that feeds our theology.

(3) *Community*. This moment focuses on communal contexts and traditions that form the public of interpretation. These include the variety of ecclesial settings and theological traditions, utilised in critical ways contribute to our theology.

These three are considered separately, but importantly cannot exist separate from the others. Following a *perichoretic* understanding of the Trinity, each of these moments needs also to be related to the others.[4] The theology resulting from such a methodology will be transformational but not infallible, transforming us by the Spirit in the direction of Christ and yet keeping us open to correction that can lead to further growth.[5] It is important to note that each moment relates both to God's ecclesial working and his general working in the world.

In *Spirit-Word-Community* Yong considers a number of issues in theological methodology and hermeneutics from a *perichoretic* understanding of Spirit, Word and Community – how their interactions may help address a number of methodological concerns. It is important to place the methodology within the context of Yong's other works to better understand its pentecostal nature and practical application. In his first work, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, we see Yong rooting his understanding of the experience of the Spirit in the

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[3]Following the summary in Amos Yong, "Hermeneutical Trialectic," 23.
[4]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 220.
[5]On the transformation aspects see Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 160.

pentecostal-charismatic experience of the Spirit's charismata in general and Spirit-baptism in particular.[6] As this work seeks a pneumatological approach to religions it is notably weak on Christology, a point which Yong later acknowledges.[7] His next work, *Beyond the Impasse*, looking at similar themes for ecumenical, pentecostal and evangelical audiences gives more space to an exposition of Scripture on the themes of pneumatology and discernment.[8] His book *The Spirit Poured out on all Flesh* gives space to consider what the pentecostal distinctives for a world Christian theology are. Here Yong places "the core thematic motif of Jesus the Christ" alongside "the core orienting motif of pneumatology."[9] In *Theology and Down Syndrome* the themes of the Scriptures, Jesus and the pneumatological imagination are placed in the service of transforming the church so it can better engage with the world.[10] Central to his method here is to bring the Community of disability studies into conversation with the Communities of biblical and theological studies in order to "reimagine and renew theology in late modernity." In *Hospitality and the Other* Yong builds on his earlier work in studying the religions but focuses more on developing "interreligious practices" that arise out of a study of experience, mission studies and theologies of hospitality. The distinctive pentecostal five-fold Christological gospel is used by Yong in *In the Day of Caesar* as a way of shaping his conversation with political theology.[11] Although the emphases vary according to the subject at hand I would suggest that the pentecostal distinctives in terms of Word (the Scriptures and Christ) have been developing in Yong's writing, alongside a consistent emphasis on the experience of the Spirit and conversations between different scholarly Communities, on the basis of the "many tongues" of pentecostalism. These communities are usually those that overlap with the broad pentecostal tradition – the catholic, critical,

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[6]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 161–70.

[7]Amos Yong, et al., "Christ and Spirit: Dogma, Discernment, and Dialogical Theology in a Religiously Plural World," *JPT* 12, no. 1 (2003): 62.

[8]Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 35–42,139–149.

[9]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 28.

[10]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 13.

[11]Amos Yong, *In the Day of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Eerdmanns, 2010 forthcoming), Section 3.3.

evangelical, ecumenical and black traditions that Hollenweger identifies.[12] In *Spirit poured out* we see Yong's theological concerns moving from individual salvation to local church communities, to ecumenical interactions to other religions to the whole of creation. It is the combination of Spirit experience, Word motifs, Communities in conversation and outward movement that make Yong's methodology distinctively pentecostal, whilst at the same time opening it up to interaction with other approaches.

2.2 Spirit-driven and Trinitarian Methodology

Before proceeding it is important to evaluate this methodology in the light of the particular concerns of our project, and this requires delving deeper into Yong's basic understandings. At the heart of pentecostal methodology is a belief that it is Spirit-driven, that pneumatology provides the vital entrance into theology – a belief that has been lived out since the start of the movement.[13] Yong argues that this does not mean that pneumatology is the end-point in pentecostal theology, but rather the Spirit drives us into a robustly trinitarian approach to theology, one which overcomes various tensions inherent in Christian theological reflection. He suggests that "only a pneumatological theism is able to overcome binitarian conceptions of God and move toward a fully trinitarian theology."[14] Polarities in theological reflection have often been noted, for example between sovereignty and freedom, mystery and revelation, transcendence and immanence. Both poles of the polarity are important and one side must not be valued above the other. John McIntyre notes a number of polarities that characterise the study of pneumatology in particular, such as between the Spirit at work in individuals and groups, in communities and institutions, in and against the Church.[15] Yong takes this further and suggests that the Spirit enables a polarity not to become a dualism but rather enables both sides of the tension to be valued (rather than synthesised together) and to interact.[16] It is the

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[12]Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 2.
[13]See here Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*.
[14]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 49.
[15]John McIntyre, *The Shape of Pneumatology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 211.
[16]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 106–9.

idea of the Spirit as the mover between polarities that formed the basis of my holistic charismatic understanding of mission, and this adds weight to the use of that understanding in this project. Significant here is the polarity that underlies the two movements of mission already considered, between the church and creation: the Spirit who moves the church to share in the world, that more of the eschatological kingdom may be seen; and the Spirit who also works in creation, bringing challenges to the church.[17] Yong is also keen to consider both aspects of the Spirit's work – ecclesial and creational.

In characterising the Spirit, Yong speaks of: Spirit and relationality; Spirit and rationality; and Spirit as the *dunamis* of life. These are considered from the perspective of both the biblical material and metaphysical considerations, with particular reference to the Spirit's work in relating the one and the many that underlies the polarity mentioned.[18] More particularly, the Spirit enables relations between God and humanity and between people, picking up themes of salvation and reconciliation. The Spirit also communicates an intelligible wisdom that is centred on Christ. There is an eschatological movement towards new life which the Spirit powers, both for individuals and the whole of creation. The characteristics are explored in regard to the Trinity in which we see relationality between Father, Son and Spirit; a rational disposition; and "a dynamic orientation of the divine life both ad intra and ad extra."[19] It is these characteristics that provide the foundation for Yong's understanding of community, in terms of trinitarian community and more generally in terms of God's relationship with the world.[20] We will return to consider the trinitarian basis of ecclesiology, but at this point we note that Yong is less concerned to start with a given social trinitarianism but rather to develop an understanding of community that fits with experience.[21] His trinitarian understanding has developed over the years, with a primary concern always to overcome the subjection of Spirit to Word in order to develop a trinitarian outlook that

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[17]See my discussion in Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 86–89.
[18]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 28–48,84–109.
[19]Ibid., 78.
[20]Ibid., 79–81.
[21]Ibid., 81.

provides for the equally valued, overlapping and yet different missions of each. Yong started

with Irenaeus' image of the "two hands of the Father" as providing such an outlook on Spirit

and Son.[22] He later filled this out through a greater consideration of the Augustinian

understanding of the Spirit as the "mutual love between the Father and the Son."[23] More

recently Yong has begun to value the *Filioque* more in providing a model of trinitarian

salvation history.[24]

These trinitarian models are also suggestive of understanding the God-world

relationship, with the world contingent upon God: constituted by Spirit and Word and

reflecting the divine movements within the Godhead.[25] In this Yong develops the thinking of

John Zizioulas whose understanding of Christian community he values.[26] Yet he does not

keep to one specific understanding of community and does not enter into the wider debate on

this subject, despite his appreciation of communitarian and liberationist perspectives. We

might surmise that for Yong community occurs where the Spirit brings about relationality and

rationality within a dynamic movement of life.

2.3 Metaphysical Foundations

Alongside trinitarian concerns, Yong has a strong concern for the metaphysical foundations

that underlie theological methodology. The demise of "epistemic foundationalism" is seen as

a key issue, particularly for evangelicals and pentecostals affected by evangelical thinking.

There are different kinds of foundationalism, the classical understanding focusing on the

"Cartesian quest for certainty: all knowledge consists either in immediately justified or self-

evident beliefs, or is mediately based on such beliefs."[27] In terms of theological methodology,

evangelicals (and many pentecostals) have insisted on the *a priori* authority of Scripture

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[22]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 98; Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 26.
[23]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 59.
[24]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 226.
[25]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 215.
[26]Ibid., 110–12; John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985).
[27]Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 564.

which leads to a certainty of belief and doctrine. Yet the foundations have been shaken in a number of ways, e.g. debates over the nature of authority; questions about the possibility of certainty; and the reality of plurality in belief and doctrine within the church. Yong utilises an essay by Richard Lints to suggest that the two post-foundational methodologies open to contemporary theology are the postmodern and the postliberal.[28] Yong suggests that evangelicals have tended towards postliberal options that emphasise "intertextuality, narrative, and the cultural-linguistic framework of all knowledge."[29] Thus it is possible to construct Christian theology that has consistency, or "coherence," within the Christian community in ways that are positive (e.g. community focus and the importance of ethics and worship). Yet the difficulty with such theology, as Yong notes in a similar way to other scholars, is whether it has "anything to say to those outside Church?"[30] More particularly, it can result in a form of mission that is more about "come to us" than "let's discover God at work in the world, bringing in His kingdom," thus emphasising the first movement in my understanding of mission to the exclusion of the second. Postliberal mission can find it hard for Christian truth to engage with and shape the truth of those outside the bounds of Christian community. Yet we must be careful not to push things too far here – the missionary statesman and scholar Lesslie Newbigin, whom George Hunsinger sees within the postliberal tradition, has strong things to say about the way the gospel is to address "societies, nations and cultures."[31] We are talking about tendencies more than disjoint categories, but these are nevertheless important. In terms of metaphysics a significant debate here is between "truth as coherence" and "truth as correspondence," the latter being a traditional evangelical outlook based on a propositional view of truth.[32] Yong argues that we need "to reconstruct a nonfoundationalist theology

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[28]Richard Lints, "The Postpositivist Choice: Tracy or Lindbeck?" *JAAR* 61 (1993): 655–77; Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 563.

[29]Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 563.

[30]Ibid., 567.

[31]Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (London: SPCK, 1989), 199; George Hunsinger, "Postliberal Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 56. Paul Weston argues that Newbigin was postmodern before postmodernity arrived, "Lesslie Newbigin: A Postmodern Missiologist," *MS* 21, no. 2 (2004): 229–48.

[32]Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 566–67.

without jettisoning the idea of truth as correspondence."[33] Interestingly, Yong proceeds without reference to the postmodern alternatives and we will return to these once we have outlined the distinctives of Yong's approach and are in a position to evaluate it.

The way forward that Yong suggests is through utilising some of the philosophical foundations of C.S. Peirce (1839-1914), the founder of American pragmatism and, in Yong's eyes, "perhaps one of the first American thinkers to launch a wholesale critique of modernity and Enlightenment rationality."[34] It is important to devote some space to considering Peirce's thought and Yong's utilisation of it as it provides a crucial shape to his theological methodology and needs evaluating. Peirce did not publish a systematic treatise and any appreciation of his work has to focus on particular themes that are suggestive of a holistic outlook, even if such an outlook lacks systematic clarity. Richard Kirkham suggests that, more than this, Peirce is inconsistent in his remarks about truth and hence there is always a need to be selective in order to build a consistent system.[35] Rather than taking Kirkham's approach of discarding elements of Peirce, here the important themes of *fallibilism*, *truth*, *triadic structures*, *belief and action* and *universality & particularity* will be considered in the light of Yong's development of Peirce's thought. Yong's focus on triadic structures is of vital importance for trinitarian theology but is of less import in the philosophical tradition itself. His philosophical approach has been influenced by his doctoral supervisor, Robert Neville, who in turn has been largely influenced by Peirce.[36] As a result Yong focuses on Peirce rather than other early developers of the American pragmatic tradition such as William James and John Dewey, although he draws on their support in later works.[37] As Yong focuses on Peirce,

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[33]Ibid., 568.
[34]Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 569. For an introduction to Peirce see Israel Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists: A Critical Introduction to Peirce, James, Mead and Dewey* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 13ff.
[35]Richard L. Kirkham, *Theories of Truth: A Critical Introduction* (London: MIT Press, 1992), 79.
[36]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 111.
[37]Compare Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community* where he interacts with a wider range of early pragmatists than in Amos Yong, *Discerning*.

this too remains my focus here and I want to bring Yong into dialogue with other interpreters of Peirce.[38]

Against the certainty found in foundationalism is placed Peirce's notion of *fallibilism*. Rather than *a priori* certainty "our knowledge of the world arises in our continuous experience of it."[39] We do not have infallible power to tell the difference between what is seen and what is inferred but rather rely on signs, on "circumstantial and inferential evidence."[40] Thus "all knowledge is provisional, relative to the questions posed by the community of inquirers, and subject to the ongoing process of conversation and discovery."[41] Here Peirce utilises an understanding of scientific method that moves from doubt to belief through a communal process of inquiry that is fallible.[42] The communal contrasts with the individual focus of Cartesianism and also with many of the philosophies of Peirce's time.[43] The "contextual and communal nature of inquiry" ultimately grounds Yong's methodology in particular communal contexts and highlights the communal nature of theology that wider pentecostal scholarship is beginning to wrestle with.[44] Yong's understanding of "living in the Spirit" illustrates this with regard to particular church community contexts. Given his characterisation of communities in terms of relationality, rationality and a movement of life he notes how "living in the Spirit" involves a spiritual journey (movement) within which the "still small voice" of the Spirit is heard (rationality) and this is tested in community (relationality).[45]

This communal process of inquiry "strives toward universal application, albeit without claiming a priori necessity."[46] For Peirce, "knowledge emerges through the engagement of a community of inquirers with the world directed toward understanding the world truly, even if

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[38]For Peirce's thought I am utilising the respected summaries of Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*; Vincent Colapietro, "Introduction to Charles Sanders Peirce," in *Pragmatism and Classical American Philosophy*, ed. John J. Stuhr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 43–54.
[39]Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 570.
[40]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 45.
[41]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 100.
[42]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 44.
[43]Colapietro, "Introduction," 45–47.
[44]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 100.
[45]Ibid., 160.
[46]Ibid., 100.

it (knowledge) is always fallible given its inferential character."[47] Later pragmatists such as Donald Davidson see this desire to find "absolute" senses for *reality* and *truth* as misguided, but Peirce follows a kind of "scholastic realism" that links with the "critical realism" of similar contemporary approaches within evangelical-pentecostal circles.[48] There remains a seeking after universal truth (truth as correspondence) but this is always tempered by fallibilism and provisionality. In this regard Kirkham argues that Peirce's theory of truth is "parasitic" on the truth as correspondence model, yet he does not mention the fallibilism central to Peirce's approach and it is important to differentiate the truth as correspondence model with the fallibilistic correspondence mode that is envisioned here.[49] For Yong, truth is public and communal if fallible, and therefore a form of weak foundationalism – themes also taken up by Newbigin in his understanding of mission in a postmodern world.[50] Truth is carried by communities whose inquiries have led to a "settled certainty" over elements of truth, although the search after truth is a common one to those inside and outside the church and interactions between communities are important as part of the inquiries. This process raises the question of appropriate "criteria for adjudicating truth claims," particularly important as final appeal cannot be made to fallible reason.[51] Initially Yong points here to the importance of Scripture and divine revelation, a point to which we will return below. Later Yong suggests that it is at this point the coherence approaches might be utilised, not as a theory of truth but rather as a theory of justification.[52] The Spirit of truth justifies this truth so as to make truth "a personal, affective, existential and embodied relation whereby to know the truth both implicitly and explicitly demands and, in some sense, brings about conformity of

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[47]Ibid., 92.

[48]For an overview of Davidson's critique see Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism as Anti-Representationalism," in *Pragmatism: From Peirce to Davidson*, John P. Murphy (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), 2–4. For an understanding of Peirce in terms of scholastic realism see Colapietro, "Introduction," 50–51. See also the critical realism of Ben Meyer as utilised by N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God, vol. 1 (London: SPCK, 1992), 50–69. Wright's outlook is exerting considerable influence on contemporary evangelical and pentecostal thought.

[49]Kirkham, *Theories of Truth*, 83.

[50]Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, a link noted by Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 586. For Yong's discussion of classical and weak foundationalism see "Demise of Foundationalism," 564–65

[51]Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 584.

[52]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 174.

life to it."[53]

For Pierce there was a strong link between belief and action that naturally fits with this approach to truth. Peirce developed this from Alexander Bain's understanding of belief as "an attitude or disposition of preparedness to act when occasion offers."[54] Peirce suggested that central to belief is the establishment of habits that affect the way we act.[55] Yong picks up these understandings through what he terms the "pneumatological imagination" which bridges the orders of knowing and being.[56] The pneumatological imagination is both "passive and active, holistically affective and spiritual, and intrinsically evaluative or valuational," empowered by the breath of the Spirit, "attuned especially to the spiritual components of reality, and is structured normatively according her [the Spirit's] christomorphic shape and trinitarian character."[57] This imagination is fed by pentecostal experience of the Spirit and Yong works from the distinctively pentecostal experience outwards to a more general framework.[58] Of particular importance in the active nature of the pneumatological imagination is the way in which it drives us to engage "with the other that stand over and against the self" in terms of people and the natural world.[59] This is important for any understanding of mission and links naturally with the understanding of public truth outlined above. It is in regard to this engagement that Yong utilises the semiotic aspects of Peirce's thought to help us see how the pneumatological imagination engages with the world through images and signs.[60] Yong's later work develops religious practices within this theme of the pneumatological imagination.

In considering the reality of the world, Yong wants to develop an understanding of experience that sees all experience as "theologically, essentially of the Spirit."[61] Despite the difficulties associated with the term "experience" Yong believes that it is a key category that

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[53]Ibid., 175.
[54]Alexander Bain, *The Emotions and the Will* (1859) quoted in Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 58.
[55]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 77.
[56]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 120.
[57]Ibid., 216.
[58]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 161–82.
[59]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 216.
[60]Ibid., 151–64.
[61]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 121.

we cannot avoid and need to define.[62] In considering experience Yong wants to overcome all dualisms and develop an understanding "that things are what they are because they are created by the Father, through the Word, by the power of the Spirit."[63] Thus all experience has a "religious dimension" rather than, say, experience being divided into Christian and non-Christian categories.[64] This is important in Yong's mission concern of engagement with the experience of those who follow other faiths. It is also valuable if we are to develop a theology of creation within which Christian convictions can be brought into "public discourse" without having to simply rely on saying "The Bible says so."[65] With these concerns in mind, Yong turns to Peirce's triadic understanding of reality in terms of firstness, secondness and thirdness that reworks the categories of Aristotle, Kant and Hegel. In short, "*Firstness* is pure potentiality, the simple quality of a thing in itself. *Secondness* is brute struggle, the resistant factuality of a thing in relation to others. *Thirdness* is what mediates between the two, the universals, laws and generalities that constitute the continuous process of reality."[66] Everything "presents itself to us experientially through the three elemental modes of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness" and "they account for the distinct but interrelated universes of lived human experience."[67] Peirce utilises these triadic divisions with a broad understanding throughout his writings, although he was not initially positive about the ideas.[68] His ability to see these categories from many angles makes it difficult to offer a comprehensive evaluation here, and for our purposes it is more important to consider the theological use of them by Yong.

The triadic structure has clear trinitarian resonances although these were not developed by Peirce himself, despite seeking to reconcile science and religion, nor by other early

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[62]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 289.
[63]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 116.
[64]Ibid., 122.
[65]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 283.
[66]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 112.
[67]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 93,92.
[68]*A letter to Lady Welby*, Charles Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Wiess (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), 8.328, 1904. As quoted in *Commens Dictionary of Peirce's Terms*, ed. Mats Bergman and Sami Paavola (Http://www.helsinki.fi/science/commens/dictionary.html, 2007).

American pragmatists.[69] Thus Yong turns to the work of the philosophical theologian Robert Neville to develop an understanding of Word and Spirit, based on Secondness and Thirdness, which gives them equal, related and yet distinct missions, without one being subordinated to the other.[70] Neville is concerned with developing a public theology that arises out of his argument for God as creator *ex nihilo* and within which Logos theory plays a vital part.[71] Neville's theory of the Logos has four elements and fills out Peirce's understanding of Secondness suggesting that "the Logos is thus the character of God expressed in each determinate thing by virtue of its determinateness, and it consists in the implications of form, components, actuality, and value."[72] Jesus as the "incarnation of the Logos... realized these four in some perfect way" although this approach allows for an appreciation of the divine beyond the Christian.[73] In other words, "anything that *is* is by virtue of its determinateness a symbol of the real presence and activity of the Word."[74] Yet each thing is also what it is by virtue of the work of the Spirit, and here Yong draws on the work of the charismatic Jesuit theologian Donald Gelpi. Gelpi develops an understanding of "thirdness" that goes beyond a mechanistic understanding of law, to embrace an understanding of the Spirit as the divine Breath and life force.[75] Yong speaks of "the Spirit as a field of force," a stronger interpretation than Gelpi's understanding of the Spirit as "vectoral feeling."[76] In all things Word and Spirit are revealed to be at work: "Each determination of being is what it is by virtue of the presence and activity of the Logos within the force fields set in motion by the Spirit, the supreme field of force. The Logos is the concrete form or pattern of each thing even as the Spirit is the power of its actualization and instantiation."[77] Yet there is a focus on the Word whose presence brings out the greatest reality: "The more intense the concentration of the form of the

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[69]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 88–90.
[70]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 115–16.
[71]Robert Neville, *A Theology Primer* (Albany: State University New York Press, 1991), xii-xiii.
[72]Neville, *Theology Primer*, 45 quoted in Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 116–17.
[73]Neville, *Theology Primer*, 45–47.
[74]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 117.
[75]Ibid., 117–18.
[76]Ibid., 117; Donald Gelpi, *The Divine Mother: A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984), 87.
[77]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 118.

Logos in any field of the Spirit, the more harmonious the determination of being."[78] Looking forward, "the eschaton will bring about the full manifestation of the Logos in the absolute power of the Spirit."[79]

Given this presence of Word and Spirit an important question, from a pentecostal perspective, is how to allow for the experience of evil spirits and powers. For this Yong utilises the work of the biblical scholar Walter Wink who contributes to a revised understanding of both Secondness and Thirdness through his understanding of the "outer" and "inner" aspects of reality. Wink enables Yong to talk about evil powers and the absence of the Spirit. Yet Yong is careful not to embrace Wink's process theology assumptions which do not include Firstness. In his proposal for a Christian theology of religions Yong suggests three correlative categories of divine presence (relating to religious experience), divine activity (relating to religious utility) and divine absence (relating to religious cosmology).[80] These flow out of this foundational understanding of Thirdness and are reflected in the pneumatological imagination. At this point it is worth pointing out that Thirdness is not the same as Hegel's synthesis, but rather it "preserves the distinctiveness, particularity and individuality of the original terms of the dialectic in an ongoing relational tension."[81] This understanding also strengthens our previous understanding of the Spirit as moving between polarities in mission.

Before proceeding to reflect further, it is important to note some questions that this triadic understanding of experience raises. Perhaps the most important is whether this implies more of a continuity than discontinuity between Christian and non-Christian experience, and what constitutes a distinctively Christian dimension of experience. In this regard we note that Yong concentrates on incarnation, Pentecost and glorification and does not deal at length with the Cross and Resurrection that can be argued to be central to Christian experience. Questions

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[78]Ibid.
[79]Ibid., 121.
[80]Ibid., 221–43.
[81]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 105.

regarding the uniqueness of Christ and the revelation of the Scriptures are pertinent in this regard. Also, Yong's treatment of Firstness is negligible and greater reflection on God the Father would be of benefit, beyond the observation that "Father makes himself present to the world not directly but through the two hands" of Word and Spirit.[82] We will return to these questions below.

2.4 Methodology Revisited

Having examined the foundations to Yong's methodology it is important to return and consider some of the implications. The fallibilistic epistemology implies that the methodology remains open to correction in the light of further experience in its use.[83] However, the triadic structure is fixed and it is important to outline further reflections on our methodological starting point.[84]

Scientific inquiry starts with an engagement with the world and so experience and interpretation are important in the first "moment" of the methodology. Yet this might suggest that there is nothing beyond this world and that a scientific methodology has little to contribute to theology that is based on the existence of God. Further reflection on the nature of experience, utilising insights from Gelpi on conversion, suggests rather that the work of the Spirit in experience, interpreted through the imagination, is both "world-affirming (re-productive) but also world-making (creative)."[85] The latter links with pentecostal experience of the "inbreaking Spirit" and is a significant concern in debate with scholars who seem to link the Spirit simply to affirmations of life.[86] Yong develops these with the help of Hans Urs von Balthasar's understanding of transcendental experience in a way that avoids the dualism of seeing the Spirit as simply the "other against us" whilst maintaining the mediated nature of

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[82]Ibid., 94.
[83]Ibid., 220.
[84]Here I am attempting an accessible summary of Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, Part III that deepens the methodology given earlier. I adapt Yong's order of presentation considerably to bring greater clarity to his method as it is utilised in this project.
[85]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 222.
[86]In regard to mission see Andrew M. Lord, "The Moltmann-Pentecostal Dialogue: Implications for Mission," *JPT* 11, no. 2 (2003): 271–87.

all encounter with the transcendent.[87] The terms "re-productive" and "creative" are confusing as the latter is often related to world-affirming theologies in wider debate, although "world-making" does not capture the challenging nature of such experiences. Hence through this project I will consider experience of the Spirit in terms of its "growing" and "inbreaking" characteristics that correspond to these categories of Yong and which I have used in my consideration of the nature of mission.[88] The first task of theology can be seen as considering and discerning subjective experiences of the Spirit, with an awareness of the diversity of the Spirit's work within and outside the church. The need for discernment is vital and Yong has developed a number of approaches that help in this holistically understood task. In terms of other religions, Yong uses the categories of divine presence, activity and absence to consider discerning the Spirit prior to using Christological categories.[89] More recently he has addressed the normative role of Scripture, utilising coherence approaches to truth as mentioned earlier. Here we need to turn to the second moment in the methodology: Word.

Engagement with the objects of Scripture and Christ are vital to Christian theological methodology and Yong approaches these via the route of experience as both "growing" and "inbreaking." Scripture and Christ are known in experience, and indeed Scripture reflects people's interpretations (and re-interpretations) of others experience of God, and the particular experiences of God revealed in Jesus Christ.[90] The experiences in Scripture link with our experiences today in ways that bring practical holistic growth (transformation) in personal character. Yet it is important to appreciate the inbreaking ways in which "the spoken, lived, and written word of God confronts us and lays claim on our lives."[91] By the power of the Spirit the Word of God breaks in and challenges our understanding. For Christians this centres around the "undeniable particularity of the person of Jesus the Christ, the living Word of

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[87]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 227–30.
[88]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 88–89. Yong does not carry on using either terminology and later reverts to talking about the in-breaking Spirit, Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 247.
[89]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 222–55.
[90]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 234–36.
[91]Ibid., 254.

God."[92] It is here that the distinct but related missions of Word and Spirit in Yong's underlying theology work themselves out in his approach to Scripture. Thus the second task of Christian theology is to consider and discern how the Scriptures, centred on Christ, speak to our concerns. This raises questions as to how such discernment relates to communities in the past and present.

Christian theology is explored and carried by communities of inquiry that exist both in the present and in the past, within what Yong terms "ecclesial tradition."[93] The third task of theology is to engage with the ecclesial traditions of past and those of the present beyond our particular background in order to discern truth. Thus we are driven by the Spirit to discern His work in ever wider circles, discovering what Kevin Vanhoozer calls the "catholic" nature of the gospel.[94] Here necessary truth as coherence is sought amidst a plurality of traditions, but the second movement in mission demands that we also see truth as correspondence through engagements with communities outside the church within which God continues to work.[95] In other words, all theology is contextual and Yong utilises Robert Schreiter's concept of local theologies within his wider methodology.[96] We need to discern within the wider communities those things that are of the Spirit and those which the Spirit would challenge.

These three tasks or moments of theological methodology are distinct and yet related and here I have erred on the side of distinction where Yong focuses on their relations. This clarifies the methodology as I utilise it in this project, whilst maintaining the need to consider the interactions between the tasks. The aim of these three tasks in theology is transformation – of individuals, communities and the world. For Yong, "Truth is pragmatic, transformative, and liberative. Theologically, truth is said to be salvific and sanctifying."[97] Belief leads to

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[92]Ibid., 258.
[93]Ibid., 265ff.
[94]Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 27–28.
[95]Given the metaphysics being used here it is more accurate to say that 'church' and 'world' overlap and that the world is not simply 'outside' the church – the Spirit works in all. Here I am using the terminology to say that the theological task is not limited to the church as is often assumed.
[96]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 268; Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (New York: Orbis Books, 1985).
[97]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 276.

action by means of the "pneumatological imagination" and religious practices. The work of theology is to bring the Spirit, Word and Community together in ways that transform our lives in the world. Yet theology is always fallibilistic and so the three tasks continue within the eschatological movement of God.[98]

2.5 Critical Reflections on the Methodology

This summary hints at some of the complexities that feed Yong's theological methodology and it is important to draw out a number of questions that face his approach. The questions raised here come both from critiques of Peirce, from pentecostals who take different methodological approaches and from the postmodern methodologies mentioned earlier.

Firstly, does Yong's approach to the Spirit tend towards universalism? His move ever outwards is suggestive of a universalist approach to salvation and indeed Yong suggests that followers of other religions may be a part of the eschatological kingdom.[99] Yet pentecostals reject such a universalist approach and their attitude to evangelism typically precludes this.[100] It is worth pausing to note that there are a number of kinds of universalism: in terms of social justice there is a desire for a universal appreciation of all people equally, and indeed a care for the whole of creation;[101] as regards values there is a desire to share good values universally, amongst all peoples – here the mixed testimony of sharing "Western democracy" and the missionary desire to civilise are but two examples, and the current moves towards globalisation in which there exist universal connections between peoples and businesses is another linked approach; as related to Christian mission there are different approaches to salvation, the universalist of which is one,[102] and such different approaches often shared a universalist drive for the gospel to be shared amongst all people, a drive that finds its roots in

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[98]Ibid., 316.
[99]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 266, cf. 236.
[100]L. Grant McClung Jr., "Evangelism," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 617.
[101]This can find its basis in the Christian belief in God as creator of all things, J. Andrew Kirk, *What is Mission? Theological Explorations* (London: DLT, 1999), 175–76.
[102]For an overview see Kirk, *Mission*, 127–32.

the biblical testimony;[103] and in Christian methodology there is a universalism that seeks to include all voices, particularly those on the margins. Yong's approach is rooted in a universal drive of the Spirit ever outwards through which the transformative gospel of salvation is shared.[104] This is, for Yong, a natural outworking of the fact that the Spirit is universally "poured out on all flesh."[105] These roots fit well with the first movement in mission that pentecostals would support, but it is when Yong suggests that this movement brings with it the need to recognise a more universal working of God outside the church that pentecostals generally hesitate.

Discernment is vital in every kind of universalism and it is this that stops us proclaiming that all is good with all. Yong develops understandings of discernment that come from both life as lived generally, and from life lived "in the Spirit."[106] In his work on the theology of religions he is keen to start with pneumatological criteria before coming to Christological criteria.[107] Yet it does mean that in his early work the Christological criteria essential for Christian discernment are largely left aside leaving Yong open to criticism. His later work aims to combine more a focus on Christ alongside the drive of the Spirit, as seen in his pneumatological soteriology.[108] In his more developed thinking on mission in the presence of those of other faiths Yong sees Jesus as the "paradigmatic host" and "exemplary guest."[109] Here is a both exclusive and inclusive Christology rooted in the Spirit and Word of Yong's method and resting on a desire for holistic discernment.

Here we might ask whether Yong's emphasis on fallibilism rather than foundational certainty may ultimately undermine his attempts towards a greater Christological emphasis and missionary reality. In a pertinent reflection, Bert Hoedemarker asks whether mission is

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[103]Bosch, *Mission*, 63–65,147–149.
[104]See Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, Chapter 2.
[105]Yong links this universal drive with the reality of mission in Amos Yong, "A p(New)Matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World," *Missiology* XXXIII, no. 2 (2005): 188.
[106]Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 150.
[107]For the motivation for this see Amos Yong, *Discerning*, Chapter 2.
[108]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 81–120.
[109]Amos Yong, *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor* (New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 126.

possible "when foundationalism becomes suspect?"[110] The missionary movement, from which

pentecostalism has gained much, has been threatened by moves from foundationalism to

relativism and some might ask if Yong's approach threatens mission.[111] One reaction to such

a threat is to retreat into forms of foundationalism, but Hoedemarker suggests the need for a

mission approach based on the eschatological Spirit who gives a "pneumatological

contextualization" of Christ in community. This enables us to hold together "the determinate

meaning and the open significance of Jesus Christ" in ways that enable mission.[112] This is, I

believe, what Yong is striving for and he makes use of Gabriel Moran's consideration of

uniqueness.[113] Moran argues that each of the world religions have things that are "uniquely

exclusive (emphasis on particularity)" and "uniquely inclusive (emphasis on universality)."[114]

Within Christian thinking Jesus is the one who is both uniquely exclusive and uniquely

inclusive, correlating with the terms "determinate meaning" and "open significance" that

Hoedemarker suggests.[115] Jesus and the Gospel centred on him are the "given" of Christian

faith, yet there is a fallibilism of interpretations and here the work of Spirit and Community

are vital.[116] There needs to be theological space to consider what the uniqueness of Jesus

means and there are advantages to a more dynamic interpretation.[117] In terms of the

understanding of mission being utilised here, a greater emphasis on Christ and his reality in

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[110]Bert Hoedemaker, "Toward an Epistemologically Responsible Missiology," in *To Stake a Claim*, eds J. Andrew Kirk and Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999), 217.

[111]For a consideration of the overlaps between pentecostalism and the missionary movement see my "The Voluntary Principle in Pentecostal Missiology," *JPT* 17 (2000): 81–95.

[112]Hoedemaker, "Epistemologically Responsible Missiology," 225.

[113]Gabriel Moran, *Uniqueness: Problems or Paradox in Jewish and Christian Traditions* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992).

[114]Amos Yong, "P(New)Matological Paradigm," 188. Here Yong develops a thought expressed earlier in slightly different language, Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 120–21, n.27.

[115]This tradition of understanding the uniqueness of Christ can be traced back through scholars of differing backgrounds, for example see W.A. Visser 't Hooft, *No Other Name: The Choice Between Syncretism and Christian Universalism* (Edinburgh: SCM, 1963), 113–14; Vernon White, *Atonement and Incarnation: An Essay in Universalism and Particularity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 112; Rowan Williams, "Christian Identity and Religious Plurality," *ER* 58, no. 1–2 (January-April 2006): 69–75.

[116]Here I am taking a broad understanding of 'gospel' as related to the good news centred on Jesus. This fits with the approach of N.T. Wright who expands common evangelical usage through a study of Paul's writings, *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Oxford: Lion Publishing, 1997), Chapter 3.

[117]In the wider debate on uniqueness there is appreciation of the need for fresh understandings of what this means, without losing the distinctive Christian witness regarding Jesus. See Leonard Swidler and Paul Mojzes, *The Uniqueness of Jesus: A Dialogue with Paul F. Knitter* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997).

our lives drives us outwards by the Spirit in mission into the entire world; and the reality of the Spirit working in all the world inevitably draws people in the direction of Christ.

Yong's methodology also needs greater clarity in terms of the "universalism" of voices that he seeks to listen to: he draws on a large number of different sources, often bringing together ideas without great critique of or consideration of the different backgrounds to each source. His "canon" seems to be defined in terms of which sources he has found positively helpful in approaching particular issues, without more justification than this. Hence the critiques of people like Frank Macchia who urges Yong to be more critical in his utilisation of Neville's ideas and ask questions as to where pentecostal experience challenges them.[118] The universal openness to the theological voices of others needs to be put alongside, and interact with, the particular foci for given theological projects. Yet, as David Ford suggests, Christian theology has a "many-faceted richness and vitality" that is "inexhaustible" and this needs to be embraced within any methodology.[119] Yong's approach of placing the Spirit alongside the Word and Community provides for both universal appreciation and yet particular critical appropriation of theological sources. Even if he does not always succeed in his critical appropriation this should be taken as a warning in good use of the methodology rather than as something that undermines it completely.

Dale Coulter suggests, there is a danger that an emphasis on the universal experience of the Spirit could make us unable to articulate any distinctively pentecostal theology.[120] Ken Archer argues that early pentecostals focused on a Bible Reading Method in constructing their often radical theology in a way that gave rise to a distinctive pentecostal narrative.[121] Following naturally from this tradition, the response that some pentecostal thinkers would urge is an emphasis on the Word speaking to experience rather than allowing possibilities the other way round. In this Terry Cross finds the approach of Karl Barth helpful and he wants to

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[118]Frank D. Macchia, "Discerning the Truth of Tongues Speech: A Response to Amos Yong," *JPT*, no. 12 (1998): 70–71.

[119]David F. Ford, "Epilogue," in *The Modern Theologians*, ed. David F. Ford (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 720.

[120]Dale M. Coulter, "What Meaneth This? Pentecostals and Theological Enquiry," *JPT* 10, no. 1 (2001): 43.

[121]Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 89–127.

stress the primacy of God's revelation in Scripture under which experience is reflected on as a "second-order" activity.[122] Methodologically this brings biblical studies to the forefront of theology, and certain approaches to such studies that fit with such an understanding of revelation. Yet, pentecostalism is rooted in experiences of the Spirit that reveal God in surprising and overwhelming ways, and is unintelligible apart from such experiences.

Considering similar themes it may be asked whether Yong's emphasis on experience undermines the distinctive Christian witness to Christ through the Scriptures. Archer, in his pentecostal methodology, tends to limit the discernment of the Spirit to Scripture rather than experience.[123] Andrew Kirk, an evangelical missiologist, suggests that pragmatic approaches to truth cannot sustain a sense of mission because ultimately they focus on affirming individuals experience rather than stressing God's initiative in Christ witnessed through the Scriptures.[124] Yet Yong's methodology brings a discerned affirmation of experience into a *perichoretic* dialogue with God's initiative in the Word in a way that goes beyond Kirk's appreciation of pragmatism. It also allows for a critique of our understanding of the Word that challenges any temptation to develop an ideological Christ who simply serves our mission purposes.[125] Here is a pragmatism that leads to self-critical mission that maintains the centrality of the Word. This also answers the critique of some postmodern thinkers who suggest that a stress on experience leads to talk of God that is "inane" and lacking the depth that is needed for distinctives.[126] It is important for mission that we maintain both the growing and the inbreaking nature of the Spirit in experience, particularly as it relates to Word and Community.

This discussion does raise a question over the metaphysical background: is it possible for both experience and revelation to be, in some sense, normative at the same time? Has

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[122]Cross, "Rich Feast of Theology," 36. Cross' PhD disseration was a study on dialectic in the writings of Barth.
[123]Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 193–96.
[124]J. Andrew Kirk, "Christian Mission and the Epistemological Crisis of the West," in *To Stake a Claim*, eds J. Andrew Kirk and Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999), 164.
[125]Amos Yong, et al., "Christ and Spirit," 32,21.
[126]Here, I'm picking up on the comment of Nancey Murphey and Brad J. Kallenberg, "Anglo-American Postmodernity: A Theology of Communal Practice," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 26.

Peirce's attempt to overturn *a priori* assumptions now been replaced by an *a priori* priority given to Christ and the Scriptures? It does seem fair to say that Yong articulates a distinctively *Christian* theology, as Dale Irvin notes, and this distinctiveness is seen through Trinity, Christ and Scriptures.[127] These are perhaps *a priori* in any Christian theology, although we can argue that they only become so out of our experience of God. The effect of Christian experience is to centre theology around a trinitarian encounter revealed through Christ in the Scriptures. In dialogue with Yong, Macchia has argued that the primacy of Scripture is not a return to foundationalism but rather it is living text that must be discovered again and again in experience.[128] Yong's model has the advantage of bringing together universal experience of the divine with the implications of particularly Christian experience of Christ and the Scriptures. Yet it does require a rethinking of our understanding of revelation and this is happening within pentecostalism. For example, Coulter speaks of the theological core of pentecostalism being found in "its dynamic view of revelation" with revelation implicitly linked with the experience of the Spirit.[129] This has commonalities with the approach of Ulrich Luz in his "history of effects" approach to Scripture, understanding the Scripture through its impact on communities through the ages.[130] The Word does not so much stand *a priori* against all else, but in relation to Spirit and Community in ways of "growing" (affirming commonalities) and "inbreaking" (giving power to uniqueness).

From a pentecostal perspective, it is Yong's stress on Community that reflects a recent shift within this tradition which tends to focus on Spirit and Word. This opens pentecostals up to the riches of Christian tradition and challenges them to engage with a wider range of theological partners. Yet it needs to be asked whether Yong's approach to Community presuppose an overly positive, scientific view of theological development. Peirce's scientific approach gives logic (and rationality more generally) a primary role, even if it is given a broad

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[127]Dale T. Irvin, "A Review of Amos Yong's *Beyond the Impasse*," *JPT* 12, no. 2 (2004): 278–79.
[128]Amos Yong, et al., "Christ and Spirit," 64.
[129]Coulter, "What Meaneth This?" 53.
[130]A methodology appreciated by the pentecostal Emerson Powery, "Ulrich Luz's *Matthew in History*: A Contribution to Pentecostal Hermeneutics?" *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, no. 14 (1999): 3–17.

interpretation, and assumes a steady move away from doubt towards belief.[131] The emphasis

on logic has been questioned because of its downplaying of sensation and intuition, the latter

of which is denied.[132] From a pentecostal perspective, their experience seems inevitably to

embrace sensation and intuition often in contrast to logical approaches.[133] Yong seems to go

beyond Peirce in his understanding of affective experience within the pneumatological

imagination and here picks up on Gelpi's wider understanding. Peirce argued against the

existence of "intuitive knowledge" based on his scientific experience, yet Gelpi argues that his

"mature theory of knowledge gave enhanced value to instinctive, affectively charged, and

imaginative forms of knowing."[134] Gelpi develops Peirce's understanding alongside that of

Josiah Royce, to suggest a metaphysical grounding for experiencing the supernatural which he

illustrates in regard to healing.[135] Building on this, Yong allows for more than the term "logic"

may first suggest, and yet at the same time he is keen to appropriate Peirce's scientific

understanding as contributing to what he sees as the gradual pentecostal appreciation of

scientific concerns.[136] Although more is implied, the outworking of Yong's methodology

tends towards the more scientific in style. In this regard it is useful to contrast his approach

with that of Vanhoozer for whom theology relates to life through the "cognitive-poetic

imagination" that goes beyond the traditional propositional approach of evangelicals.[137]

Vanhoozer links this with the theme of "right judgment" and is concerned for the missions of

Son and Spirit.[138] There are overlaps here with Yong's pneumatological imagination and the

priority of discernment. Yet Vanhoozer allows these insights to guide him into a greater

appreciation of drama as a fresh way of appreciating and articulating Christian theology,

building on the work of narrative theology. This approach seems to have much to offer

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[131]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 18,8.

[132]Ibid., 65; John P. Murphey, *Pragmatism: From Peirce to Davidson* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), 10.

[133]Macchia suggests that it is only post-1970 that pentecostals moved beyond "irregular" forms of theology to more critical forms within which logic is more valued, Macchia, "Struggle," 10–12.

[134]Donald L. Gelpi, *The Gracing of Human Experience: Rethinking the Relationship Between Nature and Grace* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001), 145, cf. 139–40.

[135]Ibid., 332–34.

[136]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 277,283–289.

[137]Vanhoozer, *Drama of Doctrine*, 278–81.

[138]Ibid., 30,68–69.

pentecostal methodology and provides a natural way to take Yong's thinking forward, despite Vanhoozer's postliberal outlook.[139]

The scientific basis of Yong's methodology can be questioned not just against pentecostal instincts but also from postmodern perspectives. Vanhoozer notes how postmodern philosophers "rebelled against the so-called 'Enlightenment project' that sought universal human emancipation through the light of universal human reason, deployed through the powers of modern technology, science and democracy."[140] Such critiques seem to apply to Peirce for whom logic, progress and scientific method are central. Kirkham argues that for Peirce only scientific method can succeed in the task of finding truth.[141] Scheffler questions Peirce's assumptions on the superior effectiveness and stability of scientific method and whether other methods might produce good results.[142] Compounding this are postmodern critiques of metaphysics, notably through the "postmetaphysical theology" associated with the French thinker Jean-Luc Marion.[143] Surely Yong stands judged as a modern thinker whose methodology belongs to an age that is passing. At this point we must note the variety of postmodernities and the similarities between Yong and postmodern reconstructive theologians. David Ray Griffin has noted how such theologians seek to reject foundationalism without losing the "correspondence theory of truth" through seeking "a metaphysical type of philosophy."[144] This is linked with the conviction "that we must and can reconcile religion and reason, which in our time largely means religion and science."[145] The similarities with

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[139]Vanhoozer's outlook could be balanced by an appreciation of Creation in the Theo-drama, not simply the Gospel and Theology (his evangelical and catholic priorities) seen in Vanhoozer, *Drama of Doctrine*, Chapters 1&2, cf. 25–30. Yong, more recently, has begun to talk about "performance" in theology, Amos Yong, "Performing Global Pentecostal Theology: A Response to Wolfgang Vondey," *PNEUMA* 28, no. 2 (2006): 318.

[140]Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity: A Report on Knowledge (of God)," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8.

[141]Kirkham, *Theories of Truth*, 82.

[142]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 70–72.

[143]See the outline of Marion's thinking in Thomas A. Carlson, "Postmetaphysical Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 58–75.

[144]David Ray Griffin, "Reconstructive Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 102,95.

[145]Ibid., 96.

Yong here suggest that he cannot be dismissed as simply modern, even though he is more critical of the process theology that underlies Griffin's approach. Perhaps the point at which Yong is most postmodern is his definite turn "away from modernity" and its Cartesian foundationalism, a key characteristic of postmodern theologies according to Vanhoozer.[146] Yong himself does not use the term "postmodern," preferring the term "late modern," although it seems appropriate to suggest that Yong is proposing a reconstructive postmodern methodology in contrast to a postliberal postmodern methodology that he sees most other evangelicals and pentecostals opting for.[147] It also challenges the argument of Kirk that postmodernity "has no grounds for reconstruction" and differs from his revised evangelical foundationalist proposal based on integration and unity.[148] Yet it does not follow the path of pragmatists such as Richard Rorty who want to abandon the "representationalist" notions suggested by the "correspondence theory of truth."[149]

Against the charge that Yong's methodology ties us to a modern view of unlimited positive scientific (and theological) progress we must note the basic assumption of fallibilism and the ability of this methodology to modify itself. This should also allow us to value the past as not simply a less mature version of the present, but as containing valuable insights in itself. However, it is important to ask whether Yong as a result of his methodology downplays the past and Wolfgang Vondey poses this question from an ecumenical perspective.[150] Considering Yong's aim at a global pentecostal theology, Vondey argues that there is a need for an archeological methodology (that seeks the origins of pentecostalism alongside other Christian traditions) rather than a teleological methodology that looks eschatologically

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[146]Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity," 5.

[147]Yong's hesitancy over the term was expressed in Personal email (30th October 2006), in which he also expresses the attractiveness to him of Griffin's "pragmatic postmodernism." He uses the term "late modern" particularly in *Spirit Poured Out*, Chapter 7. These make sense of Yong's limited and incomplete use of Lint's division into postliberal and postmodern methodologies mentioned earlier, Amos Yong, "Demise of Foundationalism," 563.

[148]Kirk, "Christian Mission," 171.

[149]Rorty, "Pragmatism," 4.

[150]Wolfgang Vondey, "Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology: Implications of the Theology of Amos Yong," *PNEUMA* 28, no. 2 (2006): 289–312.

forward.[151] In response, Yong argues for an eschatological orientation, to "privilege the future, even if it does not dismiss the past."[152] To be fair, pentecostalism has a high concern for the past as it relates to its own origins and Yong's emphasis on Community draws on a wider past tradition than is often seen in wider pentecostalism. The challenge for pentecostals is to maintain an eschatological outlook, yet one that treasures the traditions that have led and continue to lead forwards.[153] The issue of progress also poses the question as to whether this methodology has room for "paradigm shifts" (cf. Thomas Kuhn) as opposed to steady, if sometimes backwards, progress.[154] These are more difficult to include within theological methodology and are often only identified after the event, as is seen in the history of mission as examined by David Bosch.[155] Yet they are important and again highlight the need to give weight to the inbreaking experience of the Spirit that may challenge many of the established assumptions. This research project aims to develop existing pentecostal theology, but utilising the challenges given by dialogue of those within and outside the pentecostal community.

Finally, we might ask whether Yong's approach is overly utilitarian. Scheffler puts this challenge to Peirce, but acknowledges that in his educational writings Peirce seems to allow for more than practical application of logical insights.[156] There is a search after truth, whose applications may not be immediately apparent. This is a truth that may not be grasped by us in totality (not Cartesian), but which does go beyond our own conceptions and concerns (correspondence). Yong has truth arising out of the interaction of Spirit, Word and Community and thus represents a bottom-up approach which is distinctly practical but allows for a searching beyond current practice. Here it is worth noting the need for an "emphasised eschatology," to use the phrase of Hoedemaker, within which present challenges fit within a wider eschatological framework in which the coming of God is linked with the final

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[151]Ibid., 300.

[152]Amos Yong, "Peforming," 318.

[153]For the centrality of eschatology to the origins of pentecostalism see Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*.

[154]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 72; Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970).

[155]See Bosch, *Mission*, 183–85 for an introduction to Kuhn's theory as it might apply to theology, with suitable reservations.

[156]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 83–87.

"indisputable vision of truth."[157] Perhaps the danger of a utilitarian methodology is that it can reduce Christian faith to the practical action of "loving others" and this does seem the case for Peirce,[158] but Yong's conception of the pneumatological imagination is much broader than this. Although this concept is not developed in the current project the breadth of its application can be seen in the way it motivates Yong's dialogue with the scientific disciplines relating to disability and emancipation and in Yong's pneumatological approach to theology as performance.[159] The utilitarian is placed alongside a trinitarian perspective that stretches us in many ways as we enter more fully into the life of God. Yong's neglect of the Father in his theology has been noted and Vondey argues that in *Spirit poured out* Yong develops a pneumatology without reference to the Father, and the fact that it is the Father who pours out the Spirit needs to be firmly recognised.[160] This is a point to which Yong does not respond and it needs further exploration within pentecostal frameworks.

2.6 Methodology for this Project

I have sought to outline the pentecostal theological methodology of Amos Yong which we will utilise in this project. I have outlined and critiqued Yong's general methodology and its metaphysical basis to give us grounds from which to proceed. This is a distinctively pentecostal methodology in that it comes out of particular experiences of the Spirit, maintains a Christological focus and yet also finds itself driven outwards to engage with wider theological communities. There are thus particular distinctives as well as universal engagements within this theological methodology and, as I suggested earlier, Yong applies his general methodology to particular theological projects in each of his works. Thus in *Spirit poured out* he uses a pentecostal triadic of pneumatology (particularly as it relates to the experience of salvation), a Luke-Acts hermeneutic, and the community of pentecostalism "on

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[157]Hoedemaker, "Epistemologically Responsible Missiology," 220.
[158]Scheffler, *Four Pragmatists*, 90.
[159]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 10–14; Amos Yong, *Hospitality*, 38–64.
[160]Vondey, "Pentecostalism," 296–97.

the ground" which appropriates his fuller methodology of *Spirit-Word-Community* in a particular way.[161] I want to suggest that his methodology will always need appropriating in specific ways: there is always a need to give limits to the consideration of Spirit, Word and Community for specific projects – the universal being tied to the particular without sacrificing the aim of offering something of more universal value. This also addresses the critique of L. William Oliverio that Yong's approach "suffer[s] vagueness" due to the "manifold correlations" and "conflation of concepts" that can be seen in *Spirit-Word-Community*.[162] Our approach allows space to apply Yong's methodology to the task of developing a pentecostal mission ecclesiology shaped by mission.

For this project, then, the three moments of the triadic methodology to be utilised are as follows, applying Spirit-Word-Community as outlined to our specific task in the light of the critiques above:

(1) Spirit. A consideration of the discerned work of the Spirit in experience, as it relates to ecclesiology and mission. This could be carried out in a variety of ways and the methodology of practical theology has much to contribute here, as Mark Cartledge outlines.[163] Yet pentecostal discernment continues to take a variety of forms and it is not appropriate for our concerns to limit ourselves to one particular approach. It is more appropriate to utilise the results of the different discernments that scholars have made from pentecostal practice. I will be interested in what scholars have discerned as the main working of the Spirit, much as Yong points to experiences of salvation ("triumphs over sin, sickness, and Satan") as a basis for his systematic theology.[164] These workings may have "growing" (affirming the perceived good) and "inbreaking" (challenging the perceived bad) characteristics. It will be important to note the discerned work of the Spirit both inside and outside the church and how these may relate.

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[161] Amos Yong, "Peforming," 316; Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 27–29.
[162] L. William Oliverio Jr., "An Interpretive Review Essay on Amos Yong's *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*," *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009): 310.
[163] Mark J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives*, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), 27–30.
[164] Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 31.

It might be argued, in line with Shane Clifton's work, that my approach here represents a "piecemeal appropriation of the social sciences" and that I do not engage sufficiently in one context in a way that would make the ecclesiology developed more concrete.[165] In this regard it is important to note my aim of engaging with the specific theme of "networks" in a way that allows for application in different contexts. There is room for much work in ecclesiology of a more thorough sociological nature, and to such work this project might contribute particular ideas based on network insights.

(2) Word. A consideration of the biblical narrative centred on the life of Jesus and his followers, as it relates to ecclesiology and mission. Whilst allowing for a variety of approaches to biblical scholarship our discussion has suggested that narrative approaches that maintain a Christological focus should be particularly heard. Luke-Acts have been particularly significant within the pentecostal tradition, alongside aspects of the Pauline witness within the wider canonical setting. This is in line with the approach taken by Frank Macchia in regard to Spirit-baptism and also Yong in various writings, although the latter has more of a focus on Luke-Acts which he sees as the pentecostal "canon-within-a-cannon."[166] Given the importance of 1 Cor. 12-14 and other Pauline passages to pentecostal self-understanding it is important that some Pauline material is considered where relevant to the discussion, although there is not enough space for a detailed examination of all the Pauline contributions to ecclesiology as a whole. The work of N.T. Wright is becoming influential in pentecostal thinking and so will be need to be consulted.[167] Pentecostals place Scripture in the context of narrative and mission and so these will influence the choice of commentators engaged with in

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[165]Clifton, *Pentecostal Churches*, 17.
[166]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 9; Amos Yong, *In the Day of Caesar*, Section 3.2.3.
[167]Jeffrey S. Lamp, "N.T. Wright - Right or Wrong for Pentecostals? a Survey of His Thought and Its Implications for Pentecostals," paper presented at SPS 2009 (Eugene, OR, 2009).

this project.[168] This is in line with Martin Mittelstadt's analysis of two important themes in pentecostal approaches to Luke-Acts, those of narrative and mission.[169]

(3) Community. A consideration of pentecostal scholarship, as it relates to ecclesiology and mission, particularly noting those scholars that engage with wider theological traditions. Pentecostal theology still comes from the margins of mainstream theology and is a voice that needs to be heard in developing ecclesiology.[170] There needs to be a critical listening to these communities, enabled through dialogue with those interested in mission ecclesiology and from systematic theological traditions. Mission concerns will critically shape the themes considered in this project, particularly those of partnership and contextualisation. The relationship between church-specific communities and those communities that go beyond the church will also need considering. It is also worth commenting on the point that the main theological theme in this project is that of ecclesiology – in his more recent works Yong points to salvation as a they theme for pentecostals and whilst I can acknowledge this, I have chosen to shape the discussion around mission (another pentecostal essential) rather than salvation.

These three elements will naturally interact with one another, although the aim in this project is to focus on different elements in different sections before bringing conclusions together.

2.7 Summary

Given the recent nature of pentecostal methodologies this chapter has reviewed and critically examined that of Amos Yong which is going to be used in this research project. In itself this represents a significant contribution to pentecostal research as there have only been limited critiques of Yong's methodology to date. I have significantly suggested that Yong's

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[168]For a good introduction for the need for a missional hermeneutic see Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2006), 33–69.
[169]Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 82–97.
[170]Yong argues that pentecostalism is only just beginning to achieve theological respectability, and its task is still to challenge the existing theological and ecumenical traditions of the church, Amos Yong, "Peforming," 315.

methodology is general in nature and it needs to be made clear how it is to be utilised for particular projects. Thus there is a need to "operationalise" his methodology. The last section clarified the way in which the triadic Spirit-Word-Community is going to used through the rest of this project. Before we can move ahead to suggest elements of an ecclesiology based on networks it is important to review existing pentecostal contributions to ecclesiology.

Chapter 3

PENTECOSTAL ECCLESIOLOGY

Having considered the elements of a pentecostal methodology it is important to see how these can help us review existing pentecostal ecclesiologies. Such a review is important for this project and is something that has only been done in limited ways to date. Many approaches are possible in reviewing pentecostal ecclesiology: (1) we could focus on the early years of the pentecostal movement which are seen by many, including myself, as forming the essential roots and heart of pentecostalism; (2) we could trace the development of ecclesiology over the last hundred years; (3) we could focus on specific themes in ecclesiology as they have developed; (4) we could focus on ecclesiology within particular denominations or countries;[1] or (5) we could consider contemporary scholarly proposals for pentecostal ecclesiology. In line with the discussion in the introduction, the intention here is to focus on the last approach in order to explore how current pentecostal ecclesiology can be developed further. However, given the pentecostal appeal to the early defining years of the movement as seen in Chapter 1, it is important to sketch the ecclesiology present in these years.

3.1 Early Pentecostal Ecclesiology

Considering the roots of pentecostalism, Azusa Street remains important even if it was not the only centre and the roots can be traced further back through history.[2] Although the concept of church has not generally been central to pentecostal faith, Douglas Jacobsen argues that early pentecostalism represented a "critical turning point in the history of the Christian church."[3]

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[1]In this regard see the argument of R.Hollis Gause, "A Pentecostal Response to Pinnock's Proposal," *JPT* 14, no. 2 (2006): 184–85.

[2]For a review of the place of Azusa in contemporary pentecostal understanding see Edith L. Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street: A Centennial Retrospect," *IBMR* 30, no. 2 (2006): 59–64. For links with prior history see Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 19–38; Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 17–42.

[3]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 64; P.D. Hocken, "Church, Theology of The," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 544.

Dale Coulter also argues that ecclesiology was a vital concern for early pentecostals, using the Church of God (Cleveland) as an example.[4] Davidsson argues that Lewi Pethrus had a developed, if not systematic, ecclesiology for the Filadelfia church in Sweden.[5] Coulter and Davidsson's work is important given the absence of other reflections on the ecclesiology of the early years of pentecostalism. I would suggest that the essence of early pentecostal ecclesiology deriving from Azusa focuses on experiences of Spirit baptism (particularly speaking in tongues), reflecting those seen at Pentecost.[6] These experiences in assemblies of people, churches, filled with the Spirit's presence brought holiness and spiritual gifts.[7] The eschatological framework within inherited traditions was reworked through fresh appreciations of Acts and passages such as Rev. 14.6-7 and Mt. 24.14 which were framed theologically in terms of a "five-fold" or "full" gospel.[8] This gave an eschatological urgency for churches to share the "everlasting gospel of the kingdom" before Christ returned, to "try to get people saved" and to plant churches.[9] This is the responsibility and the gifting of *all* believers and Anderson sees pentecostal church growth as happening through the ministry of "persons of average ability."[10]

This perhaps remains as a common understanding of pentecostal ecclesiology, yet it is important not to neglect other less explored aspects. The experience of the Spirit was not only personal but led to the forming of communities and in this context Jacobsen has suggested that the ultimate sign of the Spirit's presence was the communal love generated by the experience.[11] This was seen in how the "color line" was "washed away" and in "a new, deep

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[4]Dale M. Coulter, "The Development of Ecclesiology in the Church of God (Cleveland, TN): A Forgotten Contribution?" *PNEUMA* 29, no. 1 (2007): 59–85.

[5]Thomas Davidsson, "No Mere 'Afterthought': The Ecclesiological Vision of Lewi Pethrus," paper presented at Research Seminar (Birmingham University, 2008).

[6]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 68.

[7]In this regard see Hocken, "Church," 547; Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 264–67.

[8]See Dayton, *Theological Roots* who also considers the 'four-fold' pattern followed by some within the early movement. The *kerygmatic* dimension of the Gospel remained a focus for pentecostal mission through last century, Byron D. Klaus, "Pentecostalism and Mission," *Missiology* XXXV, no. 1 (2007): 42.

[9]See Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, 20 for reflections on the nature of this message. Parham used the admonition 'try to get people saved' which Grant McClung takes as the heart of early pentecostal missiology, "Try," 30.

[10]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, Chapter 10.

[11]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 79.

fundamental unity in spirit" between Christians.[12] In this racial change is seen some of the social implications of Spirit baptism and Charles Parham saw God involved in "the human saga as a whole."[13] There were also ecumenical implications as unity across churches was linked with Spirit baptism, of which Parham's Beth-el ecumenical Healing Home is a notable example, after he received a call to be an "apostle of unity."[14] This was a spiritual unity across denominations rather than one that generally had concrete structures. Indeed the apocalyptic and restorationist strands in pentecostal ecclesiology led to an understanding of pentecostal churches over-against the "old churches."[15] Sadly, the many later pentecostal schisms point to the limits of this unity and a challenge to unity remains.[16] Yet pentecostalism grew through a "creative chaos" that developed a sense of togetherness (and unity) through existing and new Christian networks and later through the organisation of mission agencies.[17] The spread of pentecostalism across different cultures, from whichever starting points, indicates its early ability to "'incarnate' the gospel in different cultural forms."[18] Here it is worth mentioning the influence of Roland Allen (1868-1947), a "high-church" Anglican missionary in China, whose main work on the Spirit and the formation of indigenous churches was published in 1912.[19] His works have been very influential as pentecostal ecclesiology has developed.[20]

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[12]Frank Bartleman quoted in Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa," 61. See also Robeck, *Azusa Street*, 13–15. The later comment on unity is by Donald Gee, *The Pentecostal Movement* (London: Elim, 1949), 30 quoted in McClung Jr., "Try," 40. The uniqueness of this racial integration is noted by Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 39–40.

[13]See the exposition of Parham's thought in Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 32,41–46.

[14]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 23–24. This is significant despite his divisive and racist views that later spoke against unity, Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 33–35.

[15]Hocken, "Church," 545; Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, 24–27.

[16]See, for example, this challenge as given by Vinay Samuel, "Pentecostalism as a Global Culture: A Response," in *The Globilization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Carlisle: Regnum Books, 1999), 254.

[17]Faupel talks of 'creative chaos', *Everlasting Gospel*, 222 Cecil Robeck charts the development of pentcostal mission agencies and networks that came out of Azusa Street, "Pentecostalism and Mission: From Azusa Street to the Ends of the Earth," *Missiology* XXXV, no. 1 (2007): 79–87.

[18]Allan Anderson, *Pentecostalism*, 14.

[19]Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours?* reprint, 1912 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962); Philip L. Wickeri, "Roland Allen and the Decolonisation of Christianity," *Missonalia* 33, no. 3 (2005): 480–509.

[20]Gary B. McGee, "Missions, Overseas (North American)," in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 896–97.

3.2 Contemporary Pentecostal Ecclesiologies

Turning to contemporary pentecostal scholarship we can see continuities and developments of these themes from early pentecostalism. There remains a focus on the local church as a fellowship lived in the Spirit, but this is complemented by an interest in issues of unity and ecumenism, and in the links between the church and the world through holistic mission and contextualisation. Underlying these is a desire to develop a pneumatological and yet trinitarian basis for ecclesiology. It is important to review the current state of scholarship and then examine how these themes need to be taken forward. In the pentecostal academic journals of *Pneuma* and *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* the main scholars who write on ecclesiological issues are Simon Chan, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, Steven Land, Frank Macchia, Clark Pinnock and Amos Yong. Although Pinnock sees himself as an evangelical and is not a member of a pentecostal denomination, his experience fits within our wider understanding of pentecostalism and he is a significant contributor to pentecostal ecclesiology.[21] Miroslav Volf comes from pentecostal roots and so is considered as such here, although Mark Oppenheimer suggests that he has the "catholicity of a refugee."[22] Volf fits well with the understanding of pentecostal identity suggested in the opening chapter. Although these scholars develop aspects of pentecostal ecclesiology, only Chan and Volf set out to articulate a more comprehensive book-length ecclesiology. Yet each has a contribution to make and it is important to outline their thinking to see the current state of pentecostal scholarship. Below each ecclesiology is presented using the three-fold structure of Spirit-Word-Community as developed in the last chapter. They are considered in chronological order, highlighting the main contributions of each. The following section asks critical questions that arise out of these ecclesiologies and which give a focus to what is needed in the ecclesiology being developed here.

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[21]In this regard see Clark H. Pinnock, "Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit: The Promise of Pentecostal Ecclesiology," *JPT* 14, no. 2 (2006): 147–49.

[22]Mark Oppenheimer, "Miroslav Volf Spans Conflicting Worlds," *CC*, 11th January 2003, 18–23 [also on http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2688 accessed 4/2/10]. See also Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series, 25 (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 71; Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 125.

3.2.1 Steven Land

Steven Land developed in 1993 an influential reading of the pentecostal tradition around an understanding of the Spirit forming communities.[23] He terms such communities "missionary fellowships" given the shared experience of the eschatological Spirit. Land's starting point is an understanding of spirituality as theology centered on the theme of pentecostal experience as a "passion for the kingdom." This future-directed longing is also seen as a desire for the Holy Spirit and for Christ to come.[24] This "not yet" of the kingdom is longed for and experienced "now" in missionary fellowships through justification, sanctification and Spirit baptism.[25] These experiences are integrated by Land into what he terms Christian "affections" which motivate the heart to action and are shaped by pentecostal biblical beliefs and practices.[26] The affections that characterise the early pentecostal fellowships experience are those of gratitude, compassion and courage. These also link with the idea of a church characterised by faith, holiness and power.[27] The affections particularly come together in the experience of prayer and result in witness, hence the missionary nature of such a church.[28] The central biblical basis of missionary fellowships is seen in 1 Cor. 12, illustrating the lived reality of faith, but Land pioneers a narrative-praxis approach both to Pentecost and to the pentecostal tradition.[29] The Bible as drama is taken alongside an oral-narrative approach to pentecostal origins as seen in testimonies, songs and journals.[30] Land's main concern is to move away from individual to communal faith and his main focus is on local church life.[31] Yet he also challenges wider church issues, particularly the "ecclesiological fragmentation" of pentecostalism, and suggests the need to consider structural issues.[32] Drawing on the work of

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[23]Land, *Spirituality*.
[24]Ibid., 66.
[25]Ibid., 82 cf 14.
[26]Ibid., 23,44,183.
[27]Ibid., 23,75.
[28]Ibid., 165.
[29]Ibid., 33–34.
[30]Ibid., 71.
[31]Ibid., 178.
[32]Ibid., 193,221–222.

Jürgen Moltmann and John Wesley he urges work on a trinitarian understanding of God's working in history and hence a more holistic approach to mission.[33] The church as a missionary fellowship submits to God's reign and plays a passionate part in His kingdom mission to transform the world.[34]

3.2.2 Clark Pinnock

This world-wide mission forms the backdrop for the Spirit ecclesiology of Clark Pinnock, developed in 1996 and refined in 2006. Pinnock has constructed a systematic theology rooted in a large vision of the Spirit at work across the world and through time.[35] He speaks of the "history of the Spirit" which gives meaning to a wide variety of experiences. Interestingly, Pinnock does not interact with Land's thought and chooses to focus on two key biblical events of the Spirit's anointing: the baptism of Jesus and the baptism of the church at Pentecost. In this Pinnock's approach seems more evangelical with pentecostal additions rather than attempting, as does Land, to develop a distinctively pentecostal approach. For Pinnock, the baptismal events point forward to the coming kingdom of God and illustrate its realisation in the present through the church as its anointed herald.[36] The church is seen as a fellowship of those who are anointed and called to be heralds of the kingdom. Confession of Christ, as witnessed in baptism, initiates people into the community of God's people, a community that reflects the trinitarian society. Central to baptism is an anointing that brings a Pentecost participation in the divine life leading to a Christ-baptised life.[37] And as Christ is a sacrament of God so is the church a sacrament of Christ, sharing in his living, dying and rising.[38] In particular the church reflects Christ's life of loving suffering service, heralding the kingdom in the world. This participation in the divine life is seen in a baptism in and fellowship of the

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[33]Ibid., 42,119–206.

[34]Ibid., 175.

[35]Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1996), 113.

[36]Pinnock, "Church," 150–53.

[37]Here there is a move towards salvation understood as "union with Christ and as intimacy with God" rather than "juridicial conceptions" Clark H. Pinnock, "The Recovery of the Holy Spirit in Evangelical Theology," *JPT* 13, no. 1 (2004): 14.

[38]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 121.

Spirit, one that points to the Spirit as the source of human fellowship reflecting the Spirit as the bond of love between Father and Son. The ontological basis of the church is found in this link with the communion of the Trinity and in this Pinnock points to the work of Moltmann.[39] The sacrament of the Eucharist renews the church's participation in the divine life and spiritual gifts demonstrate the reality of God's presence and power in the church. They also point forward to the mission of the church which is seen as a participation in the apostleship of Christ and in the work of the Spirit in bringing transformation to the whole world. Through the ever widening community of the church the world becomes more and more "christomorphic."[40] This requires a charismatic structure to the local church and institutional structures within the wider church.[41] Pinnock's desire to understand pentecostal (and evangelical) ecclesiology within the world-wide working of the Spirit gives his work a form that invites ecumenical dialogue, even if his chosen dialogue partners are from a limited set of ecumenical and pentecostal scholars.

3.2.3 Miroslav Volf

Volf developed in 1998 an ecclesiology that draws on wider and deeper ecumenical engagement, particularly with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox scholars Joseph Ratzinger and John Zizioulas.[42] Rather than draw on his own pentecostal background and contemporary scholars such as Land and Pinnock, Volf chooses to start from a Free Church ecclesiology in his engagement with the dialogue partners of Ratzinger and Zizioulas. His ecclesiology is rooted in what he sees as the ecumenical consensus that the church is constituted by the experience of the Spirit of Christ within the eschatological reign of God.[43] The question is as to how this experience is discerned, to which Volf wants to point to a "lively faith" seen in the profession of the "pluriform faith of Christ" and openness to all churches and human beings.

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[39]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 117. More detail given in Pinnock, "Recovery of the Holy Spirit," 8. Moltmann here is used as a consistent support for Pinnocks theology.
[40]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 118.
[41]Pinnock, "Church," 159–63.
[42]Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998).
[43]Ibid., 158.

This "lively faith" includes in it a vocation to ministry – faith is linked with the endowment and gifting of God's Spirit.[44] Volf starts by discerning keys to ecclesiology within the American context and suggests the need for an ecclesiology that reacts against individualism and hierarchical holism.[45] The foundational biblical text throughout is Mt. 18:20 which speaks of church as a "local assembly" that goes beyond individualism but also excludes hierarchical constructs.[46] This naturally fits with Volf's starting point in a Free Church ecclesiology, if one that he sees as requiring a more thorough trinitarian grounding. He mentions the importance of the "scriptural narrative of the triune God" which is worked out in terms of the trinitarian and ecclesial nature of baptism.[47] Volf argues that the local assembly is the true church, based on a doxological understanding of the Trinity that draws on the work of Moltmann.[48] He corrects a perceived Free Church emphasis on human faith as constituting the church by means of stressing the Spirit's work in constituting the church through the essential challenge to, yet gift of, faith.[49] He sees congregations as mid-points between individualism and hierarchical structures (between the "one" and the "many"). Volf considers mission separately from his ecclesiology and uses the tension between the "one" and the "many" in a way that is suggestive of a church knowing its identity as a local assembly in Christ and openly reaching out to embrace the "other" in mission in a Cross-inspired self-giving love.[50]

3.2.4 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen

Kärkkäinen, like Volf, has an inherently ecumenical approach to ecclesiology that seems to spring from experiences of the Spirit that have moved him beyond pentecostalism to embrace wider ecumenical insights alongside those of his roots. Kärkkäinen has been engaged with

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[44]Ibid., 225–26.
[45]Ibid., 3.
[46]Ibid., 197.
[47]Ibid., 194.
[48]Ibid., 154, cf 44–46,78.
[49]Ibid., 176, cf. 224.
[50]Volf excludes mission concerns in Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 7. Some of his mission outlook can be found in Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 17–18,22–25.

pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogues over the last 20 years and his ecclesial reflections were gathered together in 2002.[51] Like Volf, Kärkkäinen focuses on the theme of assemblies, but prefers to use the terms fellowship and *koinonia* to describe them. Given the detailed ecumenical reflections on *koinonia* this is not surprising and it is perhaps more surprising that Volf does not interact more with such reflections. Alongside *koinonia* are placed the pentecostal gifts of the Spirit given to *all* believers for which Kärkkäinen, like Land, looks to the Pauline corpus for support, especially the Corinthian letters and Philippians 2.[52] He sees the central pentecostal contribution to ecclesiology in terms of a "lively spirituality" and thus his proposal starts with this. He notes the link between Spirit baptism and *koinonia* that makes all life in the Spirit linked to participation in local fellowships, thus bringing together what he sees as the ecumenical consensus that sees the church as a "communion in the Spirit" with the pentecostal stress on fellowship.[53] The charismatic gifting of all believers should lead to the active participation of all in church life, but more than this, Kärkkäinen draws on the work of Volf to make this gifting of charisms as an essential characteristic of church.[54] Underlying all this is a trinitarian outlook that sees Word and Spirit working equally with the Trinity *pro nobis*, "for us."[55] There is also a reappreciation of the sacraments as the link to charismatic presence and gifts. Kärkkäinen does not just consider the local church but considers the work of the Spirit striving for unity and dialogue in the world.[56] A drawing together of differing views on subjects is a characteristic of Kärkkäinen's work that challenges pentecostals to look further ecumenically and also through history.[57] The history of creation is seen in eschatological terms with the work of the Spirit in the church serving "the consummating of

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[51]Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, ed. Amos Yong (New York: University Press of America, 2002). For more on the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue see the useful introduction of Clifton, "Analysis of the Developing Ecclesiology," 40–46. Clifton sees this as a dialogical approach to ecclesiology.
[52]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 100–103,116.
[53]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 71. This is developed more in Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Church as the Fellowship of Persons: An Emerging Pentecostal Ecclesiology of *Koinonia*," *PentecoStudies* 6, no. 1 (2007): 1–15.
[54]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 130–32; Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 226–27.
[55]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 108 cf 98. Significantly absent here is a consideration of the Father.
[56]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 76,95, also Chapter 3.
[57]For example, see Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Baker Books, 2002); Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical and Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002).

his work in the whole of creation."[58] Thus Spirit-gifted *koinonia* is also moved by the Spirit in ecumenical and world-embracing ways.

3.2.5 Amos Yong

Such an ecumenical and world-embracing understanding of the work of the Spirit is present in the thought of Yong, who we have already considered at length in the last chapter. He engages with the thought of all the prior writers in developing, in 2005, an ecclesiology arising out of what he sees as the central pentecostal experience of the Spirit of salvation who brings triumphs over "sin, sickness, and Satan."[59] It is this pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit that constitutes the church and enables us to see it as the "charismatic fellowship of the Spirit" building on the work of Volf and Kärkkäinen as well as Roman Catholic writers from past to present.[60] This is rooted (rather loosely) in the "Acts of the Apostles and of the Holy Spirit" within his wider focus on Luke-Acts.[61] Within the wider ecumenical debates Yong is particularly conscious that pentecostalism has adopted uncritically forms of Free-church ecclesiology, centered on personal confession of Christ. Whilst valuing this, Yong admits that it leads to accusations of proselytism by other churches and there is an essential need for ecumenical engagement.[62] Yong seeks such engagement through a re-consideration of the marks of the church seen in the Nicene Creed, particularly in dialogue with the interpretations of the catholic theologian Yves Congar.[63] The "one catholic" church is realised through the shared contextual gift of the Spirit who brings diversity.[64] Unity comes through the reconciling work of the Spirit from this shared basis, through which congregations and denominations may be brought together.[65] This is a spiritual unity glimpsed in concrete

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[58]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 224.
[59]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 31.
[60]Ibid., 122,156,151.
[61]The title of his chapter on ecclesiology, although biblical study is rather sparse through the chapter, Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, Chapter 3. On Luke-Acts see Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 27.
[62]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 124,127.
[63]Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, trans. David Smith, 3 vols. (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983).
[64]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 143–44.
[65]Ibid., 135–39.

expressions, although Yong is hesitant to talk of organised institutions.[66] The "holy" church congregation is one that receives the eschatological gift of holiness by the Spirit and so is set apart for the work of the kingdom. Such an "apostolic" church thus conforms to the apostolic message and is given a message to testify to as people join in the mission of Christ by the Spirit – pentecostal "ecclesiology has been inevitably bound up with missiology."[67] As well as these marks, Yong explores sacramental encounters within the church which transform through Word and Spirit, through the Scriptures and prophetically. Elsewhere Yong outlines a vision for an inclusive church.[68] Thus we have charismatic fellowships marked by the Spirit by unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity, although it is surprising that Yong does not consider the holistic nature of the church's engagement with the world given his wider understanding of experience.

3.2.6 Simon Chan

In 2006 Chan developed an ecclesiology within the pentecostal and evangelical traditions, which has the experience of the triune God in worship at its core.[69] He has a concern to overcome what he sees as a pentecostal tendency to adopt a "very weak, sociological concept of the church."[70] Yet he engages little with pentecostal scholarship in his ecclesiology, despite a favourable appreciation of Land and Pinnock in his earlier work on pentecostal "traditioning."[71] Rather he prefers here a more evangelical approach that centres on the biblical images of the church as the "people of God," the "body of Christ" and the "temple of the Spirit." This leads him to argue that we need to think in terms of an "*ecclesial*

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[66]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 144–45. Yong displays an ambivalence about institutions and networks, both commending them as anticipations of the eschatological kingdom and examples of pentecostal ecumenical instincts, yet wanting to stress the primacy of the spiritual. Compare above with Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 179–80.
[67]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 127.
[68]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 193–225.
[69]Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community* (Downers Groves: IVP, 2006), 43.
[70]Simon Chan, "Mother Church: Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology," *PNEUMA* 22, no. 2 (2000): 178; Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 12–13.
[71]Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*.

pneumatology rather than an individual pneumatology."[72] He is particularly critical of the "voluntaristic" concept of the church as seen in para-church organisations and missionary organisations.[73] Chan develops an understanding of the ontology of the church based on an understanding of the church as the *end* of God's purposes rather than as a *means* of God's purposes for creation: "What the world is there to do is to provide the raw materials out of which God creates his church."[74] This represents a narrower view of God's work in the world than that expressed by the other pentecostal scholars considered here. In support of his view, Chan sees church in terms of the "total Christ" and since Christ came before the world so the church is a *koinonia*, a divine humanity, created by the Spirit of God "before the creation of the world" (cf Eph. 1:4).[75] The Spirit is involved in the world through the church and the Spirit relates to history now through the church.[76] Chan draws on the view of Cyprian who speaks of the church as our "mother" with a focus in on the church as a "truth traditioning" community. Focusing on worship Chan notes its fundamentally sacramental nature, linked to Christ as the "primordial sacrament" and its missiological orientation in terms of the church being formed by worship separate from the world but sent into the world.[77] This mission is "nothing but the mission of the Spirit in the church" that enables the church to be "Christ" for the world, with the eschatological hope of "uniting all in Christ."[78]

3.2.7 Frank Macchia

Macchia, also writing in 2006, developed an ecclesiology based on a rediscovered emphasis on the particular experience of Spirit baptism that picks up similar themes to Chan but with an emphasis on transforming the world. Spirit baptism is seen as the "crown jewel" of

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[72]Chan, "Mother Church," 180.
[73]Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 14 drawing on the critique of Stanley J. Grenz, *Renewing the Center: Evangelical Theology in a Post-Theological Era* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), Chapter 9.
[74]Chan, "Mother Church," 207 quoting Robert W. Jenson, "The Church's Responsibility for the World," in *The Two Cities of God*, ed. Carl Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 4 On Hardy and Wright see Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 22,25.
[75]Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 23.
[76]Chan, "Mother Church," 197–200.
[77]Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 63, 82–83.
[78]Ibid., 39–40.

pentecostal distinctives that brings personal renewal, spiritual life and mission.[79] Macchia wants to take Spirit baptism further as a metaphor that embraces much more of the New Testament witness than is usually allowed for. He particularly draws on the testimony of John the Baptist to extend Spirit baptism as an inauguration of the eschatological kingdom that comes before the church.[80] Macchia sees two movements through the New Testament: from Mary to Pentecost we see the Father sending the Son in the Spirit; from Pentecost we see the Spirit poured out through Christ to draw us to the Father.[81] Key to the latter is seeing Spirit baptism as the means of forming the people of God as a Holy Temple and as a "living flame" of witness.[82] This witness is seen through Acts and combines prophetic speech, charismatic gifting and "a certain quality of communal life."[83] Loving missionary witness illustrates the fact that the love of God "cannot be exhausted by the *koinonia* of the church" and eschatologically Spirit baptism brings divine infilling and the cosmic transformation of the whole of creation as the powers of "redemption, liberation and hope" are released, as the Spirit is poured out on "all flesh," filling the "whole universe."[84] Spirit baptism provides an orientation toward the world and yet keeps the church as the focus of God's working.[85] Macchia picks up on the outlook of Gregory of Nyssa who saw Christ as the king and the Spirit as the kingdom, with the kingdom present when the redemptive presence of God is exercised. Alongside this emphasis on the kingdom is placed an appreciation of "communion" with the goal of the kingdom being "union with God," i.e. love. Here it is divine presence more than simply a "historical-political" kingdom that is in mind and Spirit baptism, and hence the kingdom and church, have a "christoformic goal and direction."[86] Macchia draws

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[79]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 20.
[80]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 106. Here Macchia continues the line of thought of Christoph Blumhardt who moved from church to kingdom and to whom Macchia has devoted study. Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 195–96; Frank D. Macchia, *Spirituality and Social Liberation: Message of the Blumhardts in the Light of Wuerttemberg Pietism* (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1993).
[81]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 117.
[82]Ibid., 100–101.
[83]Ibid., 16.
[84]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 63,117. Acts 2 and Ephesians 4.7-10, seen as Paul's understanding of Spirit baptism, Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 102.
[85]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 156, cf. 165,175.
[86]Ibid., 106.

much on Karl Barth for his rooting of the Trinity in the inauguration of the kingdom in the world understood as Spirit baptism.[87] He speaks of local congregations and global networks of churches with spiritual unity striving toward visible expression, even if he leaves that visible expression unexplored.[88] Macchia suggests that the distinctive pentecostal marks of the church are its charismatic and missionary nature, its five-fold gospel and its discipleship, all culminating in the mark of love.

3.2.8 Other Pentecostal Scholars

Other pentecostal scholars are beginning to have greater influence on the development of ecclesiology. As mentioned in the introduction, Clifton and Morgan have completed PhD studies on pentecostal ecclesiology in Australia.[89] They share a focus on developing more concrete approaches to ecclesiology with Clifton examining the historical formation of the Assemblies of God (Australia) and Morgan looking at the areas of worship and prophecy in two contemporary pentecostal churches. Mark Cartledge has examined a British Assemblies of God congregation using a concrete practical-theological methodology. He suggests five themes that articulate an approach to pentecostal ecclesiology: temple of praise; household of healing; members of ministry; community of hospitality; and pilgrims of hope.[90] For Clifton, Morgan and Cartledge there is a desire to review present pentecostal experience as central to developing ecclesiology. Coulter considers early rather than contemporary pentecostal experience to argue that there was a distinctive pentecostal ecclesiology from very early in its history. He argues that 1886-1923 was a formative period in the ecclesiology of the Church of God. Interestingly, Coulter suggests that the ideas on church structures during this time "offer a strong view of the church that approximates Catholic and Orthodox ecclesiologies."[91] In contrast to these approaches, Althouse is seeking to develop what he sees as a theological

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[87]Ibid., 120–27.
[88]Ibid., 210, cf. 218–21.
[89]Clifton, *Pentecostal Churches*; Morgan, "Priesthood, Prophethood."
[90]Mark J. Cartledge, *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology* (London: Ashgate, 2010 forthcoming), Chapter 9 Section 3.
[91]Coulter, "Development of Ecclesiology," 82.

rather than a descriptive account of pentecostal ecclesiology. He aims "construct a Pentecostal ecclesiology that is Trinitarian, missional and eschatological in scope" that builds on his earlier work on eschatology.[92] He does this through the use of the mission ecclesiology of Lesslie Newbigin alongside the insights of Macchia, Chan, Volf and Yong. Graham Twelftree has explored Luke's view of the church as "People of the Spirit" in a way that interacts with biblical and theological studies.[93] He comes from a charismatic background and although his work does not consciously engage with the pentecostal tradition it is an important contribution to biblical studies. Pentecostal ecclesiology is a lively area of contemporary scholarship with a number of contributions seeking to be heard. In short, there are a number of different ways in which pentecostals can approach ecclesiology and we would expect different pentecostal ecclesiologies to develop that take different approaches. Wolfgang Vondey argues, against the approach taken in the ecumenical *Nature and Mission of the Church*, that "many Pentecostals suggest that there exists a plurality of ecclesial self-understandings and nuances that are theologically complementary and desirable."[94] Vondey himself comes from a Roman Catholic background influenced by pentecostalism and has developed an ecumenical ecclesiology around the image of "people of bread."[95]

3.3 Evaluation of Pentecostal Ecclesiology

This overview of contemporary pentecostal ecclesiology helps identify the main issues which we will evaluate under our methodological headings of Spirit, Word and Community.

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[92]Peter Althouse, "Towards a Pentecostal Ecclesiology: Participation in the Missional Life of the Triune God," *JPT* 18, no. 2 (2009): 231; Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*.

[93]Graham H. Twelftree, *People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke's View of the Church* (London: SPCK, 2009).

[94]Wolfgang Vondey, "Pentecostal Perspectives on *The Nature and Mission of the Church*: Challenges and Opportunities for Ecumenical Transformation," in *Receiving the Nature and Mission of the Church: Ecclesial Reality and Ecumenical Horizons for the Twenty-First Century*, eds Michael A. Fahey and Paul M. Collins (T&T Clark, 2008), 3.

[95]Wolfgang Vondey, *People of Bread: Rediscovering Ecclesiology* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008).

3.3.1 Experience of the Spirit

Terry Cross suggests, following Emil Brunner, that pentecostals have followed a Reformed lack of engagement with the question of what is the church, preferring personal faith and experience of the Spirit.[96] This is a view supported by Jeffrey Snell, yet there has been move away to seeing the experience of the Spirit as something that intrinsically draws people into Christian community, thus forming "fellowships of the Spirit" that remain at the heart of pentecostal ecclesiology.[97] These experiences are also Christocentric, experiences of "the living presence of God in Christ" as Ken Archer puts it.[98] Cartledge argues that encountering the Spirit is at the heart of charismatic spirituality and Kärkkäinen roots pentecostal spirituality in such encounters with Christ rooted in the five-fold Gospel that Donald Dayton recognises.[99] Cross roots his ecclesiological outline in experiences of "God's immediate presence and power" that transform us as the people of God.[100] There is general agreement that pentecostal ecclesiology is rooted in individual experiences of encounter with the Spirit that focus on Christ and draw people out into community. Yet there is still debate over Spirit baptism and the extent to which this outward movement extends ecumenically and into the world.

Macchia argues for the importance of the particular experience of Spirit baptism, given that he sees pentecostal scholarship moving towards more general experiences of the Spirit as characteristic of pentecostalism, a move characteristic of all the other ecclesiologies considered in this chapter.[101] It represents an acknowledgement of the diversity of pentecostalism within which Spirit baptism must be placed alongside other experiences of the

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[96]Terry L. Cross, "A Response to Clark Pinnock's 'Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit'," *JPT* 14, no. 2 (2006): 176; Emil Brunner, *Das Mibverständnis der Kirche* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1951), 7.

[97]Jeffrey T. Snell, "Beyond the Individual and Into the World: A Call to Participation in the Larger Purposes of the Spirit on the Basis of Pentecostal Theology," *PNEUMA* 14, no. 1 (1992): 43.

[98]Kenneth J. Archer, "Nourishment for Our Journey: The Pentecostal *Via Salutis* and Sacramental Ordinances," *JPT* 13, no. 1 (2004): 85–86.

[99]Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit*, 25–27; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Encountering Christ in the Full Gospel Way: An Incarnational Pentecostal Spirituality," *JEPTA* XXVII, no. 1 (2007): 17–18; Dayton, *Theological Roots*.

[100]Cross, "Response," 177.

[101]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 26–28.

Spirit. However, this movement carries with it the danger that an essential characteristic of pentecostalism, Spirit baptism, may be lost. Attempting to embrace this fact Macchia expands the classical Pentecostal understanding of Spirit baptism as a metaphor for the inbreaking eschatological kingdom. It is not obvious that the biblical basis in John the Baptist's testimony is sufficient to bear the weight of Macchia's interpretation, but as a theological metaphor his approach is attractive in maintaining a pentecostal distinctive whilst allowing for pentecostal development over the last century.[102] His interpretation is perhaps stretched most when Spirit baptism is seen embracing not just eschatological experiences within church life, but also cosmic transformation. Whilst there is clearly an eschatological aspect to Spirit baptism that points forward beyond the church and brings to the church signs of the coming kingdom, as Macchia argues,[103] it is hard to see Spirit baptism as a major biblical metaphor for the coming kingdom itself. In this regard the metaphor of *resurrection* seems to have more potential as a metaphor, as explored through the New Testament writings by N.T. Wright.[104] We seem on safer ground to concentrate on Spirit baptism in its links with the formation of the church and Christian identity, as suggested by James Dunn and Gordon Fee.[105]

If it can be agreed that a pentecostal experience of the Spirit moves people inherently into community there is a question over if and when this Spirit movement stops, given that there are different forms of community – from the local to the global and everything in between. Most of the pentecostals considered do not address this question directly but focus on the move from individual experience to local church community, considering ecumenical concerns separately. Volf is the exception, and he considers that there is a *movement* from the

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[102]In this regard see also the critique of Mark J. Cartledge, "A Response to Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*," Presntation, Annual SPS Conference (2007) who argues for the need for multiple metaphors if we are to do justice to the wider biblical texts.

[103]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 85–88.

[104]N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God, vol. 3 (London: SPCK, 2003).

[105]James D.G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Epworth Commentaries (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 1996), 22–25. Macchia notes Dunn's link between the Spirit and Christian identity in *Baptised in the Spirit*, 67. Gordon Fee explores Pauline thought of the way in which the Spirit formed the early Christian communities in *God's Empowering Presence* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 872–73.

individual to local church community followed by *openness* to wider church communities.[106] Ideally, he wants the movement to continue but stops short of saying this is an essential part of the ecclesial experience of the Spirit, for to do so is for him to undermine the validity of the local church as church. Yet an important part of pentecostal testimony is the way in which experiences of the Spirit have brought people together ecumenically. Peter Hocken argues that although early pentecostal ecclesiology with its emphasis on the invisibility of the universal church did not often address wider ecclesial issues, a movement towards ecumenical unity has been a part of pentecostalism from the start.[107] Theologically, there are issues here regarding the nature of the catholicity of the church that will need addressing, but for the moment it is sufficient to note the importance of the experiential movement of the Spirit towards wider church communities.

Finally, we need to ask if pentecostal experiences of the Spirit also move people out to appreciate God's work in the world beyond the church. Macchia's work points in this direction, as does that of Pinnock, although Chan limits the work of the Spirit to the church. Pentecostals have experienced divided loyalties between church and world from the beginning, as Grant Wacker's study of early pentecostal relationships with the American state shows.[108] Underlying these divisions is the question as to whether experiences of the Spirit within the church are of a different nature to experiences in the world beyond the church. Although pentecostalism has perhaps assumed so, there is a widespread counter-movement that seeks to overcome dualisms whilst maintaining the ability to differentiate and evaluate experiences of the Spirit. In the previous chapter I outlined Yong's approach to overcoming the dualism by means of a movement between polarities and a developed assertion that all experience is essentially of the Spirit, whether inside or outside the church. This allows us to understand and value pentecostal experience that has moved people to appreciate God's

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[106]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 154–58.
[107]Hocken, "Church," 544–46; P.D. Hocken, *The Glory and the Shame: Reflections on the 20th Century Outpouring of the Holy Spirit* (Guildford: Eagle, 1994), 151–60.
[108]Grant Wacker, "Early Pentecostals and the Almost Chosen People," *PNEUMA* 19, no. 2 (1997): 166. For more on this see below, Chapter 7.

working in the world, represented by our second movement in mission. At the same time, Yong maintains the Christological element to all experience and we have highlighted the need to value both the inbreaking and growing types of experience of the Spirit. These, together with Yong's developed approach to discernment help give an approach to the experience of the Spirit that remains pentecostal yet which links ecclesial experience with that outside the church.

The experience of the sacraments is gaining fresh appreciation within pentecostal ecclesiology and here the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist are a focus although Archer suggests five sacraments related to the five elements of the "full gospel."[109] In his treatment of ecclesiology Yong focuses on an understanding of sacraments that values the essential two sacraments within church life, but he later talks about "encountering God sacramentally and semiotically in one another and in the various orders of creation."[110] This remains an unexplored theme in pentecostal theology and yet one that might link church and creation within the mission of God. Suggestive in this regard is John V Taylor's basis of a theology of the Holy Spirit and mission in the experience of "annunciations,"[111] what Hans urs von Balthasar calls the "sacramental principle"[112] and John Inge's consideration of "sacramental events."[113] It is worth exploring a sacramental understanding within pentecostal ecclesiology as a way of linking ecclesial and world experience within the mission of God.

3.3.2 Rooted in the Scriptures

Pentecostal ecclesiology remains rooted in the text of Luke-Acts with a particular focus on Pentecost, as is true of pentecostal theology generally. There has been a move away from literalistic to more critical approaches, but Wonsuk Ma notes the remaining centrality of

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[109]Archer, "Nourishment."

[110]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 299, cf. 156.

[111]John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (London: SCM, 1972).

[112]As quoted and explored by Patrick Sherry in his consideration of the link between the Holy Spirit and beauty, *Spirit and Beauty, 2nd Ed.* (London: SCM Press, 2002), 126.

[113]John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 59–77.

Luke-Acts with a narrative missional emphasis.[114] This is clearly evident in the work of Yong although his approach to narrative remains lacking, as mentioned in the last chapter.[115] Pinnock links Jesus' baptism in Luke with the baptism of the church at Pentecost seen within a larger movement of the Spirit, and Macchia sees similar movements of the Spirit if focused this time on Pentecost and Spirit baptism alone. Alongside Luke-Acts is placed the Pauline understanding of church as seen particularly in 1 Cor. 12-14. Here is found the lively Spirit gifted understanding of church as fellowship or *koinonia* that Kärkkäinen and Land write about. It is against such backgrounds that other biblical themes and passages are understood.

Various questions can be raised about pentecostal hermeneutics but for our purposes here it is important to note questions about the use of narrative, use of the Pauline material and the wider Scriptures.[116] Narrative approaches to Luke-Acts have become increasingly popular, with Joel Green arguing that if we look at "Luke-Acts on the large canvas of narrative analysis, it is possible to see in its entirety a simple narrative cycle, painted in broad strokes. In it we see the working out of God's purpose to bring salvation in all of its fullness to all people."[117] This fits with the earlier narrative critical approach of Robert Tannehill who sees within Acts a narrative movement of salvation "to the end of the earth" (picking up the background in Isaiah).[118] The pentecostal focus on Luke-Acts naturally brings together such narrative approaches with the experiential movement of the Spirit examined above. Word and Spirit come together within a Luke-Acts ecclesiology that has mission movement at its heart. In this regard it is worth valuing the assertion of Stanley Skreslet that missiologists look at history with a "bias toward the dynamic" and "Christianity as a movement."[119] Luke-Acts is

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[114]Wonsuk Ma, "Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," in *The Globilization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Carlisle: Regnum Books, 1999), 62–63.

[115]See here his pentecostal approach in Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 27,121–122.

[116]For a more detailed consideration of pentecostal hermeneutics see Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic* developing his earlier Kenneth J. Archer, "Pentecostal Hermeneutics: Retrospect and Prospect," *JPT*, no. 8 (1996): 63–81.

[117]Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 1997), 9.

[118]Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts, a Literary Appreciation, Volume Two: The Acts of the Apostles* (Augsburg: Fortress, 1990), 17.

[119]Stanley H. Skreslet, "Thinking Missiologically About the History of Mission," *IBMR* 31, no. 2 (2007): 62.

vital for any ecclesiology that aims to be shaped by mission and pentecostals would argue that central to this is a baptism or anointing in the Spirit. If this wider missionary narrative is common in pentecostal thinking, the detail is not given equal value in ecclesiology given the bias towards the particular event of Pentecost. Using the terminology of Jan Fokkelman, pentecostals have a concern for the overall *cycle* of stories in Acts that speak of a missionary movement and the initial *story* of Pentecost that starts it off, but not so much in the *acts* that lie between the start and the end of Acts.[120] Thus the individual experience of Pentecost and the resulting global mission movement neglects the *acts* or "mid-level" narrative of Acts that suggests how the early church went from individuals to the global. Here reference is often made to Acts 1:8 as a pattern for a steady outward mission movement from Jerusalem but, as Tannehill notes, not all of these steps are developed in Acts.[121] It is more accurate to suggest that the mission movement was fulfilled through a series of missionary journeys focused on a number of linked geographic areas and city centres that extend towards Rome.[122] These were less carefully planned stages in a plan than a following of the Spirit of God "whose exact moves cannot be anticipated."[123] There is much here that links with the early pentecostal story of mission and it is important for pentecostal ecclesiology to value the narrative of churches linked through missionary journeys. This need resonates with Martin Wittelstadt's survey of pentecostal approaches to Luke-Acts in which he suggests the need for a greater study of ecclesiology within Luke-Acts and a valuing of more of Acts than is often the case.[124]

This pentecostal focus on Luke-Acts sits rather uncomfortably with their valuing of 1 Corinthians, and indeed the wider writings of Paul. Issues of authorship and theological differences in the writings are often set aside in ecclesiological discussions in the desire to emphasise Pentecost and spiritual gifts as being at the heart of what it is to be church. Such

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[120]J.P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide* (John Knox Press, 2000), 156.
[121]Tannehill, *Narrative Unity, Vol. 2*, 17.
[122]In this regard see the comprehensive research of Eckhard Schnabel who traces these journeys in the life of Paul, the central character in Acts, and notes the multi-centred approach of the early Christian missionary movement, *Early Christian Mission, Volume 2: Paul and the Early Church* (Leicester: IVP, 2004), 1466–85, 1489–93.
[123]Tannehill, *Narrative Unity, Vol. 2*, 3.
[124]Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 151,158.

differences cannot be ignored, yet various ways forward can be discerned. The thorough biblical work of Eckhard Schnabel in giving a life of Paul that draws from both Acts and the Pauline corpus shows how a missionary outlook can bring both together.[125] There has also been a "narrative turn in Pauline exegesis" that not only opens up Pauline studies, but is also suggestive of greater links with the narrative of Luke-Acts and Old Testament narrative.[126] From a missiological perspective Rollin Grams argues for a narrative reading of Paul that links Pauline thought with Old Testament narrative, but neglects interaction with Luke-Acts.[127] There is value in a narrative reading of Luke-Acts that links with the Pauline writings.

Luke-Acts as narrative is of vital importance to pentecostal ecclesiology and ecclesiology in general, particularly thinking about the nature of the church in mission. Yet not all pentecostals give attention to narrative and rather focus on particular themes or selected Bible verses. Sometimes, like Chan and Volf, they can also neglect Luke-Acts. Rather than a church caught within movements of mission, neglecting Luke-Acts seems to encourage a static understanding of church, if one that moves outwards in a strictly defined mission and always returning safely home. This is perhaps a criticism that could be levelled at some non-pentecostal ecclesiologies and is not to suggest that they do not take mission seriously. Yet pentecostal narrative linked with the Luke-Acts narrative requires more in the way of movement. Of course, within such mission movement there needs to be an appreciation of biblical themes and texts that lie outside Luke-Acts and also outside the Pauline corpus. Richard Bauckham sees the whole biblical narrative in terms of movements, particularly the movement outwards from the church into the world although the reverse movement is also mentioned.[128] This supports the argument that mission movement can be a way of appreciating Luke-Acts in a way that can relate to other biblical texts.

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[125]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 924–1485.

[126]The quote here is from N.T. Wright, *Paul: Fresh Perspectives* (London: SPCK, 2005), 10 and his brief consideration of how Acts 17 fits with Pauline thinking is suggestive of further awaited work, N.T. Wright, *Paul*, 38.

[127]Rollin G. Grams, "Paul Among the Mission Theologians," *Missionalia* 33, no. 3 (2005): 459–79.

[128]Richard Bauckham, *The Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Carlile: Paternoster, 2003).

3.3.3 Engaging with the Theological Community

We have returned a number of times to the theme of the relationships between churches and between the church and the world. Thinking on these has forced pentecostal scholars to engage with wider theological communities, particular in regard to the trinitarian basis for understanding these relationships. Two general theological communities or traditions seem particularly engaged with by the scholars we have been considering. To a lesser or greater extent Pinnock, Chan, Land, Macchia and Volf engage with the German Reformed tradition and its interpreters represented especially by Karl Barth, Jürgen Moltmann and Robert Jenson.[129] Kärkkäinen and Yong, on the other hand, engage more with the thinking of the early Church Fathers and their interpreters especially Irenaeus and Augustine. We will engage more with trinitarian thinking in the next chapter but here we note that Volf roots his ecclesiology in a social trinitarian model that develops Moltmann's "trinitarian doxology" model.[130] Macchia notes the general Reformed influence on understanding Spirit baptism and seeks to develop this in new ways through a re-appreciation of Barth as critiqued by the early writings of Moltmann and also Wolfhart Pannenberg, augmented with insights from Michael Welker.[131] In contrast Yong starts with the "two hands of the Father" understanding of Irenaeus, refined by David Cunningham, and complements it with the "mutual love" model of Augustine, as refined by Richard of St Victor and David Coffey.[132]

There is a shared desire to root ecclesiology in trinitarian understandings in ways that enable us to address issues of relationship. Pentecostals see a particular need to maintain equality between Word and Spirit and this has been a focus of attention that has produced

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[129]For Jenson's interpretation of Barth see Robert W. Jenson, "Karl Barth," in *The Modern Theologians*, ed. David F. Ford (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 21–36.

[130]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 215; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life* (London: SCM, 1992), 301–6.

[131]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 67–129; Frank D. Macchia, "Astonished by Faithfulness to God: A Reflection on Karl Barth's Understanding of Spirit Baptism," in *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Russell P. Spitler*, ed. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 164–77; Michael Welker, *God the Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).

[132]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 50–72; David Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998); David Coffey, *Deus Trinitas: The Doctrine of the Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

benefits, but also opened pentecostals up to the critique that they do not give equal attention to the Father.[133] This is still a critique that carries weight although more recent work addresses this concern. It has been common to address such concerns through various forms of social trinitarianism as Volf does. This gives high value to the equality of all believers within the church and leads Volf to focus on the unity of the local congregation and on the final eschatological unity of the church. This has much to commend it and yet makes ecumenical engagement in the present harder to defend given the existence of denominations that go beyond the local and yet do not represent the eschatological. Such engagement is required, argue Kärkkäinen and Yong, and it is interesting to note that this arises more naturally from their focus on the Church Fathers tradition.

As regards relationships between the church and the world, it is worth noting that the German Reformed tradition utilised by pentecostals is defined, in part, in reaction against the theological project of Friedrich Schleiermacher. Hence there is an emphasis on God's working (and revelation) over-against the experience of the world, the inbreaking work of God that was considered in the last chapter. This is clearest in Macchia's critique of Moltmann's *Spirit of Life*, although his work on Spirit baptism appreciates Moltmann's earlier thinking.[134] This approach can lead to an emphasis on our first movement in mission, as seen in Chan, but need not rule out an appreciation of God's working through the world as Macchia considers.[135] The Church Fathers tradition sees Word and Spirit at work in both creation and redemption, which reflects both the growing and inbreaking experience of God already discussed.[136] Moltmann's work has much that resonates with this and further engagement with his trinitarian thinking will be important in developing a pentecostal ecclesiology.

Pentecostal appreciations of both traditions have commented on the notion of *movement* that is central to understanding the Trinity and relates to our understanding of mission.

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[133]Within the charismatic tradition this critique was notably highlighted by Tom Smail, *The Forgotten Father* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980).

[134]Moltmann, *Spirit*; Frank D. Macchia, "The Spirit and Life: A Further Response to Jürgen Moltmann," *JPT* 5 (1994): 121–27; Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 120–21.

[135]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 126–28.

[136]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 52.

Macchia's double movement, mentioned above, is rooted in Pannenberg's trinitarian understanding where the movements are from and to the Father.[137] Yong points to the importance of love within these movements: the self-giving love of the Father moving out to the world and the world being brought in love to the Father.[138] The focus on movement links with mission, yet despite the inherently missionary nature of pentecostal ecclesiology it is strange that there is little pentecostal engagement with the mission tradition of theology. The work of Paul Pomerville is a notable exception and although his work does not focus on ecclesiology it ends by stressing the importance of the church in Great Commission mission as sent by the Spirit.[139] My earlier work suggests that the difference we have drawn between the growing and inbreaking work of God is reflected in the differences between the World Council of Churches and the evangelical Lausanne movements in mission.[140] In terms of structures for mission much more can be drawn from the missionary tradition in terms of missionary societies. Although Chan, following Jenson, sees these as undermining ecclesiology it is possible to see them in a more positive light. Max Warren, a significant missionary leader from last century, speaks of the importance of groups of Christians that are seen as "a middle term between the Christian individual and the Christian Church."[141] He relates such groups to missionary societies as structures for mission but which he sees as adaptable for different times and cultures. Ralph Winter spoke of "modality" and "sodality" groups as biblical groups that correspond to local church and missionary societies, both essential to mission.[142] He traces these through history and argues the need for missionary structures to exist alongside other structures, something worthy of further consideration in developing a pentecostal ecclesiology. Some pentecostals, such as Cross, are beginning to see how structures can be "Spirit-given" and this needs to develop further.[143] Another

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[137]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 123.
[138]Suggestive here is Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 75.
[139]Pomerville, *Third Force*, 163.
[140]Lord, "Moltmann-Pentecostal Dialogue," 281–84.
[141]Max Warren, *The Christian Mission* (London: SCM, 1951), 85.
[142]Ralph Winter, "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission," *Missiology* 2 (1974): 121–29.
[143]Cross, "Response," 180.

missiological debate that touches on our discussion here is over the understanding of *missio Dei*, the mission of God. This was rediscovered as an emphasis in the last century, but developed to an understanding of God's working outside the church in ways that not all pentecostals would be happy with.[144] Yet if taken as a both/and then it fits with the two movements of mission, and movements of the Trinity, which we have been considering.[145]

3.4 Summary

Having utilised the distinctive pentecostal methodology of Yong, which was outlined in the last chapter, this chapter has reviewed the current state of pentecostal scholarship in ecclesiology. This represents a significant contribution to such wider scholarship as well as being important as we proceed in this project. The review has examined both early pentecostalism and the work of particular contemporary pentecostal scholars. These have been considered in the light of the three elements of our methodology in order to determine the current state of the research. In summary we can note the importance of the following to pentecostal ecclesiology: (1) local church life "in the Spirit"; (2) outward movements in mission and ecumenism; (3) linking ecclesiology with God's working in the world outside the church. Experiences of the Spirit in local church communities, particularly in Spirit baptism, are central to pentecostal ecclesiology and link with a Christological focus for the Christian gospel. These need be reflected on in the wider context of trinitarian thinking and understandings of *koinonia*, and augmented by understandings of the sacraments. The concept of movement is central to pentecostal ecclesiology, as seen in a missionary narrative reading of Luke-Acts. It is through such movements that the gospel is shared and they need to be shaped by understandings of the life-narrative of Jesus. This can also provide ways into the Pauline and wider biblical literature, particularly in the pneumatological passages such as

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[144]eg Pomerville, *Third Force*, 134–37 critiquing the development of *missio dei* as outlined by Bosch, *Mission*, 389–93.
[145]Helpful here is the more recent discussion of Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 286–304.

John 14-16.[146] Such movements raise the question of "mid level" narratives and "middle term" structures that are crucial to developing existing pentecostal approaches to ecumenism and mission. How pentecostal ecclesiology links with God's working in the world is a current area of concern and we have commented on how the concept of movement might link with the missiological understanding of *missio Dei*. How such understandings link with the contextual nature of pentecostalism are also key ecclesiological concerns for pentecostals.

In short, having reviewed existing pentecostal contributions to ecclesiology it seems most important that pentecostals address the need for "middle term" structures, develop fresh approaches to the unity and catholicity of the church, and include contextualisation within their ecclesiology. These needs form the basis of the following four chapters so as to develop something new in pentecostal ecclesiology that builds on, but does not repeat, the current insights. Chapter 4 considers the development of network structures and related trinitarian concerns. This will give rise to questions of unity and catholicity to which Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted. Chapter 7 develops an approach to contextualisation that fits within the ecclesiology developed.

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[146]Which can be neglected. See Mark Cartledge's critique of Frank Macchia in "Response."

Chapter 4

TRINITARIAN NETWORK CHURCH

Having surveyed existing pentecostal approaches to ecclesiology I suggested that there is a need for pentecostals to address the question of "middle term" structures and this is the focus here. In support of our thesis this chapter examines the use of networks as such structures using the methodology adopted in this project, i.e. within the categories of Spirit, Word and Community. We start by discerning pentecostal experience to suggest how the Spirit has been seen as enabling the church grow in mission through networks. The last two chapters have suggested the pentecostal need for a narrative missionary approach that focuses on Luke-Acts yet enables the reading of wider texts. Here I focus on the narrative of Acts and the missionary expansion of the early church to see how it resonates with an understanding of networks. Thus a significant amount of this chapter is devoted to practical considerations regarding the nature of the church's growth within pentecostalism and in Acts. In this, the importance of networks raises questions regarding the choice of a trinitarian model for ecclesiology within systematic and mission theology. In the last chapter we saw that there is a pentecostal desire to develop a trinitarian basis for ecclesiology, and so these trinitarian questions are considered later in this chapter. The relationships between the Trinity, mission and networks are significant and will be addressed here although there are other trinitarian concerns that go beyond the scope of this project.

4.1 Discerning Networks in Practice

Turning to discerning the Spirit in experience we focus first on the growth of contemporary pentecostalism through networks. This has been linked with sociological thinking on networks and from this an initial understanding of networks is proposed.

4.1.1 Pentecostal Experience of Networks

In the last chapter we noted how pentecostal scholars have seen experiences of the Spirit as moving people outwards from individuals to local communities to the wider church and out to the world. Yet such movements have rarely been taken into a consideration of ecclesiology and hence the importance of networks to pentecostal experience has been given very little attention. There is relatively little material to draw on at this point compared to our consideration of Scripture and trinitarian concerns. Yet it is important within our theological method to discern the network working of the Spirit in pentecostal experience. William Kay offers a discernment of the Spirit's work in so-called "apostolic networks" in Britain and as this is the only such study appropriate to the theme here, it is the place to start. This will then provides a way into considering the (currently) more implicit importance of networks within the life and growth of pentecostalism. Insights gained are then placed against the background of the wider sociological study of networks within contemporary society. Here much work has been done but for our purposes this serves as a backdrop and not a focus within the methodology adopted.

Kay traces the work of the Spirit within the UK charismatic movement in order to suggest that an understanding of church as apostolic network has been central to the restorationist strands of the movement.[1] Peter Hocken comments on how the charismatic movement in the UK, like elsewhere, is often considered in terms of the Spirit at work within and beyond established denominations.[2] In terms of the Spirit at work outside denominations Tony Higton and Gilbert Kirby studied the UK housechurch movement in 1988 noting the importance of spiritual gifts and "apostles" and "elders" in their ecclesiology.[3] The earlier work of Joyce Thurman is significant here as is the recent work of Eleanor Williams on "fresh

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[1]William K. Kay, *Apostolic Networks in Britain: New Ways of Being Church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), 40–41.

[2]P.D. Hocken, "Charismatic Movement," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 490–91. For more details see his P.D. Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain, 2nd Ed.* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1997).

[3]Tony Higton and Gilbert Kirby, *The Challenge of the Housechurches*, Lattimer Studies, No.27 (Oxford: Latimer House, 1988), 7–9.

expressions" of Church in urban British contexts, where she notes the desire for connectedness.[4] Andrew Walker has termed the work beyond denominations as "Restorationism" and argues that it is out of this stream that networks arose, although he concludes by suggesting that the Anglican church in the UK could also grow through networks.[5] Through a historical review of network churches and qualitative and quantitative analyses Kay outlines what might be learnt from these churches. At heart, apostolic networks are a collection of churches, linked with each other particularly through apostolic figures.[6] Contemporary apostles are people raised by God with a focus on church planting and they act foundationally, working in teams and appointing elders for new church plants.[7] In their earlier study, Higton and Kirby note how contemporary apostles are seen as "expert builders" for local churches and are responsible for a "chain of churches" linked through their ministry.[8] Kay discerns the existence of such chains or networks over the last 30 years as bearing the marks of "energy and excitement that is released to flow in newly constructed channels or branching pathways."[9] In this the particular mission of church planting is central and has gradually spread from the UK to other parts of the world.[10] Kay sees this approach to mission as a development of faith missions that overcome institutional control and one that is community based rather than focusing on individual salvation.[11] Although the primary link within networks might have been apostles, other links focused around relationships through meetings of church leaders and through participation in large public events such as Bible Weeks.[12] Networks are not designed to be neat but rather give space for charismatic gifting

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[4]Joyce Thurman, *New Wineskins* (1979). Eleanor Williams, *Fresh Expressions in the Urban Context* (Cambridge: YTC Press, Lulu, 2007), 78. William's book is a revised version of an MA thesis utilising a practical theology methodology.

[5]Andrew Walker, *Restoring the Kingdom: The Radical Christianity of the House Church Movement, 2nd Ed.* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988); Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 353.

[6]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, xix.

[7]Ibid., 246.

[8]Higton and Kirby, *The Challenge of the Housechurches*, 17–19.

[9]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 344.

[10]Ibid., 349–50.

[11]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 260–263,269 utilising the typography of K. Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions* (Oxford: Regnum, 1994) and the argument of John Miller, *Missionary Zeal and Institutional Control* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

[12]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 345–49.

and calling.[13] Given this, and also the desire for a flat organisational structure that limits the number of congregations an apostle can relate to, it is not surprising that a variety of networks and mini-networks have come into existence with some links stronger than others.[14] Sociologically, Kay finds it hard to place these networks and considers that they represent "a new kind of sociological animal."[15] He suggests, following Walker's division of Restorationism, that some networks (R1) are "more exclusive, more bounded and more structured" whereas others (R2) and more "amorphous and affiliative."[16] An alternative approach to the idea of apostle has been suggested recently by the pentecostal Alan Johnson. He argues for the importance of "apostolic function" in mission, that of "pioneer evangelism and church planting" amongst those who have not heard the gospel.[17] All believers are urged to waken to their apostolic function and there is no mention of particular apostles or networks. We will pick up a wider understanding of the apostolic later but for the moment our focus is on networks.

Although this understanding of church as network is relatively recent and driven in part by a desire to move away from "institutional" church organisations, such understandings and motivations do have roots that can be traced back to the missionary movement. Kay considers them in relation to faith missions but it is interesting to note Andrew Walls' comment on earlier mission societies and how they "subverted all the classical forms of Church government, while fitting comfortable into none of them."[18] There seems a natural overlap between the Spirit's working in missionary societies with that in contemporary networks.[19] It is not surprising therefore to find that greatest growth in mission agencies over the last century was to be found in charismatic and unaffiliated evangelical agencies.[20] This is not to suggest

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[13]Ibid., 350.
[14]Ibid., 248–49, xix.
[15]Ibid., 280.
[16]Ibid., 287.
[17]Alan R. Johnson, "Apostolic Function and Mission," *JPT* 17, no. 2 (2008): 256.
[18]Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 249.
[19]For an understanding of the voluntary principle in mission societies as rooted in the Spirit that complements Walls' more historical approach see my "Voluntary Principle".
[20]Robert T. Coote, "Twentieth-Century Shifts in the North American Protestant Missionary Community," *IBMR* 22, no. 4 (1998): 152–53.

that pentecostal mission can be subsumed under understandings of the missionary movement, but rather to suggest that the overlaps are significant. Allan Anderson in his discernment of the Spirit within early pentecostal missions across the world comments on how "the missionary networks... were fundamental in spreading pentecostalism internationally."[21] When early pentecostals experienced Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues, many saw in this a call to mission and so set off to other countries to evangelise. Once there they often found existing missionary networks as key to the spread of pentecostal ideas and experiences, especially when they found that God had not given them the gift of a language that others understood.[22]

In utilising existing missionary networks it is important to ask how early pentecostalism learned from and contributed to a network understanding of church. Although it seems clear that early pentecostals did not see church as network, they did naturally develop a network understanding of church growth that provided the basis for developments such as the Apostolic Networks considered above. Using the example of Thomas B. Barrett, a Methodist pastor influential in the origins of pentecostalism in Europe, Anderson notes how pentecostal churches were rooted in different cultures and missionaries were encouraged to establish self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating churches.[23] Early pentecostal churches were notable for their "inclusiveness" and there was an "interracial and intercultural" aspect to the mission that established them.[24] From such local centres pentecostalism had a natural movement outwards as enabled by the Spirit. As J. Roswell Flower put it in 1908, "When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, the missionary spirit comes in with it; they are inseparable."[25] Migrant missionaries spread the message as empowered by Spirit baptism, with a "transnational, universal orientation."[26] Within 20 years there were pentecostal

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[21] Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 291.
[22] Ibid., 46–47.
[23] Ibid., 51–52.
[24] Ibid., 49–50.
[25] Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 65 using a quote found by Gary B. McGee, "Pentecostals and Their Various Strategies for Global Mission: A Historical Assessment," in *Called and Empowered*, Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 206.
[26] Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 49,54–55.

missionaries in 42 countries of the world.[27] The links between such missionaries and the sending centres were important and reflected in the journals of the time that stimulated faith (and financial support!).[28] A study of contemporary pentecostal churches across the world has found that "Many of the most progressive pentecostal churches are not part of a formal denomination. Instead, they tend to associate with networks of like-minded church leaders."[29] They found that "the churches we have studied often relate to each other on the basis of *affinity* rather than *geography*."[30]

This brief reflection on pentecostalism suggests the development of multiple networks based on different centres, growing outwards in mission, maintaining links through leaders, journals and conferences. They were not seen as being "church" and church was regarded separately in more denominational or congregational terms. Such an approach provides insights into what was important in the different centres of the network. Cecil Robeck in his significant history of the "Azusa Street Mission and Revival" speaks of the "ecclesial nature" of the Azusa Street Mission in terms of its local community characteristics.[31] Here there are continuities and discontinuities with earlier congregations, and for the latter Robeck points to Spirit baptism and the "multiracial, multiethnic" nature of Azusa Street.[32] Contemporary pentecostal scholars have pointed to different characteristics they see as essential to local congregations, as we saw in the last chapter. Of course, not all pentecostal experience points in this direction and Dale Coulter argues well for a more pyramid structure to the ecclesiology of the early Church of God (Cleveland).[33] Higton and Kirby comment on how most UK housechurches adopt a pyramid structure for their churches.[34] My argument at this point is that there is sufficient evidence of the Spirit generating networks to suggest the need for an

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[27]Ibid., 289.

[28]Ibid., 57.

[29]Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley, Calif. ; London: University of California Press, 2007), 207.

[30]Ibid., 208.

[31]Here 'Mission' means 'congregation' in the holiness and pentecostal traditions, Robeck, *Azusa Street*, 1 n.1.

[32]Robeck, *Azusa Street*, 137,88.

[33]Coulter, "Development of Ecclesiology," 77–82.

[34]Higton and Kirby, *The Challenge of the Housechurches*, 8.

ecclesiology that takes this into account rather than one developed independently of this working of the Spirit.

Allowing for such a reading of pentecostal experience of the Spirit in terms of networks, it is important to note how these church networks cannot be separated from networks in the world. The most obvious example of this is the transport networks, and Robeck comments on the importance of the Pacific Electric Railroad to the Azusa Street revival.[35] For Apostolic Networks, Kay points to the importance of mobility, motorways and world travel to their development.[36] He also notes the importance of family and kinship networks to the growth of the early church and in the Welsh revival.[37] Anderson mentions the importance of the written word and, by implication, the world mail networks although he notes the often more hesitant (or even antagonistic) approach of pentecostal missionaries to culture generally.[38] Some were influenced by the more positive cultural line of Roland Allen and in contemporary thinking Kay notes the importance of the so-called "network society" to Apostolic Networks and in this he points to the significant three volume work of Manuel Castells on *The Rise of the Network Society*.[39] Castells takes a sociological and economic approach to networks in contemporary global society, although he does not consider religious networks. Developing this thinking, below we consider the basic structure of such networks seen within an ecclesial context.

4.1.2 Basic Understanding of Networks

This project does not aim to interact in any depth with sociological network theory but rather explores theological concerns using a generally agreed basic sociological understanding of networks. For this I want to use Castells understanding of a network as "a set of interconnected nodes."[40] Jan van Dijk sees the understanding in terms of elements and connections as "the most abstract definition possible" and one which is interpreted in different

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[35]Robeck, *Azusa Street*, 204.
[36]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 288.
[37]Ibid., 290.
[38]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 50–52,241–247.
[39]Ibid., 246; Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 289.
[40]Castells, *Rise of Network Society*, 501.

ways for different projects.[41] For Castells, the distance between two nodes is measured by the frequency of their interaction and information is key to network functionality.[42] Networks are open and able to expand without limits, integrating new nodes "as long as they are able to communicate within the network, namely as long as they share the same communication codes."[43] Here we might see overlaps with pentecostal networks of local centres that have frequent interactions (through leaders, journals, conferences) and with different networks having different "codes" (doctrines, mission practices). Castells notes how the switches connecting different networks are now "the privileged instruments of power" although he does not pay much attention to those unable to participate in networks due to their lack of economic power.[44] A focus on networks does not mean the end to geographically based multinational enterprises and indeed networks often focus on such existing enterprises.[45] The geographic limitations on workforces and the face-to-face requirements of learning in universities are two factors that Castells notes in this regard.[46]

Network theory is still at an early stage of development and one recent introduction places them within "post-history" approaches and yet also within the studies of globalization and within considerations of the postmodern.[47] Another introductory text questions whether the moves in society towards network forms represent such an "epochal shift" as Castells proposes.[48] Van Dijk suggests that "social and media networks... [are] the most important *structures* of modern society" but are not "the whole *substance* of society, as they are in the exaggeration of Manuel Castells."[49] For van Dijk there is a significant move towards network society based on the development of information and communication technologies. He

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[41]Jan van Dijk, *The Network Society* (London: Sage, 1999), 28.
[42]Castells, *Rise of Network Society*, 501,507.
[43]Ibid., 501.
[44]Castells, *Rise of Network Society*, 502. Castells also notes the danger of networks becoming out of tune with the people not involved in them, *Rise of Network Society*, 508.
[45]Castells, *Rise of Network Society*, 207.
[46]Ibid., 247,428.
[47]Gary Browning, Abigail Halcli, and Frank Webster, eds., *Understanding Contemporary Society: Theories of the Present* (London: Sage, 2000), 66–67, 93, 241, 232.
[48]Craig Calhoun, et al., *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (Oxford: Blackwells, 2002), 415.
[49]van Dijk, *Network Society*, 220.

expects changing social structures as a result, more as an evolution rather than a revolution from existing patterns.[50] We should not expect church structures to be immune from such sociological changes and indeed such changes can stimulate fresh theological thought. Of course, we could ask what happens to those unable to access new networks and this remains a prophetic challenge.

The above reading of pentecostal experience of the Spirit illustrates the way in which pentecostalism can be seen as having grown through the development of networks. Such networks, Kay suggests, can be linked with the sociological understanding of Castells and others. We need to note the danger in what might be seen as imposing a current sociological understanding on pentecostal experience and also on our reading of Acts in the next section. Yet I think it is worth exploring how a basic sociological understanding of networks might creatively interact with pentecostal and biblical experience. The impetus for this in the current project is found in the desire for a contextual mission engagement. Given this, pentecostal experience and sociological insights suggest a basic understanding of a church network as comprising a set of *centres*, of church communities, that are connected by *links*. A network may be located within a limited geographical area or may span parts of the world. Within pentecostalism the links have been seen to include leaders, journals and conferences – each rooted in personal relationships. We will reflect further on the nature of networks towards the end of this chapter but now we consider how networks might resonate with the narrative we have of the growth of the early church in Acts.

4.2 Networks in the Early Church

In the last chapter I noted how pentecostals positively embrace a narrative from Luke-Acts that emphasises Pentecost (as the vital initial story) and missionary movements (as cycles of stories) but neglects the "mid-level" narratives in Acts. In this section I want to look further at the biblical narrative of Acts to consider how some mid-level stories might resonate with our

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[50]Ibid., 222.

understanding of the church networks. This is not to suggest that Acts proposes a single network paradigm for ecclesiology but rather there is value in exploring how the basic understanding of networks outlined above might suggest a different reading of Acts to that commonly assumed by pentecostals. This will also involve touching on issues of unity and networks beyond the church which will be developed more in the following two chapters. Further to the discussion above, Kay has linked the development of Apostolic Networks with an approach to networks from Acts, but this exists in outline and lacks interaction with wider biblical thinking as it is rooted more in contemporary experience.[51] From those pentecostal scholars considered in the last chapter, Clark Pinnock and Frank Macchia have devoted most space to a biblical ecclesiology that draws on Acts. Macchia's approach to Spirit baptism will be developed later and here I want to use Pinnock as a way in to our consideration of the biblical narrative.[52] Pinnock starts with the image of how the "church rides the wind of God's Spirit like a hawk endlessly and effortlessly circling and gliding in the summer sky. It ever pauses to wait for impulses of power to carry it forward to the nations."[53] This missionary movement flows naturally from the narrative of Jesus: his baptism, life, death, resurrection and the Pentecost giving of the Spirit, thus forming the community of the church so the world may be transformed.[54] Pinnock is keen to stress that this narrative is in the Spirit, with Jesus and the Spirit having equal status. This idea of Spirit narratives is significant for our project and gives a useful backdrop to considering Acts. Pinnock does not develop this but rather focuses on the character of church community life as "christomorphic" in suffering love and trinitarian in "reciprocity and self-giving."[55] This seeming rush to closure will be resisted for the moment and rather I want to pick up on Pinnock's challenge to remain open to the Spirit

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[51]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 246–58.
[52]See next Chapter that draws on Macchia.
[53]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 114.
[54]See here Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 114,147.
[55]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 116–18.

and the "disorder of divine presence."[56]

This resistance is important in approaching Acts so as to see the development of networks. Walter Liefeld notes in reflecting on the major themes of Acts that there are two approaches that can be taken: to choose themes and ideas and then see how there appear in the narrative; or to look at the development of patterns through the narrative.[57] The first suggests a top down approach and is the one taken by existing pentecostal ecclesiologies that select from Acts rather than see any progression within Acts. Even Melvin Hodges, who elsewhere draws on Roland Allen's bottom-up approach, summarises Acts as showing a focus on local churches.[58] Allen, in contrast, suggests a way more in line with Liefeld's second approach seeing the missionary journeys of Acts as causing new local churches to join a growing universal church.[59] Picking up this approach I want to reflect on the ministry of the apostle Paul who is clearly central to the narrative growth of the church in Acts, drawing on the significant work of Eckhard Schnabel in this area.[60]

4.2.1 Paul and the Formation of Networks

I want to suggest that we can see Paul as a founder of networks amidst opposition. We see in Paul someone who was both a pioneer and yet wanted to connect people and communities together. Acts presents the story of Paul in a way that parallels that of Peter, starting with his presence at the stoning of Stephen followed by his conversion on the Damascus road (7:58, 9:1-19).[61] Soon after his conversion he starts preaching in Damascus (Acts 9:20) before

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[56]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 140. Pinnock here talks first of openness to "signs and wonders" and later to "disorder" compared to over-control by church leadership, but his point applies more widely to the question of order and God's working in the wider church. My desire to resist quick closure in ecclesiology reflects Yong's desire to resist such closure in relation to other faiths, a methodological approach that is important.

[57]Walter L. Liefeld, *Interpreting the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 79.

[58]Melvin L. Hodges, *A Theology of the Church and Its Mission: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), 59–60.

[59]David Paton, ed., *The Ministry of the Spirit: Selected Writings of Roland Allen* (London: World Dominion Press, 1960), 126.

[60]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*.

[61]On parallelism in Acts, a theme also relevant below, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 56. There is debate over whether to term Paul's experience on the Damascus road as "conversion" but here I am following Schnabel. My argument does not rest on a particular understanding of this experience although the fact it gave Paul a new vocation provides motivation for his

meeting some of the apostles in Jerusalem (9:26-30) where he also preached. There is then an interlude until Paul appears again at Antioch (11:25-26). This gap in the narrative appears filled by Paul's testimony to the Galatians (1:16-17) where he speaks of setting out for Arabia and starting missionary work there without consulting those in Jerusalem (Gal. 1:16-17). There is an obvious inconsistency between Paul's recollection and Luke's narrative in Acts.[62] Some commentators try to overcome this, but for our purposes it is important to recognise the early presence of mission movement in Paul's ministry in Damascus and Jerusalem but also in Arabia, as Schnabel convincingly argues.[63] Acts and Galatians speak of both a mission movement and a desire to confer with others on the part of Paul and it is this movement and dialogue that are important here as they are reflected in the growth of the church.

Paul suggests in Gal. 2:7-9 that conferring with the leaders in Jerusalem led to a missionary division between Jew and Gentile, and some have suggested that this was a geographic division although Schnabel argues against this given that Paul continued preaching to Jews also.[64] There is a consistency in sharing the gospel with all, although different leaders have been "entrusted" with different callings (Gal. 2:7). This is borne out through the remaining narratives in Acts that see Paul (with others) engaged in different mission situations. Schnabel follows Cilliers Breyenbach in seeing these as taking the literary form of "missionary narrative": introduction, action, complication, heightening of complication, and resolution.[65] Rather than go into the detail of each narrative I want to observe the process through Acts by which the church grows through the repeated movement of Paul that results in fresh mission narratives, by which the gospel is shared and people either oppose it or come to believe in Jesus. How churches were formed along the way and how they were organised is not spelt out in detail by Luke, and many readers since would either like more detail or try and

mission I am outlining, N.T. Wright, *Saint Paul*, 35–37.
[62]so Dunn, *Acts*, 126.
[63]F.F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 1988), 193–94 argues for consistency based on the different aims of Luke and Paul. Schnabel's argument is in *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1032–45.
[64]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 993.
[65]Ibid., 1083; Cilliers Breytenbach, *Paulus und Barnabas in der Provinz Galatien: Studien zu Apostelgeschichte 13f.; 16,6; 12,23 und Den Adressaten Des Galaterbriefes*, AGAJU 38 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 24.

deduce particular models of church organisation from what is given.[66] However, the lack of "stereotypical uniformity," to quote Schnabel's phrase, is supportive of our bottom-up process approach to the formation of the church through mission networks that have variety at their heart rather than starting with a united organisation.[67] Even my use of the term "church" may be seen as assuming too much, as Luke speaks more of Christians as "a people" rather than "a church." Yet, as Jaroslav Pelikan and also Jacob Jervell argue, it is reasonable to equate the "people of God" with "church" as clearly ecclesiology is a major theme in Acts.[68]

There is a purpose to the narrative in seeing the gospel move towards the ends of the earth and Paul's strategy can be seen in this light. Yet Schnabel asks how systematic this strategy might have been, as some have suggested that it was carefully ordered around geography, perhaps drawing on Isa. 66 and the Servant Songs.[69] He concludes that there was a general strategic movement but his work (and the church) developed due to a mix of plans, circumstances and God's leading. There was a focus on different urban centres, with Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus and Rome mentioned in Acts.[70] Within these places are mentioned the Temple, synagogues and houses, and the latter are particularly significant in the growth of the early church.[71] The term "house church" is mentioned four times outside of Acts but David Matson argues the spread of the gospel in Acts parallels the sending of the 72 in Lk. 10.[72] Following the literary argument of C.H. Talbert, he argues that the sending of the 72 into homes is suggestive of mission to the Gentiles and not just to Jews, a suggestion that becomes developed in Acts.[73] Although Matson is not concerned with the movement of the gospel, his

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[66]On this see the comments of Liefeld, *Interpreting*, 32.

[67]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1083.

[68]Jaroslav Pelikan, *Acts* (London: SCM, 2006), 57–58; Jacob Jervell, *The Theology of the Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 18,34.

[69]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1294–1300.

[70]To this list Schnabel also adds Alexandria, although there is no definite information on the origins of the church here, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1489–93 Schnabel also notes that Paul's work did extend beyond cities and not all the important cities of the time are mentioned, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1300.

[71]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1300–1306.

[72]The term "house church" is mentioned in 1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:5; Philm 2; Col. 4:15. On the parallelism between Luke and Acts see David Lertis Matson, *Household Conversion Narratives in Acts*, JSNT Sup. 123 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 28.

[73]C.H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 115; Matson, *Household Conversion*, 33.

careful examination of the literary parallels between the household narratives in Luke and Acts does uphold his view that the house is the "new 'sacred space' for the new inclusive people of God."[74]

This approach also resonates with the scriptures beyond Acts, and for our purpose it is important to notice how the theme of "house" resonates with John 14-16. Mark Stibbe notes in his narrative approach to John how chapters 13-17 form a "farewell discourse" with elements in common with non-scriptural examples.[75] Within this is the theme of the Father's house and homecoming, with a spiritual and yet experiential aspect: "The realized eschatology in the rest of John 14 suggests that this house is not so much an eternal home in heaven as a post-resurrection empirical reality for true disciples."[76] This theme has run through John and homecoming is one of the "archetypes of literature."[77] In John this sense of homecoming is linked with the coming of the Spirit as the Paraclete to be with the disciples (rather than leave them orphans). This homecoming is set within the context of an ongoing mission and witness within which the disciples will find themselves scattered and in need.[78] Here there is an interesting narrative overlap between John and Acts that strengthens the argument here, whilst also deepening the understanding of "house" and "witness" with reference to the Spirit as Paraclete.

The Spirit is also vital to the Pauline understanding of the church seen in 1 Corinthians, the letter that Gordon Fees notes contains more of Paul's theology of the church than any other.[79] The two key images that Paul uses are the church as the temple of the Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16-17) and as the body of Christ (10:17; 11:29; 12:12-26).[80] Fee comments on how little there is on church order in the letter which is perhaps surprising given the disputes over

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[74]Matson, *Household Conversion*, 48, 191.
[75]Mark Stibbe, *John*, Readings: A New Biblical Commentry (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 142–43.
[76]Ibid., 160.
[77]Lk. 2.16; 2.21; 14.1-4, 23. Stibbe, *John*, 160.
[78]See Jn. 16
[79]Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 18.
[80]To these we can add the 'people of God' (cf. Rom. 9-11) as does Simon Chan, but to give a focus here I am just looking at 1 Corinthians, Chan, *Liturgical Theology*, 24–27. The approach given here also illustrates how themes can fit within a contextual letter that in turn fits within a missionary narrative.

leadership within the Corinthian church.[81] Yet this lack enables us to place the Corinthian church within the wider narrative of church growth that we have been considering, with the Pauline letters addressing particular issues in that church without expecting them to give an exhaustive ecclesiology.[82] The centrality of the Spirit to Pauline ecclesiology in providing identity and yet diversity, as seen especially in 1 Cor. 12, can be taken with John's Paraclete and Luke's eschatological Spirit to suggest that local churches are characterised by pluriform experiences of the Spirit. This mirrors and adds to Miroslav Volf's emphasis on churches being characterised by a pluriform faith in Christ.[83] There is much more that can be drawn from this but for the moment it is important to note that to utilise 1 Corinthians we need to recognise that it sits within the wider mission movement that we see in the narrative of Acts.

This brief look at Paul's mission in Acts shows a series of missionary narratives that move towards "the ends of the earth" in a thoughtful but open way. There exist *centres*, particularly houses within important cities, where people respond to the gospel and communities of faith (churches) come into being. Yet there also exists a constant movement out towards new centres that remain *linked* to the others, if only through the gospel and Paul himself. These links need further consideration and we will turn to this next, but it is important to value the fact that in Acts "church" cannot be reduced to "local congregations" who might happen, occasionally, to interact. The mission movement in Acts resonates well with our understanding of networks that comprise centres and links, with centres being linked as the church expands.

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[81]Fee, *Corinthians*, 19.
[82]It could be argued on the basis of 1 Cor. 1:10-12 that there were different church groups within the one networked church in Corinth, but Fee argues well that there is little to suggest this elsewhere in the letter, Fee, *Corinthians*, 55–59.
[83]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 152.

4.2.2 Multiple Connected Networks

Granted that the early church can be seen to grow by means of an expanding network, it may be suggested that the results of this bottom-up approach are the same as a top-down approach – there exists a universal church that is the sum of local churches. The picture in Acts appears more complicated than this with a variety of networks coming into being. So far we have only considered Paul, although we know that many in Jerusalem were scatted and went "from place to place proclaiming the word" (Acts 8:4). In particular, space is given to the narrative of Philip travelling to Samaria, from a more Jewish Jerusalem background but moving into an area traditionally hostile to the Jews.[84] People believed and we can assume a church was formed, that was soon connected to the church in Jerusalem (8:14), with Peter and James coming to extend the network through preaching in other villages (8:25). Then we have Philip suddenly moved off to speak with the Ethiopian (8:26-39) and then quickly moved by the Spirit to Azotus and towns on the way to Caesarea (8:40) where he seems to have settled for some time (cf. 21:8). We might wonder how the network spread through Ethiopia given the later claims of the church there, but it is sufficient to suggest that here is a consistency of movement and church forming that retains variety. We can postulate that in Acts we can see the church as a multiple set of networks, each with commonalities rooted in Jesus and his gospel, yet of different characters and sizes.

To call such networks "structures" may feel too rigid a description, yet there clearly existed "middle term" connected networks and this seems a better way of describing the church in Acts than focusing on individual congregations or the "universal church." It also fits with our understanding of mission in terms of movements of the Spirit, particularly the first movement in which we see the church moved by the Spirit into the world, "to the ends of the earth." In my previous approach to mission I linked this movement with a theological understanding of the "voluntary principle" central to which is an understanding that "mission is primarily motivated without reference to church organisations, i.e. mission is primarily a

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[84]Dunn, *Acts*, 107,113.

"bottom-up" not a "top-down" activity."[85] Whilst this fits with the "bottom-up" approach proposed here it is important to revise the lack of reference to church organisations. Whilst the initiative lies (I suggest) with the Spirit it is clear that mission was always connected to networks, as was the case for missionary societies. It is the nature of these connections that needs clarifying.

The contemporary Apostolic networks referred to above would suggest that networks are linked solely by apostles. Kay claims that such networks presume that in the early church local congregations were "practically autonomous."[86] Yet in narrative terms we have already noted the importance of connections through steady mission movements of people. In addition, the Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15) is central to the narrative as it can be seen as bringing together the results of the network expansion of the church, addresses the key question of Jewish-Gentile relations within the church, and sets the scene for Paul's move outwards and onwards towards Rome. Dunn describes the council as "a watershed in Luke's whole narrative" bringing coherence to the two halves of Acts and addressing vital issues of the churches identity and unity.[87] Here we have a "classic confrontation" that could be viewed simply as that between Jewish and Gentile networks, as Kay suggests, but we have already suggested above that this division is a simplification although the differences in the networks reflect in part their Jewish-Gentile foci.[88] Dunn suggests that the confrontation is between "old revelation" rooted in history and "new insight" grasped through a "developing mission."[89] For our purposes it is important to note the importance of connections (and unity) within the early church achieved through bringing together people representing different networks of churches planted through mission. Bringing together Peter, Paul, Philip and others cannot but bring together the different networks they spend time with. It seems inevitable that mission brings with it questions about how churches are to relate and the

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[85]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 108.
[86]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 247.
[87]Dunn, *Acts*, 195.
[88]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, 247.
[89]Dunn, *Acts*, 199.

importance of this Council in the narrative confirms the vital need for congregations and networks to be connected in ways beyond that of individual apostles. This has been a concern throughout Christian history and the Jerusalem Council has served as a model for different kinds of councils and decision making over the centuries.[90] Whilst this history strengthens the present argument, our aim here is not to defend particular approaches that have been taken, but rather to note the essential impulse to link and connect within ecclesiology. The Council of Jerusalem is suggestive that networks do not exist as autonomous entities but that links exist between networks as well as between centres.

Looking at the wider New Testament documents, the other prime example of this impulse to connect is seen in Paul's collection amongst his network for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. C.K. Barrett sees this as "undoubtedly one of [Paul's] major activities."[91] N.T. Wright speaks of how the collection is a "massive symbol, a great prophetic sign" of the unity of God's people across races and places.[92] It must have been "a major element in [Paul's] strategy for creating and sustaining the one family of God."[93] It is mentioned only briefly in Acts 24:17 and we have to look elsewhere for further details.[94] There is a great desire here that networks function as a source of generous giving that brings more equal measures of God's abundance to all.[95] Hence the networks can function as a way of overcome the deeply rooted racial, social and religious differences between Jew and Gentile in order to glimpse more of the unity of the church in Jesus Christ.[96] There is recognition of Gentile debt to the Jews but within the context of seeking an "expression of mutual belonging, though not of dependence."[97]

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[90]Pelikan, *Acts*, 175.
[91]C.K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: A & C Black, 1973), 217.
[92]N.T. Wright, *Paul*, 167.
[93]Ibid.
[94]Rom. 15:25-32; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8.
[95]See, for example, 2 Cor. 8.14; Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 226.
[96]See Rom. 15:27-29.
[97]John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, TPI New Testament Commentaries (London: SCM, 1989), 345.

This desire to connect churches, bringing all to unity in Christ can be seen as an eschatological impulse that Paul and Luke see realised in part through the collection and the council. Eschatology can be seen as a driving force through Luke-Acts linked with the themes of salvation and the fulfilment of God's purposes.[98] This also resonates with John 17, further to the earlier discussion, where the climax to the farewell discourses is seen in Jesus' prayer that "they might be one."[99] Here is an eschatological approach that sees the "first-fruits of the Spirit" in terms of the drawing together of local church communities and wider networks.[100] It is one that argues against the approach taken by Volf who focuses on the local church as the sole reflection of eschatological unity, supported by Matt. 18:20 as related to the Trinity.[101] He states that the church must exist where "two or three are gathered" and to say that the church must be wider than this undermines the validity of Jesus' saying here. It can be agreed that Jesus' presence is promised where just two or three gather and the verse, suggests W.D. Davies and Dale Allison, echoes a Jewish saying about the Divine Presence, *shekinah*, in the context of studying the law.[102] Yet this does not negate a consistent wider context within which Jesus' presence is not static but rather always moving outwards to make connections with others who gather in his name. This is not to deny that in extreme situations Christian communities (and indeed individuals) may be physically cut off from others, as in the case of some Christians imprisoned for their faith, but this is simply a sinful and temporary limitation (in eschatological terms) on a church that goes beyond the local to the universal. It also does not prevent a movement outwards in connected prayer, despite any physical limitations, as illustrated in Jesus' prayer of John 17 as he faced the most limiting time of his life.

In a similar way, this approach inherently critiques that of Stanley Grenz whose historical-theological approach aims to critique the reliance on parachurch organisations

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[98]On this see Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 21–25. In terms of mission, Luke and eschatology see my *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 63–66.
[99]Jn. 17.21. Stibbe, *John*, 179.
[100]To use the eschatological language of Rom. 8.23
[101]See here Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 135,197 and his following discussion on the Trinity and eschatology.
[102]W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 307.

within the evangelical tradition and rather focus on local churches.[103] He sees such parachurch developments alongside the growth of denominationalism as hindering the development of evangelical ecclesiology. Like Volf he proposes an ecclesiology based on the church as a (local) community, but marked by Word and Sacrament for mission.[104] Thus he takes ecclesiology seriously, but unlike the approach taken here does not seek to gain from the ecclesial experience of "parachurch" mission organisations nor does he interact with the narrative of Acts.

At this point it is important to consider the term *ekklesia*, often translated "church" in the New Testament, as to whether biblically it is limited to local communities. Since James Barr's critique of theology based on word studies it is less common to see exclusive focus on *ekklesia* within ecclesiology.[105] Such terms cannot be understood in singular ways, outside of their wider cultural context, and without consideration of related biblical themes and narratives. Within the New Testament the term appears used in a number of different ways as the charismatic David Watson noted.[106] Jeremy Begbie suggests that *ekklesia* understood against its Old Testament background has a meaning that may refer to a local congregation (e.g. Acts 16:15,40; Rom. 16:5) but also refers to the believers in a geographical area (e.g. 1 Thes. 1:1; Gal. 1:2) and the church in a more universal sense (especially in Ephesians and Colossians).[107] Macchia picks up on this latter sense and for my argument it is important to note the wider use of *ekklesia* beyond the local.[108] Shane Clifton also recognises the wider use drawing on K.L. Schmidt in his critique of Volf.[109]

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[103]He roots the parachurch movements within the thinking of Puritans, the Pietist movement and John Wesley's thinking and notes how these movements develop in terms of voluntary societies. Grenz, *Renewing the Center*, 287–93.

[104]Grenz, *Renewing the Center*, 309–21.

[105]James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: OUP, 1961). See also the summary of the debate in Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (London: SPCK, 1989), Chapter 4

[106]Watson, *I Believe in the Church, 2nd Ed.*, 67.

[107]Jeremy Begbie, "The Church: Awkward Questions," Theology B Presentation (Cambridge, Ridley Hall, 2003) drawing in particular on Kevin Giles, *What on Earth is the Church?* (London: SPCK, 1995).

[108]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 198.

[109]Clifton, "Analysis of the Developing Ecclesiology," 27–28; K.L. Schmidt, "Ecclesia," in *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One*, eds Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1985), 487–536.

4.2.3 Networks in Church and World

Studies of Acts often develop understandings of church that neglect the historical and contextual issues that are important to Luke. Although the recent emphasis in Lukan studies has been on Luke as theologian it is important not to neglect Luke as historian, as W. Gasque argues.[110] Gasque warns us of the "damage of divorcing the New Testament writings from their broader historical setting."[111] I. Howard Marshall argues that Luke was writing a narrative of history whose theme "formed part of world history."[112] We have noted the importance of existing social centres, particularly cities, to the development of networks by Paul. Schnabel surveys reasons given for the "success" of early Christian mission, such as the political stability guaranteed by *Pax Romana*, philosophical critiques of polytheism and the social networks within the otherwise hierarchical social structures of Roman society.[113] He goes on to argue that these are not sufficient in themselves and we need rather, as Christians, to emphasise "the powerful effect of divine grace."[114] Yet, as Michael Green argues, we must not underplay the work of God in enabling his particular "period in the history of the world" to be so suited to the spread of the church.[115] Green particularly notes the developed nature of the Roman road network that so enabled evangelists as much as merchants.[116] Greek language, thought and cults as well as Jewish influence provided the essential grounding to Christian mission. To speak of the work of God in growing church networks cannot be considered in isolation from the work of God in the wider world without losing something of the essence of early Christian mission.

Summing up, a missionary narrative reading of Acts resonates well with an understanding of the church as growing by means of a variety of connected networks. It

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[110]W. Ward Gasque, *A History of the Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, 2nd Ed.* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1989), 351.
[111]Ibid., 307.
[112]I. Howard Marshall, *Luke – Historian & Theologian, 3rd Ed.* (Paternoster, 1988), 38.
[113]Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1555–61.
[114]Ibid., 1561.
[115]Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church, 2nd Ed.* (Crowborough: Highland Books, 1984), 13.
[116]Ibid., 16–17.

provides a different reading to that usually suggested by pentecostal scholars and yet one inspired by our consideration of pentecostal experience. Such a flexible structured approach to understanding the church now needs to be brought into conversation with trinitarian concerns in systematic and mission thinking.

4.3 Trinitarian Ecclesiology and Mission

There is a common desire in the pentecostal ecclesiologies we examined in the last chapter to develop a trinitarian basis for ecclesiology. This is in line with the assumption of most contemporary theology that the doctrine of the Trinity "affects and determines the whole of life, faith, worship and theology within the Christian church."[117] It must be acknowledged that not all agree with the links made between trinitarian structures and church/human communities. David Cunningham notes that the doctrines of *imago Dei* and the kingdom of God might be seen as sufficient for the development of ecclesiology, with Ted Peters arguing for the latter.[118] Peters argues that personhood in the Trinity is primary and community secondary, so for community we should look to the kingdom of God as a primary symbol. Miroslav Volf argues, against Peters, that even if "one cannot copy God in all respects" we cannot "leave behind the inclusive Trinity as a model."[119] Volf argues for "limits to the correspondences between the Trinity and human communities" based on the created nature of humanity and the difference between the sinful present and the eschatological hope.[120] Alistair McFadyen also notes problems with "social doctrines of the Trinity... providing models of society" but argues that it is possible for correspondences if the doctrines of creation and redemption are also seen in trinitarian terms.[121]

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[117]John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 16.
[118]David Cunningham, "Trinitarian Theology Since 1990," *Reviews* 4 (1995): 10; Ted Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1993), 185–87.
[119]Miroslav Volf, "'The Trinity is Our Social Program': The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement," *MT* 14, no. 3 (1998): 404.
[120]Ibid., 405.
[121]Alistair McFadyen, "The Trinity and Human Individuality: The Conditions and Relevance," *Theology*, January/February 1992, 13–14.

With such limits in mind the question we need to consider here is how the network structure that arises out of the pentecostal and early church experience of mission engages with trinitarian questions. Within pentecostalism we noted the particular influence of both the German Reformed and Early Church traditions on current thinking and we need to examine further the links between trinitarian models and the two movement model of mission being utilised through this project. In terms of structures the question of the nature of the Trinity as both three and one has been often linked with views on the structures of church and so we start with this before going on to consider mission. These will help suggest a pentecostal trinitarian approach that can form a basis for our understanding of network church.

4.3.1 Latin and Social Trinitarianism

Gerald O'Collins identifies twelve significant issues in contemporary thinking on the Trinity, starting with the recovery of the importance of trinitarian thinking to all our theology and biblical study. His fourth issue relates to how the early church, and we, can "grasp, even marginally, the differentiated unity of God or the divine unity in distinction."[122] The relationship between the unity of the one God and the three persons in relation is a vital issue. Stanley Grenz, in his review of the Trinity in contemporary theology, notes the important shift in thinking from a focus on the unity of God to the three trinitarian members that occurred from the time of Karl Rahner onwards.[123] This shift reflects, in part, differences that existed between the West and East in the early church, with the West focusing on the unity and the East on the distinctive persons.[124] The question of language is important in early church debates on this subject – between Tertullian's Latin talk of *tres personae, una substantia* and the Greek words *ousia* and *hypostaseis*.[125] Brian Leftow terms these approaches Latin Trinitarianism (LT) and Social Trinitarianism (ST) and the general issue is whether we start

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[122]Gerald O'Collins, "The Holy Trinity: The State of the Questions," in *The Trinity*, eds Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 8.
[123]Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 217.
[124]Ibid., 8–9.
[125]The former is Tertullian's formula, the latter utilised by the Cappadocian fathers, Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 8–9.

with the one and then consider the three (LT), or we start with the three and then consider the one (ST).[126]

A useful way into this issue is through the thinking of Jürgen Moltmann, particularly given his importance in pentecostal thought. Moltmann traces LT in the early church in terms of "monotheistic monarchianism."[127] He sees this in Tertullian for whom the category of unity "prevails over the triunity" and in Karl Barth's doctrine of the Trinity arising from God's self-revelation as (one) Lord.[128] LT naturally starts with an affirmation of monotheism, the divine unity of God, within which the Father has a "priority" in sending.[129] Central here is the Father sending the Son for the "salvation of creation" and sending the Spirit "to unite created being with the Son."[130] Moltmann sees LT of value in thinking about the sending of Jesus and in thinking about unity as an "eschatological question about consummation."[131] But for him LT tends to lead to political and clerical monotheism that stifles life.[132] For example, he argues that "monotheism was and is the religion of patriarchy."[133] Moltmann also feels that the biblical testimony starts with an understanding of the three rather than a philosophical emphasis on the one.[134] Thus he proposes a form of ST which he calls the "doxological Trinity" that leads to the "inexhaustible freedom" of creation.[135] This is a trinitarian model that for him represents better freedom, love, life and worship.[136] Here is a freedom of equality and self-giving (*perichoresis*) within which the Trinity is open to the world and indeed draws the world to participate in the trinitarian life, in what he terms the "trinitarian history of

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[126]Brian Leftlow, "Anti Social Trinitarianism," in *The Trinity*, eds Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 203.

[127]Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God* (London: SCM, 1981), 131.

[128]Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 138,140. See also Moltmann, *Spirit*, 290–91.

[129]Moltmann, *Spirit*, 294.

[130]Moltmann, *Spirit*, 294. I'm not entering into the *filioque* debate at this point but outlining Moltmann's understanding.

[131]On the latter see Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 149.

[132]Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 191–201.

[133]Ibid., 165.

[134]Ibid., 149.

[135]Ibid., 218.

[136]Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (London: SCM, 1977), 301–6. See here the comments of Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 171–73.

God."[137] This is a panentheistic understanding based on the centrality of Jesus' Cross and Resurrection. Tim Chester outlines how for Moltmann the "trinitarian history of God moves from unity to unity with the cross in between."[138] In some ways Moltmann is trying to grasp what he sees as the best of LT for the past and future (the centrality of unity) but emphasising ST in the present (the importance of freedom).

This emphasis on ST models seems to hold with it a neglect of the structural concerns our reading of pentecostal and early church experience raised. Moltmann's main work on understanding the church does not argue against structures but neither does it devote any space to their consideration.[139] Richard Bauckham concludes that Moltmann too easily equates authority with domination and "neglects the inevitability of some kind of power and authority" which structures raise.[140] Whilst there are tendencies that derive from LT models that need critique, focusing on ST models is not also without critique. In addition to questions of authority, Bauckham suggests that Moltmann's approach can emphasise the similarities rather than the "highly differentiated relationship" we have with "the three divine Persons."[141] Here the critique of ST understanding of personhood by Sarah Coakley is relevant, and she argues that modern understandings are being read back into patristic texts.[142] For Bauckham, Moltmann's understanding of freedom does not adequately appreciate the overlapping ministries of the three Persons, and it might be better to focus on "the differentiated structure of the Christian experience of God," essentially an experience of God's one love for us seen in three dimensions.[143] Chester notes that Moltmann's approach leads to volitional rather than

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[137]For a good introduction to this in Moltmann's thought see Tim Chester, *Mission and the Coming of God: Eschatology, the Trinity and Mission in the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann and Contemporary Evangelicalism*, Paternoster Theological Monographs (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 33–36.

[138]Chester, *Mission*, 43.

[139]For example, in considering the unity of the church Moltmann allows for different structures but places "local communities" before a "hierarchical build-up," Moltmann, *Church*, 344. His is a bottom-up approach that does not get as far as treating structural concerns in any depth.

[140]Bauckham, *Theology*, 145.

[141]Ibid., 177.

[142]Sarah Coakley, "'Persons' in the 'Social' Doctrine of the Trinity: A Critique of Current Analytic Discussion," in *The Trinity*, eds Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 123–24.

[143]Bauckham, *Theology*, 181.

ontological unity and wonders if this is sufficient to overcome the criticism of tritheism.[144] The critique of tritheism is one posed sharply by Leftlow to ST generally and he is not convinced by their arguments to the contrary.[145] Chester questions whether Moltmann's approach to history and the cross leaves enough "room for God's independence from the world."[146] Grenz suggests that Moltmann's "commitment to the futurist ontology" exonerates him from this charge but this still leaves questions about God's dependence on the world in the present within Moltmann's outlook.[147] Mark Chapman challenges what he sees as the idealistic assumptions of ST in favour of a more practical wisdom, particularly in the realm of conflict.[148] For our purposes it is important to value LT rather than simply adopt ST models without question. In terms of church networks it might be that ST models help more our understanding of church *centres* and LT models emphasise the need for structured *links* within a mission movement.

4.3.2 Trinitarian Thinking and Mission/Structures

Having suggested that ST models tend to leave the structural concerns of networks aside within trinitarian thinking, we need to consider similar themes within mission studies. Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder provide a good review of the links between trinitarian and mission thinking based on a three-fold theological typology, of types A, B and C. They see pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic and some contemporary evangelical theologies of mission being of type A that focuses on the church as an institution and mission as the extension of the church.[149] For them, the important positive change came with the focus on church as a "community/communion in mission" that reflects the social nature of God rather than as an external institution. Here mission is "rooted in the continual self-giving and self-revelation of

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[144]Chester, *Mission*, 45. See also Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 85.
[145]Leftlow, "Anti Social Trinitarianism," 209–34.
[146]Chester, *Mission*, 47. See also Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*, 51.
[147]Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 88.
[148]Mark Chapman, "The Social Doctrine of the Trinity: Some Problems," *ATR* 83, no. 2 (2001): 239–54.
[149]Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 40–42,49.

God," in *kenosis*.[150] So Bevans and Schroeder suggest that contemporary missionary ecclesiologies favour type C/B theologies that focus on communion in the context of history and the search for truth.[151] In the language of this chapter, they are suggesting that a contemporary ecclesiology shaped by mission needs to leave behind LT and embrace ST. David Bosch starts his review of the theology of mission by pointing out criticisms of existing understandings of mission, particularly those that relate to a "colonial expansion of the Western world."[152] Such criticisms resonate with Moltmann's critique of "monarchianism" and support this move toward ST models in that they can inspire equality between churches and cultures around the world.

However, we need to ask three questions of Bevans and Schroeder. Firstly, is it possible to construct an ecclesiology that gives little place to institutional structures? To do so is to neglect the vital role of structures in ecclesiology and in mission throughout history. There is a natural movement towards structures which needs including in any ecclesiology. Secondly, what is the nature of the community envisioned? There is an assumed "local autonomy and cultural identity" that neglects the works considered earlier on the changing nature of societies and communities – the importance of networks.[153] This chapter has argued that these two points are important to a missionary ecclesiology, although the network structures envisioned differ from traditional type A approaches. Thirdly, what happens to the notion of "being sent" in mission? Bevans links this with the work of the Spirit, but the Father is strangely silent.[154] On this latter point it is important to ask whether the ST models reaction against a "sending" understood in institutional and colonial terms is detrimental to mission, especially since the term "mission" is synonymous with sending.[155] Whilst it can be argued that sending was linked with colonialism, it is important to note an emphasis since at least 1952 (at the World

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[150]Ibid., 287–88.
[151]Ibid., 296.
[152]Bosch, *Mission*, 1–3.
[153]Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 298.
[154]Ibid., 293.
[155]For example, Schnabel's argument that mission is understood literally in terms of sending for Luke, *Early Christian Mission, Vol. 2*, 1580.

Council of Churches, WCC, Willingen conference) on the church as "sent" rather than "sender" – keeping an emphasis on sending, whilst overcoming negative ways it has been interpreted in the past.[156] Our first movement in mission keeps an emphasis on the church as sent by God and to deny this movement is to remove something vital from mission. Such a sending can be seen as a reflection of the Father's sending of the Son, as obedience to the Son's sending and as response to the Spirit's prompting to go. It is within the nature of the triune God to send, with not only the Father sending the Son but the Son sending his disciples and the Spirit involved in both of these sendings. The sending aspect of mission should not be dependent on any particular trinitarian understanding and yet it seems that within LT the theme of sending is kept in sight mainly through the sending nature of the Father. Even Kevin Daugherty who recognises the importance of sending to mission seems to replace it with relational contextualisation in his ST-based approach to trinitarian mission.[157]

In developing my understanding of mission I argued that there is a tendency within the history of mission in the last century to appropriate only one of the movements in mission, and that this separation of movements is also in evidence in a dialogue between pentecostals and Moltmann.[158] In the light of the above discussion, this separation also seems to be reflected in the wider theological debates over LT and ST. It would appear that LT tends to go with an emphasis on God's working within the church and his sending of the church in a mission in which evangelism, redemption and a critical overcoming of evil are central.[159] On the other hand, ST tends to go with an emphasis on God's contextual working within the whole world, particularly in terms of liberation, life and the equal value of all. Within this the church needs to be open to God's wider working and see ways in which this working draws creation Christ-wards.[160] In this regard the trinitarian thinking of Leonardo Boff is a good

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[156]Bosch, *Mission*, 370.
[157]Kevin Daugherty, "*Missio Dei*: The Trinity and Christian Missions," *ERT* 31, no. 2 (2007): 151–68.
[158]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 75–81.
[159]See here the discussion in Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 75–81, 86–89.
[160]In this regard it is interesting to consider Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz's appreciation of Moltmann's understanding of the church centred on Jesus Christ as the universal Messiah, and his question as to whether this view alone is sufficient for the mission of the church, *The Kingdom and the Power: The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (London: SCM, 2000), 85–89, 102–3.

example – rooted in human experience and the relational Trinity he sees mission drawing humanity in the direction of this Trinity.[161] Boff develops a "perichoresis-communion model" of the Trinity within which relationships come first and unity/communion follows.[162] This model of the Trinity "can be seen as a model for any just, egalitarian (while respecting differences) social organization."[163] While in a general way creation reflects the Trinity, where society does not reflect the Trinity there is a need for action for liberation.[164] Thus for Boff a ST understanding of the Trinity links with a liberation understanding of mission and one in which the whole of creation is brought into communion with God by the Holy Spirit.[165] Structurally, this approach gives local "base" communities rather than hierarchies priority in the development of a "new ecclesiology."[166] There is still a need for a wider institution as a source of authority and to preserve the "Catholic identity" and "oneness in faith" yet Boff gives no space to a consideration of structures for mission nor gives significance to the importance of sending in mission.[167] My argument has been that if we are to be true to the experience of mission across the centuries then we need both mission movements to be valued. This now seems to imply that for an ecclesiology shaped by mission we need a trinitarian approach that spans some of the divisions between LT and ST. Before we examine this further, it is also important for us to consider how structures for mission might relate to trinitarian models.

Reference has already been made to the argument of Max Warren that the "middle term" Christian group is an "indispensable element in the Christian mission."[168] This is a structure

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[161]Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society* (Tunbridge Wells: Burns and Oates, 1988). See the summary of his thought in Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 120–23.
[162]Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 137.
[163]Ibid., 11.
[164]On creation and the Trinity see Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 223–26. On the centrality of liberation see Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 11–13 and Leonardo Boff, *Ecclesiogenesis: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church* (New York: Orbis, 1986), 40–43.
[165]Boff speaks of the divine mission of the Son, being sent to earth in the past, and the divine mission of the Spirit today in bringing all into communion, *Trinity and Society*, 94–95, 107–209. He concludes with a reflection on creation being drawn into the Trinity *Trinity and Society*, 230–31.
[166]Boff, *Ecclesiogenesis*, 1–2.
[167]Ibid., 7–8.
[168]Max Warren, *Christian Mission*, 85.

within the church that lies between "the Christian individual" and the universal "Christian church" but is larger than congregations/parishes. Warren does not envisage here a hierarchical structure of control – quite the opposite – but he sees the vital need for structures that are based on dispersed communities and linked especially with evangelistic mission initiatives.[169] In his time this meant the Protestant missionary societies and Roman Catholic Orders, but he saw a "great need... [for] the exploration of new forms through which the "middle term" of group action can find expression."[170] Warren argued for this at a time when there was pressure to remove such "middle term" mission groups and rather place mission under centralised church structures.[171] Graham Kings argues that Warren is advancing a practical argument, based on experience, for the importance of the voluntary principle that is at the heart of middle term groups – a voluntary society of people with a shared purpose.[172] Yet I have also argued that there is a theological understanding to Warren's thinking (and wider thinking on the voluntary principle) based on the work of the Spirit, drawing people together for the work of mission.[173] Again, this tension between middle term groups and centralised structures reflects similar divisions between the two movements in mission, with the first movement often linked with middle term groups within the evangelical tradition and the second movement linked with central structures within the ecumenical (conciliar) tradition. Interestingly, there has been a move in evangelical circles against middle term groups to emphasise mission through the local church congregation, and we commented above on the argument of Grenz that middle term groups have prevented evangelicals from developing an ecclesiology.[174] This represents a positive desire to link mission and

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[169]For more details see Max Warren, *Iona and Rome: Being a Critical Review of Christian History in the Making by McLeod Campbell* (London: CMS, 1946) and also the commentary on his thinking in Graham Kings, *Christianity Connected: Hindus, Muslims and the World in the Letters of Max Warren and Roger Hooker* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002), 102–4.

[170]Max Warren, *Christian Mission*, 86.

[171]See here his later reflections in Max Warren, *Crowded Canvas: Some Experiences of a Life-Time* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), 157.

[172]Kings, *Christianity Connected*, 104.

[173]Lord, "Voluntary Principle". The argument was refined in Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 107–11 and draws particularly on Max Warren, *Towards 1999*, Unpublished rept. (London: CMS, 1957) that Kings does not refer to.

[174]Grenz, *Renewing the Center*, 293–95.

ecclesiology that overcomes some of the practical divisions of the past, as forcibly argued by Lesslie Newbigin who was on the other side of the debate from Warren and whose continued influence on evangelical ecclesiology shaped by mission remains considerable.[175] We can see a pressure here to bring unity and mission together structurally, whether in a congregation, denomination or ecumenical body. In terms of trinitarian models it is interesting to note that LT models that have been assumed for those in favour of middle term groups have (at least in Warren's case) led to an emphasis on freedom, flexibility and diversity that might not be expected by those linking it with monarchical arguments. Here there appears support for the counter argument that LT need not lead to monarchical structures, as noted by Thompson, Bauckham and Chester.[176] In fact, ST models can lead to a desire for more fixed structures that are either congregational (as in the case of Grenz and Volf) or universal (as in the ecumenical movement or in an eschatological sense for Volf), which within this discussion seem more controlled than creative. Of course we are talking about tendencies here and there are exceptions, but there is a need for creative middle term communities that are called to share with God in aspects of his mission in the world, a call that involves both a sending by the Father in the Spirit with Christ confirmed by a voluntary response of the individuals that make up the community. Such communities need to be considered within ecclesiology in order to overcome the structural divisions between church and mission.

4.3.3 Pentecostal Trinitarian Model

Having discerned that network structures resonate with both pentecostal and early church experience I have been arguing that within systematic and mission thinking the move towards ST models has limited engagement with creative church structures. Hence for an ecclesiology that reflects on structural concerns in the light of holistic mission there needs to be a

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[175]Lesslie Newbigin, *Unfinished Agenda: An Updated Autobiography* (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1993), 142; Michael Goheen, *"As the Father Has Sent Me, So I Am Sending You": JE Lesslie Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology* (Boekencentrum, 2000), 227–43.
[176]Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*, 114; Bauckham, *Theology*, 159–61; Chester, *Mission*, 37–40.

trinitarian understanding that draws on both LT and ST models. We have seen how Moltmann tries to develop a ST model that also draws on some of the strengths of LT. Yet most pentecostal scholars unconsciously start with LT models, as Kärkkäinen notes, and then go on to consider *koinonia*.[177] They may then, like Land, try to embrace some of Moltmann's ST insights.[178] From our perspective of wanting to retain the idea of sending in mission together with developing middle term communities and contextual mission it seems appropriate to continue this general pentecostal approach. However, there needs to be a conscious appreciation of the issues and differences that exist. One interesting approach is that of Thomas Weinandy, influenced by his charismatic experience of Spirit baptism. Weinandy aims to overcome the trinitarian divisions between West and East in developing a trinitarian understanding that keeps a dependency on the Father in terms of "origin and derivation" but not in terms of "priority, precedence and sequence."[179] He utilises a *"perichoresis* of action" in promoting the distinctiveness of the three persons within the one God.[180] Yet his emphasis on God as the "Wholly Other" would, I suggest, limit our approach to one of the two movements in mission.[181] Another approach is that of Ralph Del Colle, a Roman Catholic active in pentecostal scholarship, who explores Orthodox critiques of LT, and proposes a LT-based Spirit-christology that draws on the trinitarian thinking of David Coffey.[182] Although Del Colle offers creative reflections on trinitarian issues regarding culture and human experience he has done little work relating to mission and ecclesiology which are our primary concerns here. Here I return rather to the thinking of Amos Yong in developing a trinitarian model, whilst recognising an overlap between his thinking and that of Del Colle in their shared use of Coffey's work.

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[177]Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 97–98.
[178]Land, *Spirituality*, 200.
[179]Thomas G. Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 15n.28, cf Chapter 4.
[180]Ibid., 78–80.
[181]Thomas G. Weinandy, *Does God Suffer?* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 113.
[182]Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); David Coffey, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit," *ITQ* 38 (1971): 202–23.

In Chapter 2 we examined Yong's trinitarian methodology but the emphasis there was not on his wider trinitarian thinking. His methodology starts with the principle that the external works of God are undivided, in other words that unity is vital in considering the works of God – hence the triadic structure of all experience.[183] Yet within this unity Yong wants to see the equal, complementary, different yet overlapping work of the Spirit and the Word. For this he draws on the social understanding of Irenaeus who spoke of the "two hands" of the Father at work in creation and redemption.[184] Yong argues that there are links between the thinking of Irenaeus and Augustine, particularly between Irenaeus's "recapitulation" model of the two missions of the Spirit and Word with Augustine's mutual love theory, thus attempting to draw on the best of ST and LT models.[185] He also links this to the social understanding of Richard of St Victor who he sees as providing an "intensification of the mutual love theory" with the Spirit seen as the third lover.[186] Yong admits that the biblical warrant for Augustine's model is weak and turns to Coffey to provide such warrant alongside an understanding of the equal but different missions of Spirit and Son.[187]

Although Yong is reluctant to place his understanding in fixed categories, desiring rather to reach across existing categories, it is possible to see his approach as lying within those trinitarian models that Grenz notes stress relationality.[188] His utilisation of the work of Cunningham on "subsistent relations" within the Trinity, which Yong links with his pneumatological category of relationality, supports this as does Grenz's mention of Cunningham in the context of relationality.[189] For Yong it is important that the Trinity is seen in relational terms but he does not see this as requiring a social understanding of the Trinity.[190]

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[183] See Chapter 2 and also Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 49.

[184] Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 52.

[185] Ibid., 60–62.

[186] Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 67. Yong later supports a non-ST reading of Richard, Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 81, n.13. In contrast, Grenz notes how Richard is often seen as ST in contrast to Augustine, Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 11–12.

[187] Coffey, *Deus Trinitas*; Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 67–68.

[188] Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 117–18.

[189] Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 57; Cunningham, *These Three Are One*; Grenz, *Rediscovering*, 117.

[190] Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 80–81. See also his hesitations in Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 57–58.

Indeed he maintains a distinctive role for the Father and talks of the "headship" of the Father although later qualifies this in terms of the Father as the "originating source" of Son and Spirit to overcome the charge of subordinationism.[191] In this the Father is characterised by "self-giving" love, a loving rather than monarchical source.[192]

In this regard it is important to recognise the different applications of the *perichoretic* nature of the Trinity assumed by Yong and Volf. For Volf, starting with the unity of God (LT) implies a "strictly hierarchical structure of the church."[193] Hence Volf starts with the three and argues that the triune unity is conceived "*perichoretically*. That is, each divine person stands in relation not only to the other persons, but is also a personal center of action internal to the other persons."[194] Volf sees this unity reflected in the life of the local congregation where persons are conceived only in relation to others, hence his argument for the communal nature of Christian faith. However, he does not see this *perichoretic* nature to be reflected in the relationship between local churches given their collective rather than personal nature – "divine perichoresis cannot serve as a model of *inter*ecclesial unity."[195] Such unity, and hence the catholicity of the church, can only be seen in eschatological terms for Volf.[196] In the present what might be termed a "weak" reflection of the *perichoretic* nature is desirable, whereby churches are *open* to others in a way that anticipates the eschatological unity.[197] This openness may lead to alliances in love, churches choosing to perhaps form a network along particular lines, and Volf urges such alliances.[198] Yet this leads naturally to the situation where church and "alliances" (the societies of the missionary era) are seen differently and hence face the criticism of Grenz and missiologists on the resulting separation between mission and church. From the point of view of our concerns for mission and networks the approach of Volf seems

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[191]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 52,55.
[192]Ibid., 75.
[193]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 214. Here Volf is addressing the view of Ratzinger but see also his stronger language against "ecclesial unity conceived by way of the one" in Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 217.
[194]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 203.
[195]Ibid., 213.
[196]Ibid., 199.
[197]Ibid., 213.
[198]Ibid., 208.

to unnecessarily limit the understanding of *perichoresis* and an alternate approach is preferable.

In contrast, Yong understands the *perichoretic* nature of the Trinity in terms of "autonomy in relationality" that is seen in Word and Spirit as they "somehow commonly [originate] in the mystery of the Father."[199] More recently he prefers the term *coinherance* to *perichoresis*, but maintains that this requires us to think of the Trinity as "distinctions between the persons... understood in terms of their relationships."[200] Rather than have two ways of understanding how the church reflects the *perichoretic* nature of the Trinity, it seems more appropriate for our purposes to define *perichoresis* consistently in terms of distinction and relationship – that the three persons of the Trinity are distinct yet each always works in relationship with the others, as in "the mutuality of partners in a dance."[201] There is obviously much debate that underlies this understanding, but I want to draw here on Yong's approach to argue that both local and wider understandings of church (including the eschatological, but not exclusively so) reflect a *perichoretic* understanding of the Trinity.[202] It follows that the unity and catholicity of the church can be seen in a local, denominational and network sense in the world today. This is partial realisation of the eschatological unity that is to come, but this is to anticipate the discussion in the next chapter.

4.3.4 The Trinity and the World

It is vital for mission to acknowledge with Yong that trinitarian models "are driven to provide relational accounts not only of God, but also of the world."[203] It is not just the church as communities that reflect the Trinity, but communities more generally if we acknowledge the work of the Trinity in all creation, as presumed in Yong's metaphysics already considered. From his pneumatological categories Yong concludes that the "world is not only related to the

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[199]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 69.
[200]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 55.
[201]Ibid., 56.
[202]For Yong's discussion of the underlying issues, including his utilization of Cunningham's thinking on personhood and relationship see Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 50–59,74–77.
[203]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 79.

divine vertically, but is also a vast web of interconnectedness horizontally."[204] There is a *perichoretic* distinctiveness and relatedness that is reflected in the web (network) of communities in the world as well as the church. This continues the broad concern of Moltmann to relate God and the world that many pentecostals appreciate.[205] Yet Chan and Chester, amongst others, suggest that Moltmann goes too far in making God dependent upon his created world.[206] In his consideration of mission Chester sees the problem being in Moltmann's equation of the economic and immanent Trinity. He points to the critique of John Milbank that "the fall imposes an 'impossible interval' between the economic and immanent Trinities" a reference also picked up by Yong.[207] Yong would support Rahner's rule that "the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity" but argues that "the reverse does not necessarily follow."[208] The question here for mission is how important it is to maintain a critical space between God's involvement in creation and his existence independent of creation? I would tend towards Yong's view in that it helps substantiate the view that the Trinity is reflected in the life of the world, and yet a mission sending exists, one that assumes that the world is not all God will have it be. This discussion is not crucial for our argument, although it is important, as Chester notes, to value mission as the coming of the kingdom that overcomes sin, understood as rooted in the fall and the cause of death in creation.[209] The understanding of mission utilised in this project is based on a holistic understanding of both sin and the blessings of the Spirit experienced within creation.[210]

Chester moves from his critique of Moltmann to develop an eschatology of the Cross within which the focus is on individual discipleship that combines hope with patience and endurance.[211] Whilst there is much of value here, for our purposes his focus does not

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[204]Ibid., 59.

[205]Hence Land's use of Moltmann in considering the transformation of the world, *Spirituality*, 196–200.

[206]Simon Chan, "An Asian Review [of *Spirit of Life*]," *JPT* 4 (1994): 35–40; Chester, *Mission*, 44–49.

[207]John Milbank, "The Second Difference: For a Trinitarianism Without Reserve," *MT* 2 (1986): 224; Chester, *Mission*, 44–45; Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 78.

[208]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 78.

[209]Chester, *Mission*, 46–49.

[210]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 62–66.

[211]Chester, *Mission*, Chapters 14 & 15.

adequately address issues of community and God's work outside the church. Chester's concern is for the life of each believer seen in the light of "an eschatology of the cross" whereas for us the result of this mission is the kingdom of God in all its holistic fullness – as it affects individuals, societies, nations and indeed the whole creation. Given the community nature of this kingdom then it is inevitable that new churches result from the mission of God even if the kingdom encompasses more than this. Kirsteen Kim suggests that the understandings of the Holy Spirit in mission has developed over the last century from a focus on the work of the Spirit in individuals and churches to different ways of seeing the Spirit at work in the world.[212] Based on Yong's pneumatology, the approach here fits with this development and so goes beyond what Kim would see as the "catholic" approaches favoured by contemporary pentecostals towards a more "orthodox" approach of seeing the Spirit at work in all life.[213] However, we do not follow the Orthodox view that "the destiny of the whole creation somehow passes through the church" a view that resonates with the work of Chan.[214] Rather the role of discernment has a place within and without the church in discovering the work of God in all its fullness, a discernment rooted in the Spirit, the Trinity and the whole biblical and theological witness. It is this that means that our approach does not equate with some modern liberal "secular" understandings of the Spirit that subsume the Spirit beneath a secular understanding of humanity.[215] The Holy Spirit work can be discerned as part of the *perichoretic* Trinity in growing and bringing in the kingdom of God through the whole of creation with the formation of Christ-linked communities a vital part of this.[216]

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[212]Kirsteen Kim, *The Holy Spirit in the World* (London: SPCK, 2007), 1–8.
[213]Ibid., 41–55.
[214]Here Kim is quoting Orthodox reflections on the theme of the 1991 Canberra WCC Assembly, *Holy Spirit*, 51. Chan is currently developing a pentecostal ecclesiology in dialogue with Orthodox thinking.
[215]Kim mentions these but does not dwell on them, probably as they tend to develop in certain Western cultural contexts and do not easily relate to her "global conversation" with the voices of India and Korea, *Holy Spirit*, 6–8. In terms of such "secular" understandings we could point to the work of Don Cupitt.
[216]In this regard, the comments of John Hull critiquing a recent Church of England report are notable and we will return to this in Chapter 7. John Hull, *Mission-Shaped Church: A Theological Response* (London: SCM, 2006). Hull argues for a kingdom result of mission rather than a church result, yet I think the community nature of the kingdom makes such distinctions hard to make.

Here we touch on an essential link between anthropology and ecclesiology through our understanding of the Holy Spirit. In this regard it is important to our purposes to consider the work of Yves Congar who, in Elizabeth Groppe's view, gave a distinctive contribution to a contemporary theology of the Holy Spirit that reunites pneumatological anthropology and ecclesiology.[217] Prompted by Moltmann's critique of his *I believe in the Holy Spirit*, Congar utilised Romans 8 to argue that the cosmic is linked to the personal.[218] More generally Congar spoke not of "trinitarian history" (as did Moltmann) but of "human historicity" viewed in the context of God's purpose for creation.[219] Here is an eschatological yet relational approach to creation in relation to the Trinity. This relational approach is rooted in a "pneumatological anthropology" and a "pneumatological cosmism."[220] Congar focuses on the work of the Spirit in bringing about the relatedness and community of creatures made in God's image and this compliments our reflections on *perichoresis*.[221] It helps provide a way of talking of God's work outside the church and the community nature of the kingdom in ways that complement those within the church.

Our argument supports the earlier suggestions of Volf and McFadyen that is it possible for correspondences between the Trinity and human communities to be productively explored. This is without saying that God is defined entirely by human communities, as if such communities were not also sinful or fallibilistic, or that God and the kingdom of God do not go beyond human understanding whilst also being grasped by it. It is also not to say that human response to God makes no difference or that salvation and redemption are not necessary. It is important to keep the trinitarian distinctives of the church, and this will be developed below, but from the present discussion we can note with Moltmann how the church is characterised by a belief and acknowledgement of Jesus as the Messiah of God.[222] With

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[217]Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 137.

[218]Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986), 123.

[219]Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 90.

[220]Ibid., 92.

[221]Ibid., 99.

[222]Moltmann, *Church*, 66.

Congar we can see the church as characterised also by an *indwelling* and not simply the *presence* of the Holy Spirit.[223] Here it is a relationship with rather than simply the presence of the Spirit that is experienced. The turning point is human repentance and faith that responds to a revealing of the presence of the triune God. Also, the church reflects Christ in his response to the *call* of the Father as he sends us ever outwards.

4.4 Network Summary

This chapter has built the case for seeing networks as integral to the growth of pentecostalism and as resonating with the narrative of the early church in Acts. The importance of network structures raised questions about the form of trinitarian basis for ecclesiology that pentecostals are seeking. In particular, the current tendency toward ST models was critiqued from within systematic and mission thinking and a suggestion proposed that embraces some of both ST and LT models. We now return to reconsider the nature of networks that was outlined in a basic form above.[224] From our trinitarian considerations it is possible to suggest that we see networks as having a source, a mission movement of self-giving love and a structure beyond the congregation that is integrally (*perichoretically*) related to congregations and other networks both inside and outside the church. The basic understanding of networks suggested that they be seen in terms of a set of *centres*, of church communities, that are connected by *links*. Each centre comprises of people in an equality of loving relationships with one another, as desired by ST. Such relationships will involve conflict, as Chapman argues, but builds communities that reflect in part a trinitarian model. Such self-giving within a centre cannot but be moved to include other centres and create new relationships of love that connect with God. Trinitarian mission movements cause networks to grow and multiply whilst maintaining the importance of relationships and mutuality, as implied by *perichoresis*. Structures can then be seen within such movements and in ways that are flexible and can vary over time, just as

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[223]Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple or the Manner of God's Presence to His Creatures*, trans. Reginald F. Trevett (London: Burns & Oates, 1962), 237; Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 94.
[224]Sectoion 4.1.2

relationships vary. Thus I am suggesting that the Trinity forms a model for networks in the way it can be seen to be reflected in the life of congregations and in the giving movement that connects with others. We will return to the character of networks in Chapter 6, but for the moment we can note that centres can be members of more than one network and that their relationship links may change over time. Part of the variation will be due to the fallible nature of human relationships and some due to fresh moves of God.

Practically, I am suggesting that networks represent "mid-level" structures that come between local centres and the universal church, and I will refer to them as "network churches" with "network church" referring to the ecclesiology as a whole. Hence network church is a messy but structured approach to understanding church in the world today. It should be clear that there can be no understanding of network church separate from a network world. In traditional theological categories, our understanding of God as creator and Redeemer must be always kept together. Hence there exist centres and networks that owe their creation to God but which lie wholly outside the church or which contain a mix of Christians and non-Christians. Church centres and church networks will link with such (world) centres and networks in a variety of ways and it is not possible for church centres and networks to exist without such links, however weak. Such links mean that mission is built-in as an essential part of network church since mission requires engagement with the world God created.

As regards network links, a number of different kinds of link exist:

> (a) within centres, between people

> (b) within individual networks, between centres

> (c) between networks

>> (c1) between two church networks

>> (c2) between church network and world network

>> (c3) between mixed networks (of church & world)

Pentecostals have been discovering the centrality of (a) to faith and ecclesiology and have naturally utilised and created networks whose links (b) are about people and relationships (e.g.

conferences, apostles) and involve communication (e.g. journals, media, testimony). The aim of this project has been to build on this through a consideration of ecumenical links (c1) and links that can be seen of as ways of mission (c2). Mixed links (c3) remain an interesting and largely unexplored area for ecclesiology and will not be explored here, although Moltmann makes reference to something similar and Raymond Fung notes their importance in the practice of mission.[225]

In terms of the understanding of mission that has been utilised in this project, the two movements in mission correspond to the movements both ways along links (c2). Such mission involves the linking of centres and networks in church and world so as to enable evangelism, healing, social change, reconciliation and ecological development – a holistic approach to mission that is rooted in communities and link relationships between communities.[226] Mission also involves the creation of new links, centres and networks to better enable this task. Such mission affects both world and church and requires of links (a), (b), and (c1) that church networks live out Christ-centered, healing, socially developing, reconciling and ecologically sensitive life and ministry. Also church centres need to have a lively Christian spirituality that shapes personal character and community relationships.[227] In church terms it is not possible to have an isolated centre, except in extreme fallible circumstances where the desire to link remains even if it is expressed more in prayer than in practical possibilities. In mission terms, pentecostals often focus on church planting which here may be seen as church centres linking to new church centres – ones that utilise (c2) links but in a secondary way. Yet it is also desirable for mission to involve such links in a primary way so that church, mission and local community are linked to transform the world for all and not just create fresh church communities. This is another way of expressing the tension between church and kingdom in mission thinking and ecclesiology, stressing the need for both.

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[225]Moltmann, *Church*, 134; Raymond Fung, *The Isaiah Vision*, Risk Book Series (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1992).
[226]As regards this holistic mission see Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 62–63.
[227]Picking up the remaining two aspects of holistic mission developed in Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 63.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter I have used the methodology of Spirit-Word-Community and the underlying understanding of mission to substantiate the hypothesis that networks can be utilised as a "middle term" mission structure within a pentecostal ecclesiology. The pentecostal experience of growth through networks has been explored, a theme that has been neglected yet is significant for pentecostal ecclesiology. Whilst pentecostals often appeal to the book of Acts they have not done so in detail when thinking about church structures and this chapter contributes fresh insights as to how narrative approaches to Acts resonate with our understanding of networks. Contemporary ecclesiology of all kinds draws on trinitarian thinking and here it is suggested that Latin and Social trinitarian approaches influence thinking on church structures and this is linked with insights from mission studies. I argued that there is a need for ways forward that combine elements of both approaches and have suggested one based on that explored by Yong. This allowed us to explore initial thoughts on the Trinity and the world, to be developed later in Chapter 7, and to suggest a more detailed understanding of our network approach to church. Thus this chapter supports the use of network structures in ecclesiology and provides a new pentecostal contribution to discussions relating to church structures. The existence of networks and their missionary nature raises questions about the catholicity of such a "network church" and to this we turn in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

NETWORK CATHOLICITY

The last chapter examined the practice of networks and trinitarian thinking related to this and we now need to move on to consider issues of catholicity. The mission nature of our ecclesiology implies that we can expect networks to grow, which moves us into questions regarding the catholicity of the church. Our approach means that we cannot see catholicity simply in terms of a spiritual, eschatological, future reality nor as the sum of all the local fellowships that exist in the present. The catholicity of network church is more complicated and requires us to have both a shared characteristic of all existing church centres and a sense of ever changing outward movements. Our concern here is not to address issues regarding existing Christian denominations and their claims to a catholicity of faith, but rather to develop further the understanding of network church which may later provide a different way into such issues. Considering catholicity that arises from a shared ecclesial essence, this chapter first addresses the question: *what is of the* esse *of church – what is the essential minimum that all churches share?* The answer to this flows from the trinitarian understanding developed in the last chapter and is rooted in experience through an understanding of "sacramental events." This requires the development of a pentecostal approach to the sacramental and I suggest one that goes beyond the existing suggestions of particular numbers of "sacraments."[1] At this point I turn to "Spirit baptism" as the distinctively pentecostal characteristic of church. A metaphorical approach is taken that sees Spirit baptism as a sacrament that is the key "mark" of the church. This, I suggest, is a more truly pentecostal approach to the marks of the church than current pentecostal approaches that turn to the marks in the Nicene creed separate from the basis of their ecclesiology.[2] Finally, I argue that

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[1] Protestants often suggest the two essential sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Ken Archer has suggested five for pentecostals, and the Roman Catholic Church values seven. Archer, "Nourishment."

[2] "One, holy, catholic, apostolic church". This is the approach taken by Yong and Macchia amongst others, Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 131; Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 204.

catholicity needs also to be understood in terms of mission movements between the local and the global.

In terms of our methodology, this chapter focus on developing the pentecostal ecclesiology through interaction with pentecostal and ecumenical *Communities* and a particular understanding of the sacramental experience of the *Spirit*, in dialogue with the *Word*. The ecumenical discussions on catholicity are wide ranging, and I have chosen to approach these through the work of Yves Congar who was one of the outstanding theologians of ecclesiology of last century. Congar is conducive to pentecostal thinking due to his appreciation of the role of the Holy Spirit in ecclesiology.[3] Congar's work overlaps in themes with that of Karl Rahner and both their thoughts on ecclesiology influenced the outcome of Vatican II. Although I will comment on this below the main focus will remain Congar. The next chapter seeks to understand more of how we might enter into this pentecostal catholicity through partnership.

5.1 Catholicity and Unity

Before going further we need to address some questions regarding the terms we are using. The terms "unity," "catholicity" and "universality" are commonly used in thinking about ecclesiology. The unity and catholicity of the church are affirmed in the Nicene creed in terms of belief in "one, catholic... church." Congar roots this "oneness of the Church," the essential unity of the church, in the "oneness of God."[4] He notes that such unity has both a spiritual and a human aspect and that it presupposes a diversity of religious experience.[5] Much debate surrounds the question of when and how a spiritual unity is experienced in human terms through history – is it limited to the eschatological future? Does it have to be represented by one denomination or church structure? Is it seen primarily in local congregations? Miroslav

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[3] In making this choice this I am following also the choice of Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 134–51.
[4] Yves Congar, *Divided Christendom: A Catholic Study of the Problem of Reunion* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939), 64.
[5] Ibid., 100–101.

Volf considers Roman Catholic and Orthodox approaches to this question through Joseph Ratzinger and John Zizioulas, and stresses their link between the unity of God and the one Roman Catholic or Orthodox church. In contrast to these Volf wants to stress such a unity seen primarily through the local congregation, with wider unity only realisable in the eschatological future.[6] I have already argued that this does not take account of need for wider mission structures in the church today. Yet his eschatological perspective is important as we consider unity and catholicity and, like Volf, I want to argue that until the eschatological future dawns the church's unity is experienced in a partial way, always straining towards further universality. Such a straining is at the heart of the approach to mission assumed in this project, eschatological movements between the local and the global. Congar notes how ecumenism requires eschatology and how this challenged Roman Catholic ecclesiology through last century.[7]

Mission often relates to the extension of the church to cover the whole world – a geographical understanding of unity and universality. Yet we need to acknowledge other approaches to the universality of the church – there is also a growing universality of truth and faith; of the collective life of the church through new communities; and the universal nature of the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Volf notes the geographical, anthropological, revelational, creational, soteriological and christological understandings of universality.[8] The unity of the church revolves around the revealed Christ and salvation through him to the ends of the world, in the context of God's creation in general and of humanity in particular. It is a relational unity that draws all together by means of the trinitarian God. This unity is real, if always partial – as the WCC document *Nature and Mission of the Church* puts it, there is a real, present, unity in Christ "but not yet a full communion."[9] In this chapter I develop the argument so far in suggesting a trinitarian-based *unity* to the church. For our purposes I want

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[6]See Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 154–58. For a similar approach focusing on local congregations see Moltmann, *Church*, 342–47.
[7]Yves Congar, *Diversity and Communion* (London: SCM, 1984), 42.
[8]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, Chapter 2.
[9]WCC, *The Nature and Mission of the Church: A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement*, Faith and Order Paper 198 (Geneva: W.C.C., 2005), 14–15.

to suggest that the term *catholicity* can be seen in terms of movements towards different kinds of universality which form foretastes of the eschatological unity that is to come. This is rooted in Congar's suggestion that catholicity can be understood as that which moves us towards unity.[10]

The relationship between the "one" and the "many" is a fundamental philosophical question and subject to much debate. In terms of ecclesiology, it is one that Volf and Congar have devoted much thought and my approach to the subject has been by means of highlighting the need for "middle term" structures that lie between a polarity of the one and the many, structures that exist within an eschatologically inspired mission.[11] Such questions also relate to contemporary questions within pentecostalism over the contextualising and globalizing tendencies within the movement. Simon Coleman, from an anthropological approach, argues that pentecostalism has both an introverting principle and a global orientation.[12] He argues that this means pentecostalism is a "part-culture," one that challenges traditional anthropological approaches.[13] This nuances his earlier study that focused on the globalizing trends in charismatic Christianity.[14] It better fits with the observations of David Martin as to the coming together of the "local and specific" with the "global and open-ended" in pentecostalism.[15] In a book of studies on the "globalization of pentecostalism" Byron Klaus argues that pentecostalism is a "quintessential indigenous religion, adapting readily to a variety of cultures" yet "has generated a global culture which shares a common spirituality."[16] C. Peter Watt notes the pressure of globalisation that can mean a type of watered-down

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[10]Aidan Nichols, *Yves Congar* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), 54.

[11]For example, see Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 192–94; Congar, *Diversity and Communion*, 70–71.

[12]Simon Coleman, "Studying 'Global' Pentecostalism: Tensions, Representations and Opportunities," *PentecoStudies* 5, no. 1 (2006): 2–3.

[13]Ibid., 10–12.

[14]Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[15]David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 169.

[16]Byron D. Klaus, "Pentecostalism as a Global Culture," in *The Globilization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson (Carlisle: Regnum Books, 1999), 127.

"sameness" can replace the Spirit-inspired mission diversity of pentecostalism.[17] Another danger of overplaying globalization is the temptation of triumphalism that pentecostals have given in to, as Gary McGee noted some years ago.[18] Yet it is impossible to ignore the global drive of pentecostalism seen primarily in its understanding of mission. Our consideration of the catholicity of the church touches on similar issues to this question within pentecostalism, but is not so interested in defining pentecostal identity as in considering how the local and global can be held together within ecclesiology.

Another important issue that underlies our approach to ecclesiology is what we might term "Congar's principle of the human and divine" and this is important to the approach developed here. In different ways Congar argues that the church can be seen both "from below" and "from above" and we need to hold both together. In his early thinking Congar distinguished between divine life from above (linked with the Spirit) and human structures (from below) although he later saw this as too forced a distinction and looked for a way beyond the charism-institution divide.[19] He wants to keep together the concrete and the spiritual, the material and the mysterious, the visible forms and the invisible working of God. There are ways in which the material mediates the divine and Congar's understanding of the Spirit forced him to continue seeking to hold the human and divine together. Indeed, Elizabeth Groppe argues that in Congar's thinking the themes of anthropology and ecclesiology are held together through a pneumatological outlook that embraces both.[20]

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[17]C. Peter Watt, "Some Dangers in the Globalisation of Pentecostalism: A South African Perspective," *Missionalia* 34, no. 2/3 (2006): 382,393.

[18]Gary B. McGee, "Pentecostal Missiology: Moving Beyond Triumphalism to Face the Issues," *PNEUMA* 16 (2) (1994): 275–81.

[19]Nichols, *Yves Congar*, 58–60; Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, Volume II: 'He is the Lord and Giver of Life'* (New York: Crossway, 1983), 11.

[20]Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 1–8.

5.2 Catholicity of Shared Ecclesial Essence

At the heart of the church's catholicity is, of course, the trinitarian God who inspires movements towards unity. In the last chapter I laid a trinitarian grounding for ecclesiology and it is important to draw the main elements of this together with the philosophical and pentecostal understandings of previous chapters. Here the argument is that unity is partly found through a shared trinitarian essence that underlies every church community. Contemporary popular missional ecclesiology speaks of the churches' DNA and here I want to give a trinitarian understanding of such a DNA.[21] Yet it is important to link such an essence with its practical outworking – to keep the spiritual and the human together, in Congar's understanding. I want to do this in a way that links with existing understandings, both pentecostal and ecumenical, but develops them in a wider direction as determined by the contextual and mission nature of this project.

5.2.1 Trinitarian Essence

It is common in ecclesiology to speak of the *esse* of the church, what is of the essence of church as opposed to what might be for the good of the church, *bene esse*. Thus Volf speaks of pluriform faith, community and openness to all churches and human beings as being of the *esse* of his understanding of church. In this he is developing a Free Church understanding through interactions with Orthodox and Roman Catholic understandings. Yet there are clearly also trinitarian and eschatological dimensions of his thought that are essential to his ecclesiology but which Volf leaves out of his consideration of the *esse*. Based on the work of the previous three chapters I want to suggest that the *esse* of network church is a trinitarian understanding of the activity of God. This is its essential essence that is shared by all churches and is the basis of its unity. I will touch on some issues within *bene esse,* such the nature of particular sacraments, but my *esse* is more inclusive than some other proposals and my aim is

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[21]Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2006), 18.

to develop an underlying ecclesiology upon which other concerns can be addressed. This provides a trinitarian way of understanding pentecostal "fellowship" which develops earlier work.

Given the metaphysical foundations of the method being adopted in this project, it is appropriate to start by saying that network church is rooted in the undivided work of God in the church and world, and every aspect of networks within them. As we saw in Chapter 2, Amos Yong, developing the outlook of C.S. Peirce, argues for the triadic nature of all experience – that in all things we can see the working of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This working is seen to be of two types: "growing" the good already in existence and "inbreaking" challenge to existence that falls below God's ideal. This allows for the commonality that has been assumed in the understanding of networks within and outside the church, and allows mission to engage both Christian and non-Christian participation. The essential unity in the working of the trinitarian God does allow also for the distinction and relationships that exist within the Trinity. I have suggested a pentecostal understanding rooting in a view of the Father as the originating source of self-giving love who both creates community and who is always moving individuals and communities outwards. This movement is both in terms of ever relating to others outside the community concerned and also a movement into greater truth, as seen in the nature of inquiry that is a part of our methodology. In this movement of love and truth we see the equal, complementary, different yet overlapping work of Spirit and Son. This is a community-focused yet outward moving and structured approach to understanding the Trinity as reflected in the church. Sociologically we might want to add to the understanding of community, but the theological focus here suggests that Christian communities reflect trinitarian life, are characterised by self-giving loving relationships, a seeking for truth and are in movements outwards.[22]

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[22]This develops Yong's consideration of the Spirit of relationality, rationality and *dunamis* as considered in Chapter 2, Section 2.

Central to this understanding of communities is an understanding of the *perichoretic* nature of the Trinity, reflected at all levels of network church. Each person, centre and network is both distinct and yet inherently related to others. There is a relationship in difference between people within a centre, relationships in difference between centres and between networks. Links thus reflect something of the self-giving relationality seen in the *perichoretic* Trinity. In this context it is possible to best appreciate the eschatological movement within which network church is set. The eschatological approach taken here is that presumed by the understanding of mission being used, and hence has not been developed at length in this project.[23] Yet here we can see how the eschatological movement towards the kingdom and towards union with God is tasted within people, centres and networks in the present. We have a community-centered approach to understanding the kingdom and union with God, so that both are intensely personal and yet always reaching to embrace others. We taste something of God's new communities and God's uniting presence in ways that take up existing understandings and take them further into new areas. Union with God is often thought of in purely personal terms, yet here it becomes clear that we cannot be united to God without being united to others. The kingdom of God is often thought of in terms of one universal community, but we can see a communal nature to the kingdom that is ever linking and transforming through a multitude of communities. Central to all this is, of course, the person of Jesus Christ on whom the kingdom and union find their focus. Although tastes of the kingdom and union can be experienced both inside and outside the church, there is an inevitable growing focus on Jesus Christ in this eschatological movement.[24] Eschatologically we see people, communities and networks confessing faith in and worship of Jesus, the vision of Revelation.[25] Hence links in the present must communicate something of Jesus, whether or

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[23]See Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 56–59.

[24]Here I am not following Simon Chan's church-focused eschatology considered in the last chapter, but neither am I losing the link between the kingdom and Jesus.

[25]For example, in Revelation 4 & 5

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not this is acknowledged. So evangelism remains unavoidable, if reimagined as the inevitable communication of Jesus Christ through all we do, inviting a response.

It is important to stress the presence of both divine and human initiative in the different links we have considered, developing Congar's principle. Links reflect and are driven by the trinitarian life of God, as we have seen. The argument so far suggests a different approach to Volf, yet we must also acknowledge, with Volf, that links also require a volitional response. There are many debates on how the divine and the human work together and we have been developing the insights of Yong that in turn draws on Donald Gelpi and others. In this regard Gelpi's multi-faceted understanding of conversion is useful in bringing together the gracious self-disclosure of God with responsible human decision making.[26] Within this we can see something of the call of God that is responded to. A variety of different kinds of centres and networks has been presumed and our concern is not to try and categorise these but at this point to say that each centre and network will have its own character determined by both the divine initiative and call, and by the nature, gifts, beliefs and responses of the people involved. This is often described in terms of people's theological outlook, practical mission concerns, social background etc. but it is important also to note the united divine initiative that creates diversity.

The human element to centres and networks links with the characteristic fallibilism that is central to our methodology. Although God is at work in all, human sinfulness and limitations mean that all people, centres, networks and links remain imperfect (whether inside or outside the church) and there is no guaranteed progress or ways to success. Rather there is a journey of highs and lows, one that is undertaken with God moving in an eschatological direction. Using Yong's terminology, we are always aware of both the presence and the absence of the Spirit in all things and yet work with the active Spirit to see more of the eschatological kingdom breaking in to the world in the present.[27] This fallibilism is seen in

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[26]Donald L. Gelpi, *Gracing of Human Experience*, 292–303.
[27]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 179.

individuals and in communities and networks and so has a social-political element as well as a personal element. All this implies that discernment is a vital practice within the network church being developed – the constant discerning of the working of God, of human response, and of sinful failings.

Having drawn together theological themes from previous chapters as they relate to network church I now want to outline the distinctive essence of church centres, which is often done in terms of faith, sacraments, the Bible or tradition. For example, Steven Land speaks of missionary fellowships marked by pentecostal affections and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen speaks of fellowships of the Spirit. Here it is important to maintain a trinitarian understanding that picks up the themes already explored. Firstly, the working of the *Father* suggests that church centres have distinctive links with creation, community and sending. Church centres exist within the Father's creation and so have distinctive contextual, cultural and geographical bases that are important to their identity. They exist as communities and not simply as a collection of individuals, brought together by the Father who ever seeks to create community. Such communities also cannot but take part in the sending, self-giving, loving mission of the Father to grow and bring in the kingdom of transformation and liberation. This freely given love is at the heart of a Christian understanding of "grace" which Congar has noted is an important source for the catholicity of the church.[28]

Secondly, the working of the *Son* suggests that church centres have distinctive connections with the biblical narrative, faith responses and the search for truth. Church communities are shaped by the narrative of Jesus, a biblical drama lived out in the present, a "full" gospel that links every part of life with the biblical narratives and does so as people respond in faith holistically with a desire for truth. They live a Jesus-Messiah-focused life that continues to provoke a pluriform response of faith – a faith that is centered on Jesus but expresses itself in many different ways as there are many kinds of people and community. The

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[28]Yves Congar, "Die Wesenseigenschaften der Kirche," in *Mysterium Salutis IV/1: Das Heilsgeschehen in der Gemeinde*, ed. J. Feiner and M. Löhrer (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1972), 487 quoted in Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 276.

incarnation reminds us that faith is always rooted in the concrete life of individuals and communities. It is a faith that involves the whole person and includes a desire to continue exploring with others the understanding of faith, as part of a community enquiry for truth.

Thirdly, the working of the *Holy Spirit* suggests that church centres experience distinctive baptisms, indwellings and transformations by God. Church communities are characterised by Spirit baptisms that shower them with a Jesus-centered abundance of God's loving power that brings many kinds of fruit. These indwellings of the Spirit create communities that can be seen as homes, houses and families brought to birth and kept alive by the Spirit. This brings with it personal transformation in terms of the affections of Land, and in terms of a wider pneumatological imagination of Yong.[29] Such transformations represent a growing in holistic holiness within churches that link the personal and the communal.

Of course, these triune workings of God are always interlinked reflecting the *perichoretic* nature of the Trinity. For example, we can see the gospel being lived out in church communities in ways that bring truth-full personal transformation. This also reflects the Spirit of relationality, rationality and *dunamis* – the three biblical motifs identified by Yong in considering the Spirit.[30] In summary, it is of the *esse* of the church to be missionary, communal and contextual; to be shaped by the Christ-centered gospel lived in relation to the biblical narrative and provoking a response; to be indwelt and transformed by the Spirit.

5.2.2 Sacramental Events

I have developed an understanding of the *esse* of church that builds on the trinitarian reflections of the last chapter. Church centres are missionary, communal, contextual, living the gospel, responding in faith, indwelt and transformed by the Spirit. It is this catholic essence of the church that in part unites it in the present and moves it towards the unity that is God's will for the future. Yet this *esse* will remain abstract unless it is experienced in

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[29]Land, *Spirituality*, 23; Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 221.
[30]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 25–48.

particular and concrete ways. To return to Congar's principle, the trinitarian spiritual essence of the church is inseparable from particular human engagements with this essence. In terms of our methodology, we cannot consider *Community* and *Word* without considering the need to discern experiences of the *Spirit*. This we do by now turning to the traditional means of holding the spiritual and the human together in the church – the sacraments. We cannot avoid the inherently sacramental nature of the church.

Alister McGrath suggests that there was little agreement over the understanding of sacraments until the Middle Ages.[31] The word *sacrament* is the equivalent of the Latin *sacramentum* used to translate the Greek *musterion,* "mystery" and Augustine described sacraments as "visible forms of invisible grace."[32] Hence sacraments link the invisible God with the visible creation, although there are many debates over the theological basis for sacraments and the practical question of what constitutes a sacrament. For the moment it is sufficient to say here that the need to ground the church's essence in action can be seen in terms of the need to see the church sacramentally, as bringing together the invisible gracious essence of the trinitarian God with visible forms or activities that make the essence real in people's lives. Of course, it is important not to place the visible and the invisible against one another in a dualistic way. The methodology of Yong adopted here presumes a triadic approach, within which experience is material and relates to invisible possibilities and mediated dispositions.[33]

Pentecostals have traditionally held back from embracing a sacramental approach for a number of reasons, and indeed the *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* seems to avoid the issue by pointing to a Roman Catholic understanding.[34] Frank Macchia suggests that pentecostals are "uncomfortable with the word 'sacrament' because of the

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[31]McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 50–51,72–73.
[32]F.A. Sullivan, "Sacraments," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1033; Inge, *Theology of Place*, 59–60.
[33]The Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness mentioned in Chapter 2. See Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 92–93.
[34]Sullivan, "Sacraments," 1033.

association of the term with an 'institutionalization' of the Spirit or with 'formalistic' liturgical traditions."[35] Yet he asks whether pentecostals "so stress the miraculous that they often detach the work of the Spirit from human efforts to create a better world?"[36] He feels that a pentecostal appreciation of sacraments could encourage pentecostals to engage better with the world and also provide a way of revitalising institutions. Macchia suggests a sacramental understanding of tongues as one of many sacraments of the eschatological future.[37] More recently he draws on the work of Daniel Albrecht to suggest that ritual sacraments "point to the grace implied in all of life" although he focuses on baptism and the Lord's Supper.[38] Kenneth Archer comments that pentecostals tend to reduce sacraments to "mere memorial rites," wanting to deny any "real grace" being mediated through them.[39] Yet they still expect to encounter "the presence of Christ through the Spirit" in their worship and even when they share Communion.[40] He links sacramental ordinances with "Pentecostal crisis experiences" within the "way of salvation," developing the work of Steven Land.[41] He links these ordinances with the five-fold "full gospel" to suggest five foundational pentecostal sacramental ordinances: water baptism, foot washing, Spirit baptism, healing and the Lord's Supper. In this he argues that pentecostals need to go beyond the two traditional sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Mark Cartledge suggests a charismatic understanding of tongues as a sacrament that draws on Calvin's *Institutes*.[42] This is suggestive of a wider understanding of sacraments as linked with God's promises, with preaching that produces faith, conveying God's grace by the Holy Spirit, and drawing us to Christ. Calvin also

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[35]Frank D. Macchia, "Tongues as a Sign: Toward a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience," *PNEUMA* 15, no. 1 (1993): 61.

[36]Ibid., 75.

[37]Macchia, *Spirituality and Social Liberation*, 159–63. See also the discussion in Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days*, 166–69.

[38]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 247–48; Daniel E. Albrecht, *Rites of the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

[39]Archer, "Nourishment," 84.

[40]Ibid., 85.

[41]Ibid; Land, *Spirituality*, 23.

[42]Mark J. Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia: An Empirical-Theological Study* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 195–97; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion II*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, Library of Christian Classics, Volume XX (London: SCM, 1960), Bk. 4, ch. 14.

distinguishes between natural and miraculous sacraments which helpfully embraces both charismatic and wider sacramental experiences of the Spirit.[43] Clark Pinnock links water baptism and the Lord's Supper with "the power of the Spirit in the action" responded to in "genuine faith."[44] Looking back to the early centuries of the church he notes how it seemed to be "sacramental and charismatic."[45] He then suggests a wider understanding of sacraments that links with creation: "Created reality is richly imbued with sacramental possibilities. The world reflects God's glory; therefore anything can mediate the sacred, where there are eyes to see and ears to hear."[46] Amos Yong also links the sacraments with creation, suggesting that life in the Spirit is "about encountering God sacramentally and semiotically in one another and in the various orders of creation."[47] This is left undeveloped as Yong focuses on the two sacraments in church life. Simon Chan argues the need for the Protestant church, within which he sees pentecostalism, to "return to its sacramental heritage" and maintains a church-focus for understanding the sacraments.[48] He sees them linking the "transcendent and historical poles of the church's being" in a "dialectical relationship."[49] Focusing on the two main sacraments, he suggests that suffering, celebration and solitude are the signs of the sacramental community.[50]

Pentecostal scholars are finding themselves drawn to a reappreciation of the sacramental in regard to ecclesiology. This can also be seen in popular pentecostalism, particularly in charismatic movements within older Christian traditions as Chris Cocksworth notes within the Church of England.[51] Pentecostal scholars find resonances between their tradition and more sacramental traditions in terms of crisis events, the grace of God by the Spirit, the gospel of Christ, eschatology, creation and salvation. They have recognised the more sacramental nature

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[43]Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 196–97.
[44]Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 127–28.
[45]Ibid., 119.
[46]Ibid., 120.
[47]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 299.
[48]Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1998), 109.
[49]Ibid., 112.
[50]Ibid., 112–21.
[51]Christopher Cocksworth, *Evangelical Eucharistic Thought in the Church of England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 10–11.

of the early church and so, in part, are beginning to reach back before the time when Baptism and the Lord's Supper became the two focal sacraments of Protestantism. The Roman Catholic church recognises seven sacraments, these being settled on between the 7th and 12th centuries.[52] Before this time there were more sacraments and I want to suggest that in different ways pentecostals are rediscovering the "more" of sacraments in the early church. There remains a focus on the church, and indeed the notion of the church as a sacrament in the world has come to the fore since the 1940s largely due to the influence of Henry de Lubac and was significant in Vatican II.[53] Pentecostals are beginning to appropriate some of this thinking in their own ecclesiology, although they remain hesitant about a sacramental understanding beyond the church. This is probably because of the belief that the world cannot be seen as sacramental without distinction, otherwise the term sacrament loses its meaning. Yet, as Pinnock and Yong suggest, a wider understanding is possible. There still remains a need to develop a pentecostal approach to the sacraments for church and world.

I have suggested that our trinitarian *esse* provides a way into understanding the sacraments and this can be developed by picking up on the pentecostal themes of grace, creation, eschatology, salvation, events and the biblical narrative. A fruitful way of doing this is through interaction with two scholars who have developed understandings of the sacraments: John Colwell and John Inge. Colwell is a Baptist theologian whose hesitations regarding the sacramental reflect those of many pentecostals, yet has developed an approach to the sacraments rooted in the trinitarian nature of God. He starts by suggesting that "at the root of both the Catholic and the Reformed tradition, is an understanding of a sacrament, not as an empty sign, but as a sign through and in which God freely accomplishes that which is signified, not in a manner that can be presumed upon or manipulated, but in a manner that is truly gracious."[54] Here is an understanding of sacraments rooted in the freely given grace of

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[52]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 60.
[53]Dulles, *Models*, 55–56.
[54]John E. Colwell, *Promise and Presence: An Exploration of Sacramental Theology* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005), 11.

God which is understood to be given through means – "sacrament is a means of grace."[55] Colwell talks of these means of grace in terms of signs through which the grace of God is made concrete. This reality of grace and means is, Colwell argues, rooted in the triune nature of God. The triune God is seen as gracious and always works towards creation in mediated presence and action: "grace and mediation are truths of the very nature of God and are defined decisively within God's Triune self-relatedness."[56] Considering the nature of creation, Colwell then argues that "there is... no unmediated presence or action of God within or toward creation; the relatedness of God to creation is mediated in the Son and through the Spirit."[57] This does not imply that all creation is sacramental, otherwise it would make "'sacramental signs' meaningless."[58] Rather there are a wide variety of sacramental signs by which the working of the triune God can be discerned in the created material universe.

Such signs, or events, are related to the gospel story focused on Christ – by "such sacramental means the Church indwells the gospel story which is the creative word of its existence."[59] This is a story within which salvation is central in a way that is both personal and cosmic. The church becomes a "sacramental means of grace within the world," "the harbinger of a cosmic salvation."[60] Sacraments are "eschatologically oriented" both fulfilling God's promise to be with us and drawing us ever onwards and inspiring us to praise the Father.[61] This is by the Spirit who draws us together in catholicity: "Ultimately it is the Spirit who defines the Church sacramentally, and he does so far more inclusively, far more surprisingly, far more graciously, than we would dare venture. And if the Spirit so acts, is it really so hard for us to accept one another as we have been accepted?"[62] This wide understanding of the sacraments is then appropriated in a particular way by Colwell in order to

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[55]Ibid., 29.
[56]Ibid., 41.
[57]Ibid., 48.
[58]Ibid., 55.
[59]Ibid., 79.
[60]Ibid., 80,85.
[61]Ibid., 61.
[62]Ibid., 258.

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understand the church as being "sacramentally defined."[63] He focuses in particular examples of "sacramental mediation" that are essential to the well being of the church: "baptism, Eucharist, ministry, and the continuing spiritual disciplines of discipleship (penance perhaps)."[64] This focus helps illuminate existing sacramental signs within church life and place them within a wider theological understanding, but does not deny a wider set of signs or events being possible. Here my concern is less with particular existing signs, about which much has already been written, but rather with developing a pentecostal framework within which they can be better appreciated.

There is a good resonance here between Colwell's understanding and that of this project in seeing sacraments as the visible, human, created form of the invisible, spiritual, trinitarian essence that underlies the church. The Father is graciously working through means in creation, by the Spirit indwelling particular events or signs, in ways that draw us to Christ and move us onwards in eschatological directions. This understanding also integrates with Congar's principle, and with the concern for catholicity. Colwell's focus on trinitarian thinking can be usefully developed through a wider interaction with the biblical narrative, as indeed is required by our pentecostal methodology. For this I want to turn to the work of Inge, an Anglican scholar (and Bishop), who has developed a wide biblical understanding of sacraments.[65] Inge approaches sacraments from the point of view of the biblical concern for place that is often neglected in contemporary Western culture.[66] In this he develops the work of Walter Brueggemann who notes "the preoccupation of the Bible for placement."[67] This starts with the Garden of Eden, develops during the journey to the Promised Land, is longed for in Exile, and is to come in the New Jerusalem – we can see God the Father who longs to develop places for his people within the whole salvation story. Such places are the central

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[63]Ibid., 79.
[64]Ibid.
[65]See also my review of his work that focuses on the relationship between place and network in mission, Andrew M. Lord, "Searching for Contextual Churches," *Theology* May/June, CIX, no. 849 (2006): 191–98.
[66]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 1–28.
[67]Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (London: SPCK, 1978), 10.

context for the relationship between God and humanity – the contexts for encountering God.[68] He deepens this understanding through an appreciation of the incarnation: "it is clear from the incarnation that *places are the seat of relations or the place of meeting and activity in the interaction between God and the world.*"[69] In other words, Jesus is central to a sacramental understanding. Such sacramental encounters with God are seen as "sacramental events," a "surprisingly common" way that God reveals himself to us even beyond the bounds of the church.[70] Inge does not dwell on the role of the Holy Spirit in such events and lacks the more comprehensive trinitarian basis of Colwell.[71] Yet his more detailed analysis of the biblical narrative adds weight to our argument that we should expect God's self-revelation in the world and therefore "that the world is a possible place of sacramentality."[72]

Inge also stresses the relational aspect of sacraments, expressed through particular events of meeting – important in Land's pentecostal understanding of the spiritual life, yet neglected so far in our consideration of sacraments.[73] For Inge, sacraments are about action and relationship and in this the reaction of people to sacramental events is important: "Only when the gracing action of God is matched by the accepting faith of a believer is sacramentality enabled and grace caused."[74] In sacraments we see God's free offer of grace that needs to be received. This reception enables a growth in transforming holiness that moves people towards the eschatological future. Sacraments thus point to the redemption of all things in Christ – they bring together the memories and history of the past with the eschatological hope of the future in present places and communities.[75] Inge then develops a sacramental understanding of the church in terms of shrines, drawing on insights on place and pilgrimage.

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[68]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 46.
[69]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 52. Italics in original.
[70]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 67.
[71]Inge recognises that sacramental events are enabled by the work of the Spirit but does not explore this in detail, Inge, *Theology of Place*, 79.
[72]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 74.
[73]Land, *Spirituality*, 45–46.
[74]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 81.
[75]Ibid., 103–14, 86.

This ignores wider issues of ecclesiology pertinent to this project, but draws our attention to questions of place and context that will be picked up again in Chapter 7.

Drawing these threads together, I want to suggest that it is possible to have a pentecostal understanding of sacrament that flows from the biblical witness in a wider way than is commonly envisioned. In sacramental events the grace of the Father is mediated through particular created places by the Spirit to individuals and communities in ways that draw on the past, point to Christ and his salvation in the present, and draw us into an eschatological movement of fulfilment. In terms of our methodology, this is to suggest that the Spirit can be discerned in sacramental events that show eschatological foretastes of the grace of the Father and the salvation of the Son. Two questions then face us: what is a distinctively pentecostal appropriation of such a sacramental understanding? and how might such an approach make concrete the *esse* of the church we have been considering?

5.3 Church marked by Spirit Baptism

It is important to ask about the distinctively pentecostal experience of the sacramental events described above. For this we naturally turn to Spirit baptism which Macchia has highlighted.[76] In Spirit baptism pentecostals have long experienced God's grace by the Spirit in ways that draw them to Christ within an eschatological missionary urgency. William Seymour, like many others in the early pentecostal movement, placed Spirit baptism within an understanding of the stages of grace in a person's life.[77] Places such as Azusa Street witnessed an outpouring of the Spirit experienced by people as events that Cecil Robeck places within an ecclesial context.[78] It led quickly to a spreading fire of missionary urgency driven by its eschatological outlook.[79] I want therefore to suggest that the root of pentecostal experience, Spirit baptism, can be seen a sacramental event within a missionary movement.

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[76]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 20.
[77]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 69–70.
[78]Robeck, *Azusa Street*, 87–89.
[79]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 47–57; Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, 212–27.

The term "Spirit baptism" itself has a number of interpretations that have been grouped into pentecostal, evangelical and catholic: focusing on mission, soteriology and initiation respectively.[80] Pentecostal understandings of Spirit baptism are rooted in personal experiences with questions as regards initial evidence and tongues. Yet for some time this has been broadened from the personal to the relationship of Spirit baptism to the body of Christ, for example in the challenges of Frederick Bruner in 1970 based on the importance of 1 Corinthians. He argued that experiences of the Spirit must build up Christ's body.[81] More recent pentecostal scholarship has moved to appreciate both the distinctiveness of Spirit baptism and yet to widen its understanding. Robert Menzies comments that there is no unified biblical understanding which lends weight to the arguments of Macchia and Tak-Ming Cheung for a more metaphorical understanding of the term.[82] The general background for such an understanding is found in the holistic eschatological kingdom for which there is a link in John the Baptists announcement of Jesus as the one who will baptise with "the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Mt. 3:11). Whilst, as I stated in the last chapter, I am not convinced that this passage can take the weight that Macchia places on it I think a holistic eschatological interpretation of Spirit baptism is unavoidable. This is clear from Acts 2, "in the last days...," and from the early pentecostal link between Spirit baptism and eschatology.[83] Simon Chan links Spirit baptism with growth in the Christian life, linking it to the "illuminative way" of traditional Christian spiritualities, an infusion of God's grace in particular experiences.[84] This is a personal emphasis that complements Archer's understanding of Spirit baptism within sacramental experience for mission.[85] Although pentecostals have traditionally linked Spirit baptism with the gift of tongues as evidence, the picture is mixed for pentecostal scholars.

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[80]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 62; Tak-Ming Cheung, "Understandings of Spirit-Baptism," *JPT* 8 (1996): 121.

[81]Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1970), 285–302.

[82]Robert P. Menzies, "Luke's Understanding of Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective," *PentecoStudies* 6, no. 1 (2007): 108–26; Cheung, "Understandings."

[83]McClung Jr., "Try," 36.

[84]Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 73–74.

[85]Archer, "Nourishment," 92–93.

Cartledge, in his empirical-theological study of charismatic glossolalia sees contemporary tongues as being more about praise and worship rather than as a sign of baptism in the Spirit.[86] Whether or not tongues are seen as an initial sign there is sufficient pentecostal thinking to support a metaphorical understanding of Spirit baptism as sacramental events that mediate the holistic, eschatological and missionary graciousness of God and move us onwards in the Christian life.

As Macchia argues, it is important to keep Spirit baptism as central to pentecostal identity, and yet when it comes to the catholicity of the church pentecostals have tended to look elsewhere. Yong and even Macchia himself turn to consider the Nicene marks of the church already mentioned, the "one, holy, catholic, apostolic church." Yet this line of approach leaves to the side the question of pentecostal identity. Also, I would suggest that these four marks should be considered as the result of much debate and discussion rather than as the starting point. I want to propose the church is catholic in that it has a shared essence seen in sacramental events, particularly Spirit baptism, that mark its practice. Here particular understandings of "sacrament" and "Spirit baptism" are being used, as developed through this chapter. This pentecostal focus on the Spirit brings with it a robustly trinitarian approach, as Yong argues in the methodology we are utilising and as we have seen is central to our understanding of sacraments.

The idea of the "marks" of the church is seen more in some traditions than others. Out of the Reformations in Europe came a Protestant focus on the marks of Word and Sacrament formulated particularly by John Calvin over against the Roman Catholic understanding of the time.[87] At this time sacrament was understood in terms of Baptism and the Lord's Supper rather than the seven Roman Catholic sacraments. Archer argues well for the need for a pentecostal approach to traditional sacraments (what he terms sacramental ordinances) that is narrative in character and begins with the importance of Jesus and his story.[88] I have been

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[86]Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 196, 182.
[87]Kärkkäinen, *Introduction to Ecclesiology*, 50; McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 468.
[88]Archer, "Nourishment," 88–90.

taking a different approach, but it is worth commenting on his ideas to suggest a list of pentecostal sacramental ordinances. I am using the term "sacramental ordinance," as does Archer, to signify specific ritual sacraments within church life, without therefore hindering the wider understanding of sacraments developed earlier. Obvious omissions in his scheme are sacraments that relate to the Word preached and to worship – we might expect these to also mediate the holistic, eschatological and missionary graciousness of God. Hence, within my framework, I suggest that a church marked by Spirit baptism could see this worked out through the particular sacramental ordinances of: water baptism, foot washing, tongues, healing, the Lord's Supper, preaching and worship. Such ordinances can be seen as following on from Spirit baptism at Pentecost within the narrative of Acts: a people baptised in the Spirit find themselves speaking in tongues and preaching the word of God (Acts 2:1-40); the result is water baptism and the formation of a community characterised by breaking bread, worship and a sacrificial service to others that reflects foot washing (2:41-47); out of this community flows an immediate healing outside the church that points people again to Jesus (3:1-10). Clearly, most pentecostals do not read Acts in such a sacramental way but, for example, French Arrington talks of "the life of the new converts" that are "the direct and immediate results of the outpouring of the Spirit."[89] He is speaking of the sacramental visible results of the invisible presence of the Spirit, a point he makes in regard to Spirit baptism and beyond.[90] There is not space to develop this here in ways that interact with wider thinking and the fact that different pentecostals look to different ordinances.[91] Nor is there space to deal with questions regarding the authorisation of sacramental ordinances, and the aim here is simply to point a way forward within the model being developed.

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[89]French L. Arrington, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988), 33.
[90]Ibid., 20.
[91]In this regard see the list of sacramental ordinances compiled by David Morgan, "Pentecostal Sacraments" (2010), [Http://davidjmorgan.wordpress.com/pentecostal-ecclesiology/pentecostal-sacraments/ accessed on 4th May 2010]. This shows the great variety within pentecostalism and here I am suggesting ordinances inspired by Archer and a reading of Acts.

Given this understanding of the church as marked by sacrament it is clear that the ecclesiology being developed emphasises Dulles model of church as sacrament. Dulles notes how sacraments "build up the Church and make it the sacrament that it is."[92] A sacramental model brings together the best of the institutional and mystical models of the church, requiring both the external and the internal aspects of the church.[93] For us, a sacramental church holds together a network structure with a trinitarian essence – a wider basis than Dulle's focus on Christ as God's sacrament.[94] In this regard it is interesting to note Ralph Del Colle's exposition of Joseph Ratzinger in dialogue with Miroslav Volf. He suggests that the structure and sacramentality of the church are always linked.[95] It is not the case that the church is a monolithic whole as Volf assumes of Ratzinger's argument. Rather the church as sacrament means that the structures of the church are "perpetually recreated by God" through a charismatic pneumatology.[96] Although our structures are networks rather than the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the same reality of a structure being perpetually re-created by God applies as networks are born, grow, shrink or die in response to the Spirit at work in the world and church. A number of criticisms have been made of a sacramental model of the church, the most challenging for this project being that it is inward focused and does not pay sufficient attention to mission.[97] This is perhaps linked with what Dulles sees as a reticence amongst Protestants for this model in favour of the church seen as herald and servant. Yet we have noted a growing pentecostal appreciation for a sacramental outlook alongside the continuing commitment to mission seen in terms of proclaiming the gospel and serving others. Through models of mission and sacrament the ecclesiology here draws on some of the best of Dulles's five models.

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[92]Dulles, *Models*, 56.
[93]Ibid., 65.
[94]Ibid., 59–60.
[95]Ralph Del Colle, "Communion and Trinity: The Free Church Ecclesiology of Miroslav Volf–a Catholic Response," *PNEUMA* 22, no. 2 (2000): 323–27.
[96]Joseph Ratzinger, "The Theological Locus of Ecclesial Movements," *Communio* 25 (1998): 482–83 quoted in Del Colle, "Communion and Trinity," 323.
[97]Dulles quotes Richard McBrien as a critic in this regard, *Models*, 67; Richard McBrien, *Church: The Continuing Quest* (Paramus, N.J.: Newman Press, 1970), 61.

Given this wider appreciation of the sacramental within a church shaped by mission, we need to comment on the centrality of the particular sacrament of the Lord's Supper (or Eucharist) to many ecclesiologies. Our argument supports the Eucharist as a sacramental ordinance shaped by Spirit baptism and reflecting something of the trinitarian essence of the church. Indeed, it is impossible from the narrative of Acts to exclude the Eucharist from the life of the church and hence most Christian traditions acknowledge it. It would be possible to show how the Eucharist can be seen as a full expression of and entrance into the trinitarian essence of the church in worship. Yet we are some way from, say, Zizioulas in seeing the Eucharist as constituting the church – an identification of church and Eucharist by the Holy Spirit.[98] Volf supports the argument that such identification represents an "over-realised eschatology" and also argues that this outlook requires a particular ecclesial structure that undervalues the local church.[99] Douglas Farrow supports Zizioulas's argument for the "decisive importance" of the Eucharist based on a study of the Ascension.[100] He develops an understanding of the nature of Christology informed by the story and metaphor of the ascension. This he brings this into dialogue with understandings of the Eucharist, although for the purposes of this project his lack of interaction with mission issues and subordination of the Spirit to Christ limit his contribution.[101] For those traditions that emphasise the Eucharist it would be possible to develop an ecclesiology along the lines developed here, but taking Eucharist rather than Spirit baptism as the vital mark of the church. This would provide an adequate grounding for the Eucharistic nature of the church that addresses some of Volf's critiques if not going as far as Zizioulas would like. It is such an approach that Inge seems to be pointing towards in his understanding of the Eucharist as a "locus" for finding God and as bringing past, present and future together within churches as shrines.[102] For him the church "is

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[98]Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 21.
[99]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 101–102,107–116.
[100]Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 1–4.
[101]For a critique of Farrow's understanding of Jesus' eucharistic presence see Andrew Burgess, *The Ascension in Karl Barth*, Barth Studies (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).
[102]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 82,105–110.

most itself when it is a place of Eucharistic celebration."[103] Such an approach is not appropriate for a pentecostal ecclesiology within which Eucharist is shaped by Spirit baptism and not the other way round. Within a pentecostal ecclesiology, through Spirit baptism we can experience God's grace by his Spirit; we find ourselves drawn to Christ and moved on in the Christian life; we discover a missionary urgency; and we are oriented more towards the eschatological kingdom. As Macchia suggests, the Eucharist can deepen the spiritual experience found in revivals and open people up to "deeper experiences of divine infilling."[104] The Eucharist can reinforce or deepen the effects of Spirit baptism through the ways it mediates God's grace; it draws us to confess Jesus as Lord; and it orients us to the kingdom that is past, present and future.

A danger of seeing the church marked by Spirit baptism is that it may be assumed that we are claiming an ever increasing pentecostal church – a variation on the triumphalistic universality mentioned earlier. This can seem the case from the development of many pentecostal strategies for such universal growth.[105] Yet it is important to see that Spirit baptism is about God's action in our weakness, here rooted in the fallibilistic methodology adopted. David Smith argues that as regards universal expansion, the church in the West is being deeply challenged to face its weakness in the face of decline.[106] As we see in the New Testament, the church is always under judgment and in need of repentance and obedience if it is to continue. Thus the "possibility of decline and loss are written into the story."[107] Andrew Walls, reviewing the history of mission, notes how the expansion of Christianity has a "built-in fragility" and so the expansion involves "advance and recession, not irreversible progress."[108] He speaks of how such a "vulnerability is engraved into the Christian

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[103]Ibid., 106.
[104]Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 254.
[105]For a now dated review see Todd M. Johnson, *Global Plans in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Tradition: And the Challenge of the Unevangelized World*, in *Pentecost, Mission and Ecumenism*, ed. Jan A.B. Jongeneel (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992).
[106]David Smith, "Understanding Europe: Belief and Unbelief on Our Continent," *ANVIL* 25, no. 1 (2008): 45–52.
[107]Ibid., 46.
[108]Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (New York: Orbis; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002), 26.

foundational documents themselves," particularly the Pauline letters.[109] Walls sees this fragility resulting in part from the translating nature of Christian faith – faith is expressed through different cultural contexts, rather than being imposed upon them. This is both a vulnerability, in that the church can decline, and yet a strength, in that cultural imperialism is challenged and Christian faith can keep advancing in new places.[110] Pentecostal history reflects both the rapid advance of Christian faith and a contextual nature that contains in it the possibility of decline. Martin, in his global review of pentecostalism, concludes that pentecostalism is rooted in the weak and grows "from below" often unnoticed by media and the academy, despite its global reach.[111] There is a universal impulse to pentecostalism but not a triumphant one. It is an impulse never without vulnerability and the need for dependence on God.

5.4 Movements towards Unity

At the heart of discussions about the unity of the church is the relationship between the local and the global, the one and the many, the particular and the universal. Volf points out that there are tendencies towards "universalization... and pluralization," towards emphasising either the local or the global when what is required is an ecclesiology that embraces both.[112] Above we commented on how similar questions are raised in philosophy and in understanding pentecostal identity, and the issue is *how* we are to hold together the local and the global. Volf resolves this issue through an ecclesiology rooted in local fellowships of faith, yet also by emphasising an eschatological (future) global unity. The link between the local and the global is through a present "openness" in churches to look (and hopefully move) towards the global: "The minimal requirement for catholicity with regard to relations between the churches is the *openness* of each church to all other churches... A church cannot reflect the eschatological

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[109]Ibid., 29.
[110]On the surprising challenge of mission to imperialism see Walls, *Cross-Cultural Process*, 42. On the wider issues see Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: IVP, 1990).
[111]Martin, *Pentecostalism*, 167.
[112]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 259.

catholicity of the entire people of God and at the same time isolate itself from other churches."[113] A church open "to other churches should lead to a free networking with those churches" otherwise it would be a "*poor* catholic church," yet Volf avoids saying such a movement towards networking is of the *esse* of church.[114] His argument is that for a Christian person to be a "catholic person" they must move towards others to form local church communities.[115] He distinguishes his Free Church approach from Roman Catholic and Orthodox approaches that apply such an understanding to churches and not just persons.[116] He roots his argument in the historical understandings of the different church traditions, and in doing so extends the common Free Church understanding towards a positive appreciation of catholicity.[117] In different ways I have suggested that despite this, the limits he places on catholicity are not sufficient to our approach that is rooted in mission. Pertinent questions are: how can churches remain open to others without moving towards them in some way? does not a local church approach, tempered by openness, still lead to a static view of church rather than seeing churches as part of mission movements? is it not possible that in the same way people must move outwards into community, communities must move outwards to connect with other communities? and how are the historical realities of mission societies to be positively appreciated within a Free Church setting (within which many of them originated)?

Such questions point to limitations in Volf's approach, and perhaps Free Church approaches more generally. Yet we need to move beyond a critique to find an approach more in line with the argument of this project, and for this I want to return to Congar's understanding of catholicity. As Aidan Nichols suggests, there is "no one Congarian ecclesiology" and yet there are "characteristic concerns" that can be seen developing through his work.[118] In 1939 Congar published *Divided Christendom* seen by many as "his extremely

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[113]Ibid., 275.
[114]Ibid.
[115]Ibid., 280–82.
[116]Ibid., 274–75.
[117]Ibid., 259–64.
[118]Nichols, *Yves Congar*, 52.

influential classic work."[119] This emphasised the link between the "oneness of Church" and the "oneness of God," speaking of a model of "unity in polarity" with the unity of the Church coming "from above," from the one God.[120] This does tend to imply a rather static nature to catholicity and to God, yet as James Bacik notes it was a view articulated in contrast to what he saw as the overly human-focused ecumenical movement of the time.[121] Congar speaks of the church as one family sharing in the divine life but makes little of mission and movement. Yet he does speak of the church as an "organism" in contrast to the overly "hierarchical" focus of the Roman Catholic church over previous centuries.[122] In a similar way, Rahner was later to speak of a "mutual relationship of dependence" between the charismatic and institutional elements of the church.[123] Congar's use of the term organism implies the need to let God's life flow into the church and he uses the term "sacrament" to describe the manifold means by which this life can flow.[124] This life involves growth and hence catholicity is seen in terms of "dynamic universality" even if this dynamism is initially not well explored.[125]

This central dynamic of life that is central to catholicity was developed by Congar over the years as he increasingly appreciated the work of the Holy Spirit.[126] Looking back, Congar felt that in 1939 he had not properly appreciated the "missionary dynamism" underlying the ecumenical movement.[127] And so by 1950 Congar was speaking of the Spirit as "the living master of the impulse" towards unity.[128] Catholicity is dynamic, moved by the Spirit to bring life to the church through a growth in love that cannot but converge upon unity. Congar reflected that "ecumenism really is a *movement*," a movement of mission that springs from the Spirit.[129] Here it is interesting to contrast this approach with Rahner who presumes a

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[119]James J. Bacik, *Contemporary Theologians* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1989), 38.
[120]Congar, *Divided Christendom*, 48,58–59.
[121]Bacik, *Contemporary Theologians*, 120.
[122]Congar, *Divided Christendom*, 32–33.
[123]Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations, Vol. 5: Later Writings* (London: DLT, 1966), 260.
[124]Congar, *Divided Christendom*, 85–87.
[125]Ibid., 98.
[126]Nichols notes how Congar's ecclesiology became more pneumatological as he got older, *Yves Congar*, 61.
[127]Yves Congar, *Dialogue Between Christians* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), 36.
[128]Ibid., 102.
[129]Ibid., 47.

"missionary zeal" but focuses on "God's universal salvific will" that leads him to conclude the presence of "anonymous Christians" outside the church.[130] Here lies much debate, but for our argument the contrast between Rahner and Congar highlights the latter's distinctive emphasis on a Spirit movement and a greater engagement with the ecumenical movement.[131]

It is widely acknowledged that Congar had a "decisive influence" on the thinking of Vatican II, although tracing exact links between his thinking and that of the Council documents is nearly impossible.[132] In our present context, we might reflect on themes in *Lumen Gentium* on the nature of the church. This starts with an affirmation that "Christ is the light of the nations" and speaks of the "universal mission of the Church."[133] The work of the Holy Spirit links the universal Church with the unity of the Trinity.[134] By the Spirit the church is on a pilgrimage, ever moving on in a universal and eschatological direction.[135] This report starts with the people of God and then moves on to consider its "hierarchical constitution," a significant shift from earlier Roman Catholic thinking that points to the mission of all before examining particular ministries within the church.

Congar's major work on the Holy Spirit (originally published in 1979-80) speaks of the Spirit as bringing about unity in the Body.[136] He notes how important it is that the Spirit is seen as personal, which implies that catholic mission movements are also personal – comprised of people responding to a vocation and sent by God. Indeed Congar himself is seen as "a man of ecumenical virtue" who in himself saw a vocation of catholicity that inspired his life work.[137] This requires a "committed-openness" as Bacik notes, yet also a movement

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[130]Rahner, *Theological Investigations 5*, 339,356; Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations, Vol. 6: Concerning Vatican Council II* (London: DLT, 1969), 391.
[131]For some of the debate see J.A. Di Noia, "Karl Rahner," in *The Modern Theologians*, ed. David F. Ford (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 130–31; Geffrey B. Kelly, *Karl Rahner: Theologian of the Graced Search for Meaning* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 255.
[132]Fergus Kerr, "French Theology: Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac," in *The Modern Theologians*, ed. David F. Ford (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 116.
[133]Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Lumen Gentium*: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1965), 5.
[134]Ibid., 6–7.
[135]Ibid., 70–71.
[136]Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, II*, 15.
[137]Bacik, *Contemporary Theologians*, 42; Congar, *Dialogue*, 2–3.

towards finding ways beyond the obstacles that prevent unity.[138] Congar speaks of "active patience" that keeps him moving forwards, despite the obstacles that were placed in front of him by his own church.[139] The catholicity of the church is understood in terms of Pentecost which gives the church a "vocation to universality" as the Spirit "thrusts the gospel forward into the period of history that has not yet come."[140] This resonates with the Protestant emphasis on the church as a "called community" as Thomas Oden emphasises in his ecclesiology.[141] The church is "called out" and "called together" by Jesus, the "Calling One." It is also "called to" mission as pentecostals would emphasise.[142]

This movement of the Spirit, entered into personally, is seen by Congar to stimulate diversity.[143] Catholicity is a movement that aims at a "communion," a coming together as one, a unity that can only exist through diversity. Such diversity is rooted, for Congar, in a pneumatological anthropology – an understanding of people who are by the Spirit diverse and yet also called to come together in communion. Diversity is a characteristic of humanity brought to life by the Spirit, with each person unique in bearing the divine image.[144] This diversity is never separate from the relatedness that is also a characteristic of the divine image and points to the interrelated nature of the universe in ways that draw us onwards in communion.[145] It may be asked whether there are limits to this diversity and whether we are proposing pluralism without limits. Whilst Congar increasingly stresses diversity, he also repeatedly returns to the theme of the apostolic nature of movements of catholicity. This, naturally for a Roman Catholic, has a focus on the apostles and Peter in particular and so, in 1939, he speaks of the "universality of divine truth of the faith handed down by apostolic

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[138]Bacik, *Contemporary Theologians*, 43.
[139]Congar, *Dialogue*, 44–45.
[140]Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, II*, 25,34.
[141]Thomas C. Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, Systematic Theology, vol. 3 (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 270–74.
[142]See Vondey, "Pentecostal Perspectives," 1. Oden only mentions mission in passing and so his work is not utilised more here.
[143]Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, II*, 17.
[144]Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 90–91.
[145]Ibid., 91–92.

magisterium."[146] In 1950 he wrestles with how churches out of communion with "the Petrine, apostolic fonthead" can be churches and concludes that more work is needed in this regard.[147] Of course, central to apostolicity is Christ and Congar has always noted that however much diversity there is, catholicity is still shaped by Trinitarian and Christological faith.[148] Nichols picks up from elsewhere Congar's use of the term "apostolic organism" to describe Christ.[149] Later Congar emphasises the work of the Holy Spirit in ensuring that "the Church will be faithful to the faith of the apostles."[150] This work relies on Christ and the Scriptures leading to a different way into the "living tradition of the whole church."[151] Apostolic faithfulness then becomes dependent upon the faithfulness of God, rather than starting with the Petrine office.[152] Reviewing early church history, Congar questions the idea of the "undivided church" as apostolic succession alone was not a sufficient measure of apostolic unity.[153] From our point of view, this apostolic focus on Christ links better with the trinitarian essence developed earlier within which the working of the Son can be seen as ensuring the apostolicity of the church. Such apostolicity naturally gives rise to the movements that communicate Christ to those who have not heard – the apostolic function that Alan Johnson urges pentecostals to recover.[154]

Congar moves from this understanding to a recognition of the eschatological aspect of apostolicity, our coming before Christ when he comes again.[155] The movement of the Spirit towards this eschatological end is one of mission alongside Christ. Such an eschatological outlook both enables a clear focus on Christ *and* a diversity of expression. In this Congar develops Thomas Aquinas in speaking of the "gap" between "our truest expressions and the

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[146]Congar, *Divided Christendom*, 98, cf. 73.
[147]Congar, *Dialogue*, 205–7.
[148]For example, Congar, *Divided Christendom*, 95.
[149]Aidan Nichols, *Yves Congar* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), 57–58; Yves Congar, *This Church That I Love* (Denville: Dimension Books, 1969), 45.
[150]Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, II*, 27.
[151]Ibid., 28.
[152]Ibid., 39.
[153]Congar, *Diversity and Communion*, 19–22.
[154]Alan R. Johnson, "Apostolic Function."
[155]Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit, II*, 39–40.

reality towards which they strive" that "allows for a plurality of expressions."[156] Such a movement is one from partial unity (through diversity) towards full unity in diversity. As Bacik summarises, for Congar "the limited unity already given at Pentecost will achieve its perfection only at the end of time, as a gift from God."[157] This perfection, as Nichols comments, is for Congar linked with the "consummation in God of all his visible creation."[158] It is salvation, a gift from God that communicates through people a life that is the goal of creation.[159] There is much here that resonates with the understanding of mission being used in this project and helps us better understand how mission and the church maintain a distinctively Christian character whilst inevitably developing diversity.

However, having utilised Congar's insights into catholicity within the framework of this project I am not suggesting that all of his thinking is suitable within a pentecostal ecclesiology. Amos Yong, in a review of Congar's *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, challenges Congar's emphasis on the Pope and apostolic succession and wants instead a more bottom-up approach rooted in the charisms of the Spirit and the ministry of reconciliation.[160] He also struggles with how best to approach the question of apostolicity in a pentecostal way that does not neglect the valid structural questions that Roman Catholics raise. Yong leaves an answer to these thoughts undeveloped, although I have argued that the elements of such an approach already exist within Congar's wider writings. Ultimately, Congar argues for a form of "re-reception" of different churches within one catholic church by a process of reconciliation wherein different dogmatic understandings of Christian faith are addressed.[161] The lengthy dialogue between the Roman Catholic church and pentecostal scholars' points to the importance of such reconciliation, although it needs to be placed alongside questions of experiences of the Spirit and appreciations of Christ and the Scriptures – Community, Spirit

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[156]Congar, *Diversity and Communion*, 169.
[157]Bacik, *Contemporary Theologians*, 39.
[158]Nichols, *Yves Congar*, 58.
[159]Nichols, *Yves Congar*, 58. Here Congar picks up some of the thinking of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.
[160]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 135–39.
[161]Congar, *Diversity and Communion*, 171–77.

and Word need to be all considered.[162] This is a much wider question beyond the aims of this project, but it is important to note the essential question being posed here: what is the visible outworking of such a dynamic apostolic catholicity, given the theological understanding we have been developing? and if not a structural union within the Roman Catholic church, then what? One answer is to point to the flexible understanding of networks that we developed in the last chapter. To this we now need to ensure a visible way of representing such a dynamic catholicity and the next chapter will seek to do this through partnership.

This study of Congar enables us to see that catholicity must be dynamic and not just be about a common essence. Further, this study has shown us the character of such a movement in theological terms. This is to say, building on our understanding of the *esse* of the church, that the Father moves the church by a catholic movement of the Spirit characterised by the apostolic gospel of the Son. In terms of our methodology it is important that Community, Spirit and Word are all kept distinct yet interrelated in order to keep both movement and essence. Thus, against Volf, I have argued that openness is not sufficient to adequately relate the local and the global in the present from the point of view of mission, of ecumenical catholicity and in relation to the methodology employed here. Yet, with Volf, there is a shared concern for Christ and a pluriform faith which is here linked with the apostolic nature of the church in its movements of catholicity. There are also shared trinitarian concerns for individuals and communities although our methodological approach to the question of church structures differs. Volf's argument is shaped at this point around the ecumenical issue of "offices," ordination and episcopal offices in particular. These are vital to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox ecclesiologies he is considering and it is in this light that he considers issues of catholicity.[163] However, the approach here involves different dialogue partners and the issue

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[162]For aspects of this dialogue relevant to the present discussion see Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Trinity as Communion in the Spirit: Koinonia, Trinity, and Filioque in the Roman Catholic–Pentecostal Dialogue," *PNEUMA* 22, no. 2 (2000): 209–30. For a summary of some of the agreements and differences in ecclesiology that came from the dialogue see Jerry L. Sandidge, *Roman Catholic / Pentecostal Dialogue (1977–1982): A Study in Developing Ecumenism*, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity, vol. 44 (Frankfurt: Verlag Peter Lang, 1987), 261–68.
[163]See the development of Volf's argument in *After Our Likeness*, Chapters 6 and 7.

of "office" is not determining our approach and will follow from the argument developed, as we shall comment on in the next chapter.[164] Pentecostal ecclesiology has perhaps less concern for particular offices given its emphasis on the ministry of all and the variety of ecclesiologies adopted.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has been concerned with addressing questions regarding the catholicity of the network church developed in the last chapter. The flexibility of networks require an approach to catholicity that is not tied to existing structures of denominations or local churches, but rather one that can be applied to a variety of situations. I have proposed an approach that sees catholicity in terms of both a shared trinitarian essence and an outwards movement. This represents a new, more detailed trinitarian pentecostal approach to the nature of the church. Catholicity has both inner, theological, spiritual elements and outer, visible, concrete expressions and this has been expressed through the development of a pentecostal approach to sacramental events. The approach suggested receives a natural pentecostal focus through a metaphorical understanding of Spirit baptism. Such an understanding is new and might provide a different way into a pentecostal and sacramental understanding of the church, although more could be said about the sacramental nature of local church and network life. Often catholicity is seen in static terms whereas the influence of mission necessitates a more dynamic approach here. Drawing on the work of Congar I have suggested catholicity be also seen in terms of a "dynamic universality." Having outlined this in mainly theological terms it is important now to consider how this might be worked out in concrete terms. The next chapter addresses this in terms of the mission theme of partnership.

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[164]Section 6.3

Chapter 6

NETWORK PARTNERSHIP

The last two chapters examined networks, trinitarian concerns and suggested approaches to catholicity based on a common essence and dynamic mission movements. The sacramental nature of the church and its marking by Spirit baptism arose out of the aspects of a common catholicity of *esse*. We now turn to the concrete outworking of the dynamic approach to catholicity. In addressing questions of how a church or network grows pentecostals tend to point to individual evangelism and community church planting as the main practices. Whilst these are vital, our argument so far raises the question of how such growth links with the catholicity of the church. Rather than go over existing studies on evangelism and church planting I here want to provide a fresh contribution based on the theme of *partnership* that has been key in mission thinking. Pentecostals have been challenged by Chris Sugden to think further on partnership but have been slow to pick up the challenge.[1] The argument here is that networks are characterised by partnerships which enable a dynamic catholic movement in mission. This is a relational rather than hierarchical approach to catholicity but one in which relations go beyond local congregations.[2]

Andrew Kirk notes that in mission partnership has become fashionable and as a theme embraces many ideas.[3] In terms of this project we are interested in partnership as a way of understanding relationships between churches and networks for the purpose of mission – in this relationship and mission are central, as is a pentecostal dialogue with these themes. Of course, other approaches are possible and there is a wealth of possible sources for reflection – in terms of trinitarian theology, David Cunningham has noted the "common focal-point" for

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[1]Christopher Sugden, "International Partnership in Mission: New Testament Reflections," *PNEUMA* 16, no. 2 (1994): 289–91.
[2]On the importance of relational approaches in our current context see Michael McCoy, "'Community': A Postmodern Mission Paradigm?" *JAS* 1, no. 1 (2003): 31–45.
[3]Kirk, *Mission*, 184.

most recent work "is that of relationality and mutuality," two important themes in partnership.[4] Yet our aims and methodology suggest that here it is important to focus on discerning the Spirit of partnership in pentecostal and mission practice and reflecting further on Luke-Acts. There is not space to explore the limited material on a theology of partnership but in developing network church discerned experience and biblical reflections are key.[5] Hence this chapter first turns to a discernment of the Spirit in the mission practice of both pentecostals and the wider ecumenical community. As there has been little pentecostal reflection on the theme of partnership more space is inevitably given in this chapter to hear the voices that reflect on this theme from outside the pentecostal tradition than is the case for other chapters – the influence of mission is more prominent here. Discerning partnership will naturally force us back to Scripture to re-examine Luke-Acts in the light of these discussions. Finally, the themes explored are drawn together into an understanding of networks.

6.1 Discerning the Spirit in Movements of Partnership

I have suggested we explore how partnership contributes to the network ecclesiology being developed here and it starts with a discernment of the partnership theme that has been prominent throughout this last century. A consideration of partnership has been neglected within pentecostal studies and so this represents a new contribution to pentecostal ecclesiology generally. Yet within wider studies it may be argued that the terminology is beginning to change as the term partnership is being used more widely. As we will see, its Christian mission origins lie in the broad question of how churches and agencies are to relate across nations in the world. Since the 1990s the term has tended to become more focussed on specific partnership agreements where a number of churches or agencies agree to work together for particular aims in mission. Thus, for example, within the Anglican communion

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[4]Cunningham, "Trinitarian Theology Since 1990," 8.
[5]Significant theological reflection has been undertaken by General Secretaries of the Church Mission Society (CMS) for which see Max Warren, *Partnership: The Study of an Idea* (London: SCM, 1956); John V. Taylor, *The Uncancelled Mandate*, Board of Mission Occasional Papers, no. 8 (London: Church House Publishing, 1998); Simon Barrington-Ward, *Love Will Out* (Basingstoke: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1988).

the 1990s began a time of wanting to value specific partnerships yet find a new term that embraced the "quality of broad relationship" that was previously associated with the term partnership.[6] The term "companionship" was settled on for this understanding of "equals taking part in a journey together, supporting, encouraging, communicating, breaking bread and being together."[7] There are then developed "companionship links" between churches that link local and global mission. It might be argued that although new within pentecostal circles, a term other than partnership should be used for an ecclesiology in a new century. However, the term partnership remains used in ecumenical literature, for example in the 1997 Dictionary of Mission, and as referring to relationships in mission in the 2004 history of the ecumenical movement, and in describing relationships between churches round the world in the 2007 evangelical dictionary of mission theology.[8] Admittedly, the history of the ecumenical movement uses a variety of terminology in exploring the theme of relationships between churches – such as dialogue, co-operation, fellowship, *koinonia* and shared responsibilities.[9] Also, the recent WCC report on *The Nature and Mission of the Church* only mentions partnership in passing.[10] From another point of view it may be suggested that partnership is an ideology shaped by post-colonial guilt and as such needs to be transcended. However, maintaining the term partnership means that the heritage of reflection on this theme is not lost and brought freshly into dialogue with pentecostal thinking. It also allows us to proceed with a single term that covers both particular and more general understandings at a time when there is no wider agreement on replacement terminology.

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[6]Eleanor Johnson and John Clark, eds, *Anglicans in Mission: A Transforming Journey; Report of MISSIO 1999* (London: SPCK, 2000), 80.
[7]Ibid.
[8]Gustav Menzel and Karl Müller, "Partnership in Mission," in *Dictionary of Mission*, ed. Karl Müller, et al. (New York: Orbis Books, 1997), 339–43; Birgitta Larsson and Emilio Castro, "From Missions to Mission," in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, Volume 3: 1968–2000*, ed. John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, and Georges Tsetsis (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), 142–44; Samuel Cueva, "Partnership," in *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations*, ed. John Corrie (Nottingham: IVP, 2007), 273–75.
[9]John Briggs, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, and Georges Tsetsis, eds., *A History of the Ecumenical Movement. Volume 3, 1968–2000* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004), 42–44,86,93–94,665.
[10]WCC, *Nature and Mission*, 31.

6.1.1 Partnership within Pentecostalism

Discerning the Spirit promptings of partnership in pentecostal mission is itself worthy of significant study, but here the more limited aim is to see that traces of partnership can be seen within early pentecostal history. As the term as we are using it was not understood as such in early pentecostalism it is important to look for the coming together of the themes of relationship, togetherness, mission and unity. We will do this in the early *Apostolic Faith* journals that came out of Azusa Street which form an important marker in pentecostal identity, and through a reflection on the creation of the first pentecostal missionary society, the *Pentecostal Missionary Union* that is narrated in *Confidence*, the influential pentecostal journal that was edited by Alexander Boddy in Sunderland, UK. Having surveyed in general the theme of partnership in places where the term itself is not used, it is important to examine somewhere it has been used – for this the *Evangel* journal of the Assemblies of God has been chosen because of its early date.

Turning first to *Apostolic Faith* a main theme is that of people receiving their "personal Pentecost," their Spirit baptism, narrated through letters printed in each issue. The pre-requisite for this was a coming together of people in unity, as it was before the first Pentecost: "If God can get a people anywhere in one accord and in one place, of one heart, mind, and soul, believing for this great power, it will fall and Pentecostal results will follow."[11] This is also linked with Jesus' prayer in John 17, "O, how my heart cries out to God in these days that He would make every child of His see the necessity of living in the 17th chapter of John, that we may be one in the body of Christ, as Jesus has prayed."[12] As another writer puts it "There must be one accord and one purpose in order that the Spirit may have a clear channel."[13] There is a coming together to receive a Pentecost which then results in a fresh togetherness, the "spirit of unity, love and power is manifest."[14] When the question is put as to what is the

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[11]*Apostolic Faith* 13, 1908, p.18. *Apostolic Faith (AF)* page numbers quoted here come from the electronic edition published by the Revival Library – http://www.revival-library.org.
[12]*AF 13, p.18*
[13]*AF 13, p.33*
[14]*AF 6, 1907, p.3*

"real evidence that a man or woman has received the baptism with the Holy Ghost" the answer is clear: "Divine love, which is charity."[15] This is expanded to name all the "fruits of the Spirit" from Galatians 5:22 which take precedence over the "outward manifestations" despite the important nature of these.[16] As other writers put it, the "sweetest thing of all is the loving harmony" and the "fire of love in my heart."[17] Hence the experience is not about creating "a new sect or denomination" but rather creates a belief "in unity with Christ's people everywhere."[18]

This creation of loving, harmonious relationships is not without its challenges – it is a unity "in the Word of God."[19] For pentecostals "stand on Bible truth without compromise" at the same time as recognising that "every man that honors the blood of Jesus Christ to be our brother, regardless of denomination, creed, or doctrine."[20] Out of this coming together around a valuing of Scripture comes an evangelistic mission of love and truth, linked with the character and work of the Holy Spirit.[21] As one writer put it, this "is a time as never before when the baptized saints are scattering abroad everywhere preaching the Word. They have gone out from Los Angeles far and near, carrying the sweet message that the Comforter has come."[22] From the start this included a valuing of the people the missionaries went to work amongst and indeed many missionaries had been such for years before their personal Pentecost. As one said in the first issue of *AF*, "Often tears fill my eyes, as I think of their simplicity and kindness to us, in the years of our residence among them."[23] The vital theme in both personal experience and evangelistic ministry was the togetherness in love, as Jacobsen also notes from his study of early pentecostalism.[24]

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[15]*AF* 11, 1908, p.11
[16]see also *AF* 12, 1908, p.26
[17]*AF* 3, 1906, p.4, 35
[18]*AF* 11, 1908, p.13
[19]*AF* 11, 1908, p.13
[20]*AF* 4, 1906, p.3-4
[21]*AF* 13, 1908, p.13
[22]*AF* 10, 1907, p.2
[23]*AF* 1, 1906, p.16. Brother S.J. Mead, "a missionary to Africa"
[24]Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 79.

This togetherness (or partnership in our terms) in love was also seen in terms of the biblical image of the marriage between Christ and His church – "We are married to Christ now in the Spirit (Rom. 7:2-4)" once we have received the baptism in the Spirit.[25] To put it another way, "When Christ is in you, He is married to you in spirit. He calls you, 'My love and My dove'... O how sweet it is You would not depart from this husband of your soul for anything."[26] Practically, this togetherness or partnership was seen in experiences of Spirit baptism and the following practices of going in mission and coming back to Azusa for annual camp meetings. Leaders' spoke of God's leading in forming such camp meetings in these terms: "God has just awakened and said: 'Get up and write. My people must be called together. I have called this mighty camp meeting that I might get a chance to speak to My people. I am coming soon and I have great things to show them.'"[27] This sense of being together with God and with one another was also the reason for the journal in the first place. The hope was that "Hundreds of workers and missionaries will be represented in it" and through reading the journal people would be encouraged to see themselves as part of a family together encountering God afresh and spreading his message across the world.[28] Even when pentecostals were separated, through the journal they could "be united together in prayer."[29]

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the influence of *Apostolic Faith* spread to a Church of England minister, Alexander Boddy, in Sunderland during 1906-7.[30] He began the journal *Confidence* and the first edition picked up on the theme of love already mentioned, seeing "*Love* as being the great result of 'Pentecost.'"[31] In January of 1909 the Pentecostal Missionary Union (PMU) was formed and was clearly seen as an organisation that worked alongside "Pentecostal Centres" to encourage and enable pentecostal mission rather than

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[25]*AF* 13, 1908, p.34
[26]*AF* 10, 1907, p.9
[27]*AF* 8, 1907, p.18
[28]*AF* 1, 1906, p.31
[29]*AF* 3, 1906, p.10
[30]Gavin Wakefield, *Alexander Boddy: Pentecostal Anglican Pioneer* (London: Paternoster, 2007), 80–84.
[31]*Confidence* 1(1), 1908, 16. The edition of *Confidence* referred to is that produced by *The Revival Library* – http://www.revival-library.org/acatalog/pentcoll.html

something that would become another church.[32] The first two missionaries, Miss James and Miss Miller, sailed for Bombay in March 1909. Miss James started by working alongside the local Indian mission and revival leader Pandita Ramabai, in Mukti.[33] A revival with Spirit baptism occurred at Mukti in 1905, prior to Azusa Street and we can reasonably conclude that there was at least a more equal working together between Miss James and Ramabai rather than Miss James bringing a Pentecost to Mukti.[34] Indeed it seems that Miss James arrived as a missionary dependent upon Ramabai for language study until she left in August 1910 and so partnership would have been essential.[35] Miss Miller went to work alongside Maud Orlebar and here there was more of a divide between missionary and "native" with talk of the "native Christians... hungry for God" and later praising the "splendid native workers."[36]

Early pentecostal mission thus embraced a Pentecost of love that resulted in missionaries travelling across the world to work alongside others. Admittedly, some of this togetherness or partnership was skewed but the experience of the first two missionaries suggests that it could be skewed either in favour of the missionary or the local Christians. The PMU was particularly influenced by Boddy who had "restless feet" and a desire to build relationships that spanned the world prior to his experience of Pentecost.[37] His travelling ministry continued as did his letter writing and editing of *Confidence* until 1926 and he had a remarkable ability to sustain relationships and grow a network of people who shared a common experience and desire for mission.[38] In a trip to America in 1912 he commented that: "The theme which the Lord brought me back to each time ere I closed my addresses, was the hope that the sad divisions among Pentecostal people here in the United States, and especially in Los Angeles, would be healed up by a Baptism of Love."[39] This brief survey of early

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[32]*Confidence* 2(8), 1909, 175

[33]*Confidence* 2(3), 1909, 75

[34]On Pandita Ramabai see Edith L. Blumhofer, "Consuming Fire: Pandita Ramabai and the Global Pentecostal Impulse," in *Interpreting Global Christianity*, ed. Ogbu U. Kalu, associate editor Alaine Low (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008), 207–37.

[35]See *Confidence* 3(5), 1910, 119 and *Confidence* 3(8), 1910, 198

[36]*Confidence* 2(9), 1909, 210; *Confidence* 3(2), 1910, 43

[37]Wakefield, *Alexander Boddy*, 34–54.

[38]Ibid., 138,144.

[39]*Confidence* 5(11), 1912

pentecostal mission illustrates the importance of a loving togetherness in mission, which more recently has come under the term partnership. Although this term is not in the earliest literature, it was used from 1911 by writers of the journal *Evangel* (Assemblies of God) and we turn to this next.

In *Evangel* we see explicit use of the term "partnership" to describe writers experience and understanding of the Spirit's work.[40] In 1911 Minnie Abrams spoke of how through Spirit baptism God "is taking us into partnership with Himself in the salvation of the world."[41] In 1917 E.N. Bell wrote on "Divine partnership" in terms of our working together with God: "What a great partner God's workers have! He has all the wisdom we need to run the firm; He is able to finance the firm, give it life and strength... He graciously condescends to be our partner, with all His wisdom and wealth."[42] In a 1917 article, reprinted in 1933 and 1939, Samuel Jamieson wrote on "Partnership with God" in terms of being "labourers together" with God (cf. 1 Cor. 3:9).[43] He says how we "need to realize the great truth set before here. All through the Scriptures we see that God has planned to have the co-operation and co-partnership of man with Himself in great program."[44] Jamieson sets forth biblical and contemporary examples of how this is seen in practice, holding together the big vision of mission with our small everyday contributions to this: "God wants your co-operation in this business of getting a great harvest for Himself"; yet this is seen in the small "seeds" we pass on, for "God has to have our co-operation in planting the seed."[45] So the Christian who preaches a sermon, passes on a tract, shares a word to those anxious or serves a Sunday School is a partner with God in a great evangelistic harvest. Jamieson criticises other churches for not having this kind of partnership at the heart of their life together, for without such partnership "There is a form of worship without the power and demonstration of the Holy

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[40]For copies of this journal see http://www.ifphc.org
[41]Minnie Abrams, "The Object of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit," *The Latter Rain Evangel*, May 1911, 11.
[42]E.N. Bell, "Divine Partnership," *PE*, 3rd November 1917, 8.
[43]The text of the 1917 article is not available and here I'm quoting from the 1933 version, Samuel A. Jamieson, "Partnership with God," *PE*, 18th February 1933, 1,9.
[44]Jamieson, "Partnership with God," 1.
[45]Ibid., 9.

Ghost."[46] We are to be "coworkers" with a great God, "accepting His Word as true" and seeing the results. In 1938 J.H. Jowlett wrote of pentecostal partnership with missionaries that turns weakness into strength through prayer: "Apparent weaklings can be the companions of mighty warriors, by supporting them in prayer... We can, by prayer, liberate the powers of great men and women, and make them mighty masters of difficult circumstances."[47]

We thus discover traces within early pentecostalism of a God-centered partnership for mission that focuses on what we might call the vertical partnership between us and God. The horizontal partnership between churches came more to the fore in the 1950s and looking back the Assemblies of God speaks of how in this time "the change from paternalism to partnership led to dramatic church growth in many places."[48] They point to leaders such as Melvin Hodges who exerted a great influence in enabling an indigenous approach to pentecostal mission. Hodges did not use the term partnership when considering mission relationships and has more of a "three self" focus for his writing at that time.[49] However, his work is seen as key to pointing a way beyond paternalism in pentecostal mission practice and hence towards what would later be understood in terms of partnership.[50] Hodges discerns that to grow churches missionaries must aim for relationships of equality that expect the local Christians to be ultimately responsible for their church life and growth. For this to happen there needs to be the "New Testament power" of the Holy Spirit – the partnership between missionary and indigenous Christian needs the partnership between both and God.[51]

More recently, we can see Walter Hollenweger's pentecostal emphasis on intercultural theology as a way of working out partnership in theological settings. Lynne Price outlines how he sees mission in terms of intercultural theology, requiring "fully international participation"

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[46]Ibid.

[47]J.H. Jowlett, "Partnership Through Prayer," *PE*, 20th August 1938, 9.

[48]Flower Pentecostal Heritage Centre, "The Assemblies of God: Our Heritage in Perspective" (2008), Http://ifphc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=history.main [accessed 22nd July 2008].

[49]Hodges, *The Indigenous Church, 3rd Ed.*

[50]On Hodges contribution to overcoming paternalism see Gary B. McGee, "Hodges, Melvin Lyle," in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 723–24.

[51]This is my reading of Hodges, *The Indigenous Church, 3rd Ed.*, 131–34.

that allowed all voices, particularly those from the "'underside' of history" to speak.[52] Hollenweger sees the importance of context, the encouragement of voice from the margins and the bringing together of different views as important to facilitate "the expression of the universality of the church for the sake of a future which the world holds in common."[53] Such global interactions form a natural part of pentecostal vision and it is possible to discern other forms of partnership within such a vision. Sebastian Schüler argues that prayer chains form another vital link within the "everyday religious life linked to global Pentecostalism."[54] He places these within the context of research into transnationalism in cultural studies which often neglect religious aspects. Schüler argues that pentecostals work with "an imagined global community... represented in the image of a global family of God."[55] Relationships between churches are thus discerned in terms of prayer links – partnerships of sharing within a global vision.

Sugden argued that pentecostals tended to focus on mission using methodologies developed in the United States and growing churches within single cultural settings.[56] In contrast, he suggests that Paul argued in Romans for the vital importance of partnership across different cultures for the gospel and mission. Whilst we might agree that these are appropriate critiques we have seen that partnership *can* be discerned within pentecostal practice. The focus initially was on our "vertical" partnership with God in mission, as empowered by Spirit baptism and lived out in prayer. This developed with practices of "horizontal" partnership that take the context of the "other" seriously, seeking to be indigenous. This latter development overlaps with practices within the ecumenical movement which has devoted much to the practice and reflection on partnership. Hence it is important in the rest of this section to discern the insights God has given through this parallel movement whose overlaps with

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[52]Lynne Price, *Theology Out of Place: A Theological Biography of Walter J. Hollenweger* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 72–73.
[53]Ibid., 77.
[54]Sebastian Schüler, "Unmapped Territories: Discursive Networks and the Making of Transnational Religious Landscapes in Global Pentecostalism," *PentecoStudies* 7, no. 1 (2008): 50.
[55]Ibid., 48.
[56]Sugden, "International Partnership."

pentecostalism in terms of partnership have been limited.[57] Future sections will develop

further biblical reflections in ways that address the heart of Sugden's challenge.

6.1.2 Partnership within the Ecumenical Movement

The ecumenical movement is complex and world-wide and so discernment of any theme is

difficult. It was in the coming together of councils that the ecumenical movement's process of

discernment is most clearly seen. For our purposes a significant starting point is the research

project of John Brown to "survey the history of the ecumenical discussions on relationships in

mission" within which the theme of partnership is key.[58] Summarising his findings we can see

the significant themes that run through the last century of reflection and discernment. The

standard starting point for the ecumenical movement is in the 1910 Edinburgh conference

which concluded that "there were two major tasks needing to be undertaken: to persuade the

mission agencies to work together, and to develop relations of partnership with local

churches"[59] The differences between "younger" and "older" churches in partnerships was a

focus of debate and the 1921 IMC meeting at Lake Mohonk asked how was "the indigenous

character of the younger churches to be expressed."[60] Partnerships had tended to take the

character of the older partner at the expense of the younger and this needed addressing. In the

1928 meeting in Jerusalem the younger churches demanded action on better relationships,

emphasising the importance of the local church in the "unfinished task of evangelism."[61]

Positive partnership was seen as giving "greater hope of ultimate success" in this task as the

gifts of the world-wide church were pooled. This was emphasised again in 1938 in

Tambaram: "The notion of partnership was decisive. 'The unfinished evangelistic task is the

responsibility of the whole church and has the whole world as its field of action'... In the new

situation this task will have to be undertaken 'by a partnership between the older and the

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[57]Of course, other overlaps have been significant and the life and work of David du Plessis is notable here, Spittler, "Du Plessis" See also Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 39–51.
[58]John Brown, "International Relationships in Mission: A Study Project," *IRM* LXXXVI, no. 342 (1997): 207.
[59]Ibid., 210.
[60]Ibid.
[61]Ibid., 212.

younger churches, by a pooling of resources and by cooperation of all Christians'"[62] It was clear from experience that partnership in world evangelism needed to be rooted in the local, valuing the voice of those nearest the people amongst whom Jesus was to be shared.

The late 1940s and 1950s was a period of the development of new independent nation states in Asia and Africa, often after much struggle. And part of "this struggle for independence was the demand of the local churches for independence from mother-churches in the west."[63] The theme of the 1947 Whitby meeting was "Partners in Mission" emphasising the growth in mission amongst the younger churches. The final report also noted how the "growth in partnership arises partly out of human insights and adjustments, but its origin is in obedience to the living Word of God in Jesus Christ, and the continuing Word given by the Spirit. The force of opposition drives the churches to seek strength in unity and partnership. Further, the urgency of the opportunity pushes us towards cooperation."[64] Also given that partnerships were focussed on different mission tasks, the importance of partnership in setting policies was also raised. In the 1958 Ghana meeting K. Matthews, leading Bible studies on partnership from 1 Corinthians, said that "partnership required the churches to talk straight to one another," to seek reconciliation and realise that "our funds are not for our control" but God's.[65] The theme of God's prior working, the *missio Dei*, was given a new emphasis through this time. Partnership was seen within God's mission, rooted in Word and Spirit, in ways that overcame dependence and led to greater joint involvements in priorities as well as practices. The link between *missio Dei*, the churches and partnership was seen to be cemented in the integration of the International Missionary Council (IMC) within the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1961.

All this naturally led to a discerned need to focus on *equality* during the 1960s and 1970s. In Mexico City in 1961 it the call was "to move onwards to common planning and

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[62]Ibid., 213.
[63]Ibid.
[64]Ibid.
[65]Ibid., 214.

joint action."[66] Each church had an equal share in mission, focussed on its locality but also in sharing "its gifts for mission for the missionary task throughout the whole world."[67] The formation of the Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel (ESP) programme in the WCC in 1969 "saw its task as helping the churches to make a new start in new tasks, new relationships of genuine equality."[68] ESP was rooted theologically in an understanding of mission in terms of liberation and God's initiative to create "spirit-filled community, based on faith in Jesus Christ."[69] The difficulty of changing structures in order to create greater equality was seen by some as too great and this fed into discussions following the 1973 Bangkok assembly. Some of these focused on the need for a temporary moratorium on the "sending of personnel and funds as a useful tool in the service of mission."[70] It was felt this might break unequal power structures and enable local churches to better engage in mission locally. Brown summarises the results of the discussions at Bangkok that represent the discernment over many years in these terms:

> "home and foreign missions were not to be separated; mission is in six continents; mission is the responsibility of all churches; the local church has primary responsibility for mission in its area; all churches need the help of other churches in their mission work; the end of the westernization of the church – the churches have many identities; a moratorium is a valuable tool for mission in some places."[71]

The integration of the IMC into the WCC was not seen by all as a positive encouragement for mission, a notable challenge being posed by Max Warren. Warren's concern was that energy would henceforth be poured into maintaining an organisation of partnership rather than keeping partnership as a more organic way of mission.[72] It may be debated whether this resulted, but for our purposes we simply note the challenge partnership brings to church structures not initially designed with this in mind. This supports the need for an approach

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[66]Ibid., 216.
[67]Ibid., 215.
[68]Ibid., 217.
[69]Ibid., 220.
[70]Ibid., 218.
[71]Ibid., 219.
[72]On this see Max Warren, *Partnership*, Chapter 3; Max Warren, *Crowded Canvas*, 157 and also the discussion in F.W. Dillistone, *Into All the World: A Biography of Max Warren* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980), 121. For an alternative view see Newbigin, *Unfinished Agenda*, 142.

based on different structures such as the one being developed here with networks and partnership as essential components. It also points up the need to hold together not just the WCC developments that Brown chronicles but also the developments arising out of the evangelical movements from the 1970s onwards that disengaged once the IMC changed. Elsewhere I have outlined the pentecostal issues in the evangelical Lausanne movement, but here it is worth mentioning insights from the "Together in Mission" consultation in 1982, under the banner of the World Evangelical Fellowship.[73] Theodore Williams pointed to the costliness of partnership: "Togetherness is not a natural trait in human beings. By nature we are independent and individualistic. Togetherness is costly. It calls for a price. It is not an option—a 'take it or leave it' sort of thing. It is a *must*."[74] It is "of the Spirit" and yet must be "accepted as a commitment" if the world is to believe. George Peters picks up similar themes to those mentioned in WCC discussions: partnership in terms of "equality and mutuality."[75] In this he puts the theme of servanthood as central, a natural development from what he sees as the themes of devolution and fraternity. Lawrence Keyes sees such servant partnership as focused on specific purposes or tasks, rather than "specific theologies or experience," that demand "equal participation from *both* Western and non-Western alike."[76] Such purposes fall within the wider task of world evangelization, as Panya Baba argues, with mission more often seen in these terms than in terms of liberation. Baba also focuses on the character of the partner that is required to overcome the challenges of paternalism, inferiority and pride, summarising this in terms of the need for Christ centeredness rather than self centeredness.[77]

The theme of the kingdom of God was touched on through the 1980s in ecumenical circles, just as it was in different ways for pentecostals.[78] The 1980 Melbourne conference was

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[73]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 45–50.

[74]Theodore Williams, ed., *Together in Mission* (Bangalore: World Evangelical Fellowship, 1983), viii.

[75]George W. Peters, "Mission-Church Relationship," in *Together in Mission*, ed. Theodore Williams (Bangalore: World Evangelical Fellowship, 1983), 58.

[76]Lawrence E. Keyes, "New New Age of Cooperation," in *Together in Mission*, ed. Theodore Williams (Bangalore: World Evangelical Fellowship, 1983), 73.

[77]Panya Baba, "Models in Missionary Partnership," in *Together in Mission*, ed. Theodore Williams (Bangalore: World Evangelical Fellowship, 1983), 77–78.

[78]For pentecostals see my *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 27–31, 39–42.

entitled "Your kingdom come" and commented positively on the level of "mutuality in shared mission" that had now developed even if the "ecumenical sharing of resources" still needed much development.[79] How this sharing occurs with "the involvement of the marginalized in decision making as equal partners" was as a significant challenge of the El Escorial meeting in 1986. The San Antonia meeting in 1989 was entitled "Your will be done" and in addition to themes mentioned above pointed out the importance of the "recognition of cultural diversity as an enrichment," the overcoming of "ideologies and prejudices that lead to injustice" and the "promotion of a global vision of mission, in which the fullness of the reign of God is proclaimed."[80] Not all ecumenical scholars share a positive view of the kingdom theme given its inherent link with power, although it is a power framed in the New Testament around the Cross.[81] But here kingdom points to the links between partnership and justice for the marginalized.

The question of the marginalised is raised in a different way in the 1996 CWM review of partnership practice. Rather starkly it was discerned that the "practice of partnership in CWM tends to exclude many."[82] There seem two reasons for this: firstly, partnerships are formed between churches and communities within the CWM network and hence those outside the network (even if geographically very close to communities inside) are excluded; secondly, partnership requires resources, particularly financial, and so those seemingly without can be left out. In short, there was found a temptation for the CWM network to become "self-satisfied" and the challenge was to include the "broken and victimized humanity."[83] There is seen a need for "prophetic witness in places of strife, injustice and disharmony" through partnership.[84] CWM sees the "reign of God" as a vital theme in mission, witnessed to by good

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[79]Brown, "International Relationships," 222.
[80]Ibid., 223.
[81]For example, Kirsteen Kim's survey of ecumenical work on the Holy Spirit in mission avoids kingdom language, or translates it into Spirit language, *Holy Spirit*. This was confirmed in Kirsteen Kim, Personal Email, 12th February (2008) where I contrasted her approach to my close link between mission, the Holy Spirit and the kingdom of God.
[82]CWM, "'Perceiving Frontiers, Crossing Boundaries': Report of the Partnership in Mission Consultation of the Council for World Mission," *IRM* LXXXV, no. 337 (1996): 294.
[83]Ibid., 295.
[84]Ibid., 296.

sharing in partnership.[85] Its own work is as a network facilitator of member churches rather than an agency that engages in mission itself.

A different kind of question is raised by a discerned lack of partnership between churches in particular geographical locations: the question of *proselytism*. Monica Cooney is typical of those who argue that unity and mission are simply not possible where proselytism exists.[86] She argues for a "dialogue of love" between Christians, we might say an inter-church partnership of sharing that tackles different understandings of faith and witness. For her, the goal of mission is "God's plan of gathering all into unity" and hence any witness that seems to draw people out of one church into another goes against this.[87] Brown notes how pentecostals are particularly accused of proselytism, a "unilateral engagement in mission" that is "disrespectful to Christ and his body."[88] Thus, for example, the charismatic leader Peter Wagner argued that "mission may set as its priority the evangelization of a people group with or without the approval of the local body."[89] Brown does acknowledges the important energy, enthusiasm and resources that pentecostals bring to mission and the lack of ecumenical engagement with pentecostals.[90] In dialogue with Roman Catholics, some pentecostals have seen that the issue here is in different understandings of the church – between the importance of personal faith as opposed to structural belonging.[91] Pentecostals would want to stress the need for evangelism, whatever peoples assumed church background, yet there is a greater awareness of the need for common witness with other Christians wherever possible.[92]

Another way of framing the underlying question here is as whether our overall aim is mission *or* partnership? As Stanley Skreslet has suggested, there is a temptation to equate

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[85]Ibid., 294.

[86]Monica Cooney, "Towards Common Witness: A Call to Adopt Responsible Relationships in Mission and to Avoid Proselytism," *IRM* LXXXV (1996): 284.

[87]Ibid., 285.

[88]John Brown, "Some Questions on International Relationships in Mission," *IRM* LXXXVI, no. 343 (1997): 416.

[89]C. Peter Wagner, "Mission and Church in Four Worlds," in *Church/Mission Trends Today*, ed. C. Peter Wagner (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), 225.

[90]Brown, "Some Questions," 415.

[91]"Evangelism, Proselytism and Common Witness: The Report of the Fourth Phase of the International Dialogue 1990–1997 Between the Roman Catholic Church and Some Classical Pentecostal Churches," *Cyber* 4 (http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj4/rcpent97.html [accessed 22nd May 2008] 1997): 69.

[92]Ibid., 78–79.

partnership with mission and in doing so lose the heart of biblical mission.[93] Skreslet reviewed the particular strategy of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and suggested that in their key documents "partnership is put forward as the sole first-order category for theological reflection on Christian mission."[94] Hence activities in mission such as evangelism and social justice "are to be judged by how well they serve the higher strategic objective of partnership."[95] Skreslet argues that partnership is vital in mission in that it counters "attitudes that demean the core values of the Gospel," but must not replace that gospel.[96] There is a need to seek common mission understandings that can be shared, of sharing the gospel "in a spirit of partnership."[97] In response to Skreslet, Clifton Kirkpatrick agrees with this but puts partnership as "one of our most crucial tasks for faithfulness in mission in this generation."[98] It is possible to define mission as partnership and downplay other traditional aspects of mission. This can be done with positive motives, as Colin Marsh suggests, particularly given the need to overcome unequal power structures.[99] Marsh argues for a move from "sending" to "sharing" in the practice and understanding of mission. He argues that "sending" held back the "sharing" in his study of the mission agency USPG.[100] Yet, most would see the sending and the sharing as linked rather than one replacing the other. The challenge for the ecclesiology being developed here, given the assumed model of mission, is to keep a focus on mission whilst overcoming barriers through a fresh appreciation of the vital task that partnership plays.

6.1.3 Discerning Partnership

I have argued that partnership is a theme in pentecostal experience of mission, if not one that is often valued. Building also on the discernment of partnership within the ecumenical

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[93]Stanley H. Skreslet, "The Empty Basket of Presbyterian Mission: Limits and Possibilities of Partnership," *IBMR* 19, no. 3 (1995): 98–104.
[94]Ibid., 100.
[95]Ibid.
[96]Ibid., 101.
[97]Ibid., 103.
[98]Clifton Kirkpatrick, "Response to Stanley Skreslet," *IBMR* 19, no. 3 (1995): 105.
[99]Colin Marsh, "Partnership in Mission: To Send or to Share," *IRM* LCII, no. 366 (2003): 370–81.
[100]Ibid., 377.

tradition I want to suggest four themes that stand out, to suggest that partnership involves: (1) mission; (2) specific tasks; (3) being with God; and (4) sharing. Partnership is to serve the wider purpose of mission, yet is expressed in particular agreed tasks undertaken by certain church centres (1&2). Partnership has vertical and horizontal dimensions and so is practised with God and in sharing with others (3&4). Giving more detail to this we can say that firstly, partnership has developed within a primary concern for global and holistic mission. Such mission has maintained a focus on evangelism but has been more widely described in terms of the kingdom of God, liberation and reconciliation. Over recent decades such understandings have been theologically linked with the theme of *missio Dei*, the mission of God. As such, partnership naturally fits within the understanding of mission assumed in this project that suggests a holistic approach based on the kingdom of God within an eschatological movement.[101] Secondly, partnerships are for particular tasks in specific contexts – a contextualised mission engagement. These should be agreed through common planning and with a shared commitment to action. They should also be prophetic in crossing cultures and including the marginalized. Thirdly, this has to happen in partnership with God and springing out of the shared trinitarian life we outlined in the last chapter. This requires humility and an openness to receive the gifts of the Spirit – a shaping of character and gifting. Partnership involves a divine-human relationship and springs from a human response to divine initiative. Finally, partnership involves sharing with one another out of relationships of equality – in which there is mutual respect, a desire to serve, and to both give and receive. All kinds of resources are shared such as gifts, experience, testimony, prayer, worship, biblical insights, theology and finances. Such partnership is costly in many ways and challenges some of our natural inclinations. It goes against the temptations of paternalism and dependency; of oppression, independence, unequal power structures and single-culture approaches.

Most studies on partnership focus on the last of the four themes – that of sharing. Henry Wilson picks this up in encouraging people to develop relationships further after the 1996

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[101]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 55–73.

Salvador conference.[102] The United Church of Christ in the Philippines document on "partnership in mission" also focuses on sharing using the additional themes of wholeness and confession.[103] Yet it also mentions the important of "signs of a new spirituality active and oriented to the coming of God's reign of justice, righteousness and freedom" which partnership resonates with. Also, the term "covenant relationship" is used in describing the commitment to particular tasks in partnership.[104] This helps support the fourfold approach suggested, but more important here is the link between these and the themes of the last chapter we are seeking to develop. The dynamic movement of Spirit-inspired catholicity explored in the last chapter resonates with an understanding of partnership in terms of tasks of working with God to contribute to God's global mission (1, 2 & 3). Catholicity, by nature, is about bringing people together in sharing so as to make visible in relationships today the unity that is being worked towards (4). Thus partnership might be seen in terms of particular sacramental ("with God") tasks within a mission movement that is catholic in drawing people together in sharing and in moving outward into all the world. This suggestion will be developed below after we look further at the biblical and theological grounds for such a discerned experience of partnership.

6.2 Biblical Partnership

We have devoted much of this chapter to a discernment of partnership within the Spirit's working through the last century, as is appropriate given the contribution of partnership to the mission practice of the church. Continuing with the methodology of this project, it is important to consider how the four themes identified resonate with the biblical material. The initial theme of mission has been assumed in this project with its biblical basis given

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[102]Henry S. Wilson, "Salvador and Churches Sharing Across Cultures," *IRM* LXXXVI, no. 340/341 (1997): 139–43.

[103]UCCP, "Basic Principles: A Synthesis Taken from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines Document 'Partnership in Mission'," *IRM* LXXXVI, no. 342 (1997): 339–40.

[104]This theme of "covenant" is also being explored by the Anglican Communion in its attempts to better define the nature of relationships between churches around the world, Lambeth Commission on Communion, *The Windsor Report 2004* (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2004).

elsewhere.[105] Here I want to start by drawing on existing discussions regarding the biblical roots in *koinōnia* that tend to focus on the Johannine and Pauline letters. Developing these I want to suggest that there are important contributions to partnership in Luke-Acts, our focal pentecostal narrative, that are often overlooked.

The theme of sharing in partnership is often related to the term *koinōnia* from the New Testament, and Max Turner has provided a valuable charismatic contribution to the literature on this. He sees at the heart of the word group of *koinoneo, koinonos* and *koinonia* the concepts of sharing and partnership. Thus *koinonia* is understood as "an association, sharing or partnership *with others in some joint enterprise, experience or benefit*."[106] In an earlier chapter I pointed out the dangers of building theology on particular words, a danger that Turner is aware of.[107] Here Turner places the particular terms within a study of the Johannine letters and John's gospel. He argues that *koinonia* is at "the very heart of the spirituality of the writing" of 1 and 2 John and that "this emphasis is almost unique to the Johannine community."[108] In 1 Jn 1:7 is seen the horizontal fellowship when "all parties walk in the light... and in a self-sacrificial love."[109] This horizontal partnership is rooted in a vertical partnership with the triune God (our third theme) and Turner sees in 1 Jn 1:3-6 that "*koinonia* with the Father and the Son must mean something more like the mutual sharing of believers in a personal *communion* with the Father and the Son, who *are* truth, love, light and life."[110] The term "abiding" is also used of "the believers in God, and his love abiding in them (2:6; 2:7-11, 15; 4:16)."[111] Ultimately Turner argues for translating *koinonia* by "fellowship" with the trinitarian nature of God in mind. Mention of the Holy Spirit is limited in 1 John and Turner points to 1 Jn 2:24 in terms of trinitarian fellowship. There is a need for greater clarity in this

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[105]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 60–73.
[106]Max Turner, "The Churches of the Johannine Letters as Communities of 'Trinitarian' *Koinonia*," in *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honor of Russell P. Spittler*, ed. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (London: Continuum, 2004), 54. Italics in original.
[107]See Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*.
[108]Turner, "Churches," 56.
[109]Ibid., 55.
[110]Ibid.
[111]Ibid., 56.

concept of sharing to be rooted in a trinitarian *koinonia* and so Turner turns to the Gospel of John which is seen as presupposed by 1 John. Admittedly the term *koinonia* does not appear in the Gospel, but Turner argues that "the *concept* of a community whose spirituality is defined both in the vertical direction and in the horizontal, by what 1 John means by 'fellowship with the Father and the Son' is clearly present, especially in John 14-17."[112] He suggests that it is "because the Father and the Son are so totally united in love – and the Spirit so united with them – that the Spirit brings the Father and the Son *together* to indwell the disciple."[113] This provides the "model for the early community" of Christians in their relationships with one another.[114]

Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen points to similar passages in support for his understanding of the church in terms of a trinitarian communion in the Spirit, building on the work of Cecil Robeck.[115] Such an argument usually rests on the Johannine literature linked to the Pauline corpus, particularly Phil. 2:1 and 2 Cor. 13:13. Yet it is important not to rely on the term *koinonia* to the exclusion of wider themes that are relevant. Within the Pauline writings the theme of self-giving is important, particularly in the passage from Philippians mentioned. Michael Gorman has developed a narrative approach to Paul's writing in which self-giving after the example of Christ, especially through the Cross, is primary. He sees Phil. 2:6-11 as "Paul's master story" which he summarises as "to be in Christ is to be a living exegesis of this narrative of Christ, a new performance of the original drama of exaltation following humiliation, of humiliation as the voluntary renunciation of rights and selfish gain in order to serve and obey."[116] He therefore suggests that at the heart of Pauline living with Christ is a sharing in his humility and service. This passage is also noted by Collins in his approach to partnership: "There is no biblical mandate regarding the form which such partnerships should

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[112]Ibid., 58.
[113]Ibid., 60.
[114]Ibid., 61.
[115]Cecil M. Robeck, "The Holy Spirit and the NT Vision of *Koinonia*," Pentecostal position paper read at the 12th dialogue session, unpublished (Pasadena, Calif., 1986); Kärkkäinen, *Toward*, 102–3.
[116]Michael J. Gorman, *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 2001), 88,92.

take, only that Christians should do nothing (not even evangelism!) out of selfishness or conceit, but rather that we should, in humility, count others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3)."[117] The "with Christ" aspect of partnership can be seen in through the "with" preposition that Paul uses so often, and which Paul Minear outlines.[118] Minear sees this as being a relationship shaped by the death and resurrection of Christ. Gorman argues that the Pauline narrative has a fourfold pattern of "cruciformity": "faithful obedience, or cruciform *faith*"; "voluntary self-emptying and self-giving regard for others, or cruciform *love*"; "life-giving suffering and transformative potency in weakness, or cruciform *power*"; and "cruciformity as requisite prelude to resurrection and exaltation, or cruciform *hope*."[119] He goes on to state the essentially communal character of such cruciformity.[120] To see partnership as including a sharing in faith, love, power and hope develops our existing reflections, particularly highlighting the need for both weakness and hope to be an essential part of any sharing. Also drawing on the Pauline material, Miroslav Volf reflects on themes of giving and receiving in his popular work, *Free of Charge*. Taking an approach influenced by his reading of Martin Luther, Volf places the sharing of gifts as at the heart of a Pauline spirituality that, like Gorman, dwells on the sacrificial nature of the Cross. He sees the body of Christ as characterised by spiritual gifts that are exchanged in a reciprocal manner.[121] This is seen as a reflection of a flow of gifts within the Trinity that flow naturally out into the world with the aim of creating more givers who delight in God.[122] Volf acknowledges the many practical difficulties involved in giving, particularly in the giving of forgiveness. Yet a focus on "union with Christ" gives hope and momentum towards giving as we see Christ living in us.[123]

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[117]Travis Collins, "Missions and Churches in Partnership for Evangelism: A Study of the Declaration of Ibadan," *Missiology* XXIII, no. 3 (1995): 337.
[118]Minear, *Images*, 162–64.
[119]Gorman, *Cruciformity*, 93.
[120]Ibid., 349.
[121]Miroslav Volf, *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005), 86–87.
[122]Ibid., 70–71.
[123]Ibid., 148–49.

Andrew Kirk, in his theology of mission that unlike most devotes space to a consideration of partnership, brings it together with suffering. He sees that "'partnership in mission' also belongs to the essence of the Church: partnership is not so much what the Church *does* as what it *is*. Churches (theologically) belong to one another, for God has called each 'into the fellowship (*koinonia*) of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord' (1 Cor. 1:9)."[124] Kirk draws mainly on the Pauline material in his biblical approach, pointing to 2 Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:10; Gal. 6:17 and 2 Cor. 4:8-12 in terms of a partnership in suffering.[125] He also speaks of partnership as sharing in a common project, the task element of partnership in our framework, and in sharing of gifts and material resources. Kirk comments on *power* arguing for a wider positive biblical view of power as legitimate and transformed by Christ.[126] Gorman argues for an understanding of power that takes on board the weakness of the Cross. In his perceptive study, Stephen Sykes argues that "the sources of the Christian faith actually sponsor diverging views of power."[127] What is needed, he suggests, is humility and the "God-given gifts" to lead with the powers given, recognising the ambiguities inherent in any consideration of power in the world. Kirk wants a transparent approach to the inevitable power forces in partnership, one that enables "the freedom to let go of all that hinders a life of sacrificial love (Mark 10:42-5; John 10:17-18; 3:1; Phil. 2:5ff.)."[128] Ultimately any power in mission has its roots in the human partnership with God and we must not neglect power because of the inherent dangers. Even the pentecostal scholar Robert Menzies had to admit to neglecting some of the power aspects of mission as outlined in Acts 2:17-21. Recently he has argued that Luke modified the Joel quotation to emphasise the church's mission as one "characterized by visions and divine guidance, bold witness in the face of intense opposition, and signs and wonders."[129] This may be overlooked or challenged by some scholars, such as C.K. Barrett who focuses on historical criticism of the text, but highlights the move away from considering issues of power amongst

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[124]Kirk, *Mission*, 187.
[125]Ibid., 190–91.
[126]Ibid., 194–98.
[127]Stephen Sykes, *Power and Christian Theology* (London: Continuum, 2006), 151.
[128]Kirk, *Mission*, 196.
[129]Robert P. Menzies, "Acts 2.17–21: A Paradigm for Pentecostal Mission," *JPT* 17, no. 2 (2008): 200.

pentecostals alongside others.[130] Our reflections suggest that it is the importance of power *received* and not just exercised that needs to be born in mind. Kirk comments on how "hard it is for the Church in the West to receive," recognising the challenge to receive is an important part of partnership.[131]

Turner comments in his consideration of *koinonia* how some argue that "Luke's position concerning the period of the church largely as an '*absentee* Christology.'[132] Turner admits that, compared with the Johannine writings, Luke-Acts does not stress "fellowship with the Son." This may help account for the lack of consideration of Luke-Acts when it comes to the theme of partnership, and yet these accounts provide important reflections on tasks given by God that are carried out together with others. I want to suggest that Luke-Acts also supports the idea of partnership. Central to the theme of discipleship in Luke-Acts is the idea that Christians are to reflect Jesus' life and ministry. As Joseph Fitzmeyer puts it, "for Luke, Christian discipleship is not merely the acceptance of the master's teaching, but an identification of the person with the master's very way of life and destiny, a following that involves intimacy and imitation"[133] It is a life "together with Jesus" and Luke highlights Jesus' call to particular tasks in the so-called "Nazareth manifesto" of Lk. 4:16-30. Elsewhere I have considered how these tasks reflect a holistic understanding of mission, but here it is worth noting how they are "fleshed out" in Jesus' practice of Lk. 4:31-44.[134] Joel Green notes how here the tasks are undertaken in particular places, amongst the marginalized and results in conflict.[135] The first calling of disciples to follow in the steps of Jesus comes in Lk. 6:12-49 where we have a prayerful choice of the apostles, those to be sent. Yet the sending does not happen immediately and Jesus gives them "no explicit assignment."[136] It seems that to undertake the tasks of Jesus there is a need to live the life that reflects him. Cleverly Ford, in

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[130]C.K. Barrett, *Acts, Volume 1: I-XIV* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 129–43.
[131]Kirk, *Mission*, 194.
[132]Turner, "Churches," 56.
[133]Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian: Aspects of His Teaching* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), 134.
[134]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 64–66.
[135]Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 220–21.
[136]Ibid., 257.

an early mission reading of Luke, comments on how the choice of apostles is followed by Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount. He suggests that there is a focus here on "Joy based on acceptance, love, integrity and action."[137] Green comments how the practice commended here is one involving giving and receiving, even with enemies, and reflects a "notion of reciprocity."[138] This is a useful corrective to approaching partnership simply in turns of rushing into action without integrating this with a life of integrity that reflects Jesus. It is the case that "character and commitments" come "forth in action."[139] In terms of our framework, this reading of Luke supports partnerships as being about a life lived with God, in sharing together in commitmented tasks in mission.

Having emphasised the importance of reflecting Jesus, Luke then sees Jesus giving the challenge to the 12 and the 72 to particular tasks in mission (9:1-17; 10:1-20). The tasks here are of healing and proclaiming the kingdom of God (9:2; 10:9) that reflect the previous narratives of Jesus' works. As Green notes, how Lk. 9:1-17 "clearly demarcates the twelve as Jesus' emissaries whose ministry is grounded in and is an extension of his own."[140] V. George Shillington notes "the prominence of power words in the mission narrative," such as Lk. 9:1, "Jesus... gave them complete power and authority over all demons and diseases."[141] This has led postcolonial readers to critique the appropriation of these texts to the task of Western mission as supporting domination. Whilst there is weight in this critique, Shillington notes that these passages say to "take nothing" and hence from "this description of mission 'strategy' we could not possibly draw the notion of domination in any way."[142] He goes on to say that Paul follows a similar model in Acts in that he is not interested in "a takeover of lands and peoples" but rather leaves people "in their social and cultural place" with their "eternal salvation... secure in communion with Jesus Christ and his people.[143] Underlying such an

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[137]D.W. Cleverley Ford, *A Reading of Saint Luke's Gospel* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1967), 104.
[138]Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 273.
[139]Ibid., 277.
[140]Ibid., 358.
[141]V. George Shillington, *An Introduction to the Study of Luke-Acts*, Approaches to Biblical Studies (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 88.
[142]Ibid., 89.
[143]Ibid., 100.

approach is the notion of equality that Shillington sees as most significant in the Pentecost quote from Joel.[144] Green comments on how the call to "take nothing" is linked with both hospitality and the possibility of rejection.[145] Ford speaks of this in a way that resonates with much we have been saying about partnership, even if the language is dated: "In their mission they are to understand the importance of hospitality. People who grant them hospitality indicate places where a worthy reception of their message is likely. Apostles therefore are not to go forth as self-sufficient men. Men who *exercise* pastoral care must be in a position to *receive* pastoral care."[146]

For Luke the account of the task given to the 72 "is closely related temporally and thematically to his sketch of the onset of the journey to Jerusalem."[147] A narrative approach to Luke-Acts requires us to place partnership under a wider understanding of God's mission in general. In these passages it serves the wider theme of the "kingdom of God" and also the bringing of peace, what Green calls the mission of a "restoration of wholeness."[148] It is a mission that is organised – "two by two" going to certain places – in line with the goal.[149] It might be argued that historically this passage may not represent what happened, as do the Jesus Seminar. However, Darrell Bock argues for underlying historical roots to the passage as a part of Jesus' mission goal of expanding the number of disciples.[150] Bock notes how this mission goal "will be determined not only by efforts in the field, but also by prayer and God's sovereign direction."[151] The theme of opposition runs through these passages and here the image of "lambs amongst wolves" picks up the image of the Great Shepherd in the Jewish background. Bock sees the "lamb as representing God's people" amidst the "danger of hostile nations."[152] Green comments on a wider theme that gives narrative unity: "the experience of

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[144]Ibid., 113–16.
[145]Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 359.
[146]D.W. Cleverley Ford, *Reading*, 129.
[147]Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 410.
[148]Ibid., 415.
[149]D.W. Cleverley Ford, *Reading*, 139.
[150]Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1996), 986–991,995.
[151]Ibid., 994–95.
[152]Ibid., 996–97.

the mission as the arena of conflict and eschatological engagement with diabolic forces."[153] He sees this in the focus on hospitality which also allows for inhospitality, for rejection. N.T. Wright comments on how Jesus' "kingdom vision, was bound to come into conflict with other first-century visions of the kingdom."[154]

It might be argued that this case for partnership as an integral part of the mission calling of the church only applies to some disciples of Jesus. In taking an overview of Luke, Wright comments that "The summons to follow Jesus, going beyond the challenge to be loyal to his cause in one's own setting, thus focused itself more and more narrowly. Some were summoned to abandon all and follow Jesus; within that, some were called into a special and deeply symbolic inner group; within that again, some had a further symbolic, as well as humanly supportive, function."[155] Yet in terms of the narrative structure of Luke, there is a movement outwards rather than a narrowing of focus: from Jesus, to the 12, to the 72 and to the disciples generally (Lk. 24:49; Acts 2:1). Also, as Green comments looking just at the earlier passages: "Even if his teaching in this section is directed to his disciples in particular (6:20), it is equally clear that he taught 'in the hearing of the people' more generally (7:1). Here and elsewhere in Luke, 'the people' are prospective followers; Jesus gives instructions on the way of discipleship that serve as an invitation and challenge to all."[156]

It would be possible to extend this consideration into Acts and reflect on how it is together the disciples receive the Holy Spirit alongside a mission task (Acts 2), how social mission was carried out by a team (6), how this togetherness included even the Gentiles (10), how the church at Antioch sent a team out in a pattern reminiscent of Luke's Gospel (13), how partnership was required in facing conflict between churches (15), how hospitality was practised by Paul in mission (18) and how the overriding mission of the kingdom for the world comes at the climax to the book (28). Yet a sufficient case has been built for seeing the

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[153]Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 411.
[154]N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God, vol. 2 (London: SPCK, 1996), 317.
[155]Ibid., 300.
[156]Joel B. Green, *Gospel of Luke*, 261.

four discerned themes in partnership as integrated into the narrative of Luke-Acts and the Pauline and Johannine writings.

6.3 Partnership Networks

This chapter has sought to develop the theme of partnership as the essential practice of networks that enables the catholic mission movement we saw as important in the last chapter. It is important to summarise what has been learnt before we then apply this to networks. I have suggested that we see partnership within a dynamic understanding of the unity of the church which comprises a catholic movement outwards into the world. Partnership is a key way in which this unity is made visible and, I would suggest, is rooted in sacramental events of sharing. For pentecostals, Spirit baptism marks both a receiving from God and a call to sacrificial giving in mission. Such a sharing is rooted in an ongoing relationship with God that includes a call to specific tasks within God's holistic mission in the world. Here we can see the four themes of partnership identified in this chapter linking with the themes of the last chapter. Biblically and theologically a number of roots have been examined as underlying these themes. These can be seen as revolving around the nature of God and of our discipleship with God. Reflections on the social nature of God have centered on the theme of *koinonia* as a pattern for our sharing with God in relationships for mission. This need not imply a full social trinitarianism, but can be seen as one of the ways human relationships can in part reflect the nature of the Trinity. The root concept of discipleship brings together a number of themes regarding our involvement in the mission of God in the world. Max Warren can be seen to articulate this theologically in terms of involvement, responsibility and liability.[157] The latter links with the need for a cruciform faith and reflects the *kenosis* and *plerosis* seen in Christ as he sacrificially gives and draws together, and is thus incarnational in reflecting Christ in specific contexts. Such discipleship is prophetic in its desire to include all, particularly the weak and marginalised. Discipleship and *koinonia* serve the mission gospel of God's love for

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[157]Max Warren, *Partnership*.

the world seen above all in Jesus Christ and made visible in sacramental events. For pentecostals, as we have seen, they are also marked by Spirit baptism that highlights their empowered, communal, missionary and yet weak nature.[158]

In Chapter 4 I reviewed the background to a network understanding of church and there understood networks in terms of a set of church centres that are linked and interact in a variety of ways. I suggested that most pentecostal ecclesiology has focused on links (a) within centres, between people, and this project contributes to a better understanding of links (b) within individual networks, between centres. The last chapter argued that networks share in a common trinitarian *esse* that characterises each of the church centres within them. This chapter suggests that the links between church centres within a network can be seen as characterised by particular partnerships. Within a common mission and sense of being sent by the Father, each network is characterised by a particular sense of calling with God to particular tasks in mission carried out through a sharing together. We can say that a network is characterised by particular mission tasks and patterns of faith and sharing. This is inevitable given the call of God, the context of a network and the fallibilistic nature of the church. God's calling and gifting varies between individual and individual, between church centre and church centre, and between one network and another. Each network is rooted in a particular context that contributes to its identity and cannot be completely abstracted from that context. A fallible church network is not able to undertake everything nor to express the whole of Christ's mission in the world – its understanding and practice of mission tasks, of life with God and patterns of sharing will always be limited and in need of challenge and growth.

The need for networks to remain challenged is vital to their remaining prophetic in their partnerships, reaching out to those excluded from the power networks accrue.[159] Our study suggests that this might happen when people feel called to a new task or patterns of life with God and sharing that are different from those dominant within a network. Classic examples of

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[158]On weakness and speaking in tongues see Cartledge, *Charismatic Glossolalia*, 200–203.
[159]On this limitation of networks see 4.1.2 and the work of Castells, *Rise of Network Society*.

this can be found within the missionary movement when people felt called to mission tasks outside of the countries their church networks were rooted in. Andrew Walls talks of 19th century mission communities "influencing, supplementing, and by-passing the life of Church and State alike."[160] Yet they then went on to rework the existing church networks and form new ones – the Anglican communion is but one example of the result of this process of network challenge carried out over two centuries.[161] This has resulted in the growth of the church through a dynamic and catholic movement out into the entire world. Of course, such a church remains fallible and remains in need of correction but I am suggesting that such a motivation for challenge is built into this understanding of networks.[162] We have seen how this challenge is partly one to unwise use of power and hence is linked with an understanding of the Cross. The methodology adopted in this project requires such a constant reassessment of understandings and practices.

Within pentecostalism it must be recognised that whilst challenges to existing networks might have produced growth they have also caused pain and undermined mission. Pentecostalism has been characterised as a movement of multiple schisms and there is much truth in this – Allan Anderson describes the early years as an "ecumenical period" followed by three major doctrinal schisms in North American pentecostalism in the second decade and a "hardening and proliferation of denominational boundaries... from the 1920s."[163] The early years also saw differences and Steven Land notes that "Splits over doctrine, personalities, race and regionalism were common" and that these led eventually to "ecclesiastical fragmentation."[164] He suggests that this was due to the rapid development of the movement and the pressures of the time and he notes the need for an ecclesiology that enables for change and debate without schism to overcome such splits today and notes positive moves in this

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[160]Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, 241.
[161]See the discussion in T.E. Yates, "Anglicans and Mission," in *The Study of Anglicanism*, ed. Stephen Sykes, John Booty, and Jonathan Knight (London: SPCK, 1998), 483–96.
[162]I am aware of the many critiques of the missionary movement, and in the current regard Stanley, *Bible and the Flag* remains an importance source of reflection.
[163]Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 9.
[164]Land, *Spirituality*, 193.

direction.[165] Schism can occur through differences in focus (task), in theology or spirituality (understanding of life with God) and in personalities and race (that unsuccessfully try to share). Such critiques of schism within pentecostalism have much in common with the critiques of proselytism in the ecumenical sphere. Yet it must be said that such divisions have not stopped and indeed sometimes have been a cause of numerical growth within pentecostalism – in part, the creation of new networks enables more people to participate in mission. In the context of the current argument then, the hope and aim of the ecclesiology being developed is for partnerships to exist that avoid schism whilst allowing for differences. The possibility for people to challenge existing norms needs to be retained if networks are to be prophetic, yet in a fallible network this can lead to schism – to the creation of new networks in opposition to existing ones. Challenge is a risk that cannot and must not be avoided but, I suggest, needs to be placed within the committed practice of partnership within an overriding commitment to the catholicity of movement in God's mission of good news. An emphasis on partnership can be seen as a corrective to pentecostal tendencies to divide and this strengthens the themes importance in the development of any pentecostal ecclesiology.

This also gives rise to the question as to what extent networks are chosen or given. Have the people and churches in a network who share in a mission task with God chosen that task or been given it by God? We would want to say that there is both a human and divine element to all tasks, as developed within the metaphysics adopted in this project. This is a reality and a tension that S.L. Greenslade saw in terms of church structures in his classic study of *Schism in the Early Church*.[166] One of the causes of schism is the belief that our choice and understandings (before God) is more important than God's choice of us. There is a greater freedom to divide from others if we can convince ourselves that God has blessed us with the right tasks and understandings, as opposed to others. But in reality all are fallible and God's choice is thankfully not always determined by our rightness. This is not to say that there

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[165]Ibid., 216–218,221.
[166]S.L. Greenslade, *Schism in the Early Church, 2nd Ed.* (London: SCM Press, 1964), 208–15.

cannot be different networks serving different aims and having different understandings of faith and mission. It does suggest that there will be networks which God has chosen individuals and churches to be a part of even though there are very real differences.[167] Utilising Greenslade's terms, networks need to embody negotiation and continuing theological reconsideration as a result of their differences rather than move quickly to divide.

It is appropriate to ask whether this emphasis is made visible in particular ministries within the church. We might expect that God would call individuals to enable such catholic partnerships to be created and sustained. It is at this point within the ecclesiology being developed that the question of ordination and the "offices" of the church are, I think, best addressed. We have been developing a bottom-up yet structured ecclesiology and the question of ministries within church life is not the focus of this project. However, in considering structures it is unavoidable to comment briefly on those ministries traditionally linked with structures, particularly those of "ordained ministry" and "Bishop." Volf would argue that questions of ordination should be addressed simply in terms of the local church centre. He suggests that "ordination is to be understood as *a public reception of a charisma given by God and focused on the local church as a whole... ordination is an act of the entire local church led by the Spirit of God*."[168] This is in reaction against the ecclesiologies of Joseph Ratzinger and John Zizioulas which he sees as inherently hierarchical.[169] Volf comments on how the act of ordination can be seen as "an important *sign* of the unity of local churches."[170] The approach taken here is not subject to the same critiques by Volf and whilst the question of unity is vital for local church centres, it is of vital significance also beyond them. Although there is not space to develop the theme here, I want to suggest that ordination might be seen as a public reception of a charisma given by God for the purpose of being a focal agent in the creation and maintenance of partnerships. Ordained ministry might be exercised within a local

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[167]This is the reality of many historical denominations.
[168]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 249, italics in original.
[169]Ibid., 254.
[170]Ibid., 250.

congregation, encouraging partnerships for mission within the congregation and developing partnerships with other church centres in networks. It might also be exercised within networks, encouraging partnerships between the church centres in the network and between these and other networks – and here the role of the Bishop is traditionally found. We might also envisage ordained ministries that link networks together. Such an outlook deserves more thought, but is suggestive of an ordained ministry that is rooted in mission, encouraging common working, spirituality and community life.

As I said at the start of this chapter, this project has not started with existing structures of denominations but sought to explore a theology that contains key elements suitable for application in current and future forms of church. It is possible to see existing denominations as particular networks that share understandings of mission, life with God and ways of working together that are shaped by their history and context. These must be seen in a more fluid way than has been the case, in recognition that churches are often members of more than one network. Pete Ward's work on "liquid church" is illustrative here as he develops an understanding of church within a cultural context of network "flow."[171] Peter Hocken notes how the charismatic movement was initially distinguished from the pentecostal movement in that it existed "*within* historic denominations" as well as in groups across the denominations.[172] Although the movement developed beyond the denominations there has been a continuing influence of the charismatic movement on existing denominations that is seen, for example, in the "third wave" that Hocken speaks of. The ecclesiology developed here allows for such a richness of movements and overlaps, whilst insisting on the importance of network identity and the need for partnership links that draw people together in the common task of mission in the world.

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[171]Pete Ward, *Participation and Mediation: A Practical Theology for the Liquid Church* (London: SCM, 2008), 168–91.
[172]Hocken, "Charismatic Movement," 514.

6.4 Summary

We have developed a trinitarian network approach to pentecostal ecclesiology, one shaped by mission concerns. As part of this was suggested the need for approaches to catholicity based on common essence and dynamic mission movement, outlined in the last chapter. This chapter has developed a dynamic approach through the mission theme of partnership. This represents the first developed pentecostal approach to partnership and contributes to a theological understanding of partnership rather than the more common practical approaches. I have argued that partnership can be discerned within the history of pentecostalism and that this can be usefully complemented with insights from partnership within the ecumenical movement. Such discernment led to a four-fold understanding of partnership that resonates with relevant biblical material, particularly in regard to *koinonia* and Luke-Acts. The result has been to suggest how networks might be characterised in terms of partnerships.

We have now touched on most of the common concerns in ecclesiology through the new means of a network structure and many ecclesiologies might conclude at this point. Thus, for example, Volf concludes with a chapter on the "Catholicity of the Church."[173] Yet we have consistently suggested that networks also exist outside the church and the links between church and "world" networks are vital for mission. Volf speaks of openness to all of creation at the end of his work and here we need to take this further by drawing together themes that have occurred throughout this project.[174] Hence we next address the concern for contextualisation in the next chapter.

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[173]Volf, *After Our Likeness*, Chapter 7.
[174]Ibid., 276–82.

Chapter 7

ENGAGING THE WORLD

Networks have been considered with the related trinitarian concerns and issues of catholicity. We now turn to consider how such a church might engage with the world. Any ecclesiology shaped by mission must address questions of engagement with the world. In mission studies such questions have often been examined under the heading of contextualisation. Starting with a review of such mission thinking this chapter then goes on to consider how we can discern pentecostal engagement with the world (Spirit); how the biblical material, especially Acts, can contribute to positive world engagement (Word); and how this project has already seen such engagement, developing pentecostal scholarship (Community). Two issues have remained unaddressed and will need consideration here – firstly, that of power mentioned in the last chapter in regard to partnership but also influencing contextualisation; secondly, that of place which can be seen to conflict with the non-geographical approach to networks taken in this project. Given positive approaches to power and place I then want to suggest a pentecostal trialectical practice of contextualisation, based on Amos Yong's work on *hospitality*. Although this project has been more "blueprint" than "concrete" it is important to give an example of how a concrete church practice might arise out of the methodology. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the combination of Spirit, Word and Community leads to a transformed pneumatological imagination within which renewed religious practices can be worked out. Here, networks, partnership and hospitality provide the pentecostal imagination with a new way of seeing contextualisation that is worked out in a three-fold practical approach to the task.

7.1 Mission and Contextualisation

For many centuries it had been assumed that there was only one orthodox expression of Christian faith, even if different groups held different understandings of what was orthodox.[1] It was only in the 19th century that the influence of culture on theology was appreciated and the independence of many Third World countries during the last century moved this debate on significantly. David Bosch traces the change to Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and the development of Third World theologies that represent an epistemological break with those that went before.[2] The term *contextualisation* first appeared in the 1970s in the context of theological education and since then it has become a blanket term for a variety of theological models. There are different terms but I prefer to follow Bosch and keep the general term "contextualisation" which may then be subdivided. Of course, contextualisation has always existed within the Church and is rooted in the "impossibility of separating an individual from his social relationships and thus from his society."[3] There has to be a two-way interaction between Christian faith and social context and this interaction recognises the basic fact that "God has turned towards the world" and does not simply drag people off to an unworldly "spiritual" place.[4] Andrew Kirk laments what he sees as a "dualistic understanding and practice of the Gospel" by the church in the West whereby Gospel and culture are seen in opposition rather than interaction.[5] Theologically contextualisation rests on the reality of the incarnation which may be seen as "a translation of the Word into flesh."[6] In terms of church practices, the interaction has most often been appropriated in Bible translation.[7] As Lamin Sanneh states, "Translation is the church's birthmark as well as its missionary benchmark: the

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[1]See also here my introduction in Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 91–96. Also my earlier reflections on contemporary monasticism in England, Andrew M. Lord, "Contextualisation in Britain: Insights from a Celtic Spirituality," MA dissertation (Birmingham, 1999).
[2]Bosch, *Mission*, 422–23.
[3]Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, 7.
[4]Bosch, *Mission*, 426.
[5]Kirk, *Mission*, 77.
[6]Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, 26.
[7]Ibid., 28.

church would be unrecognizable or unsustainable without it."[8] The contextual nature of the Christian message and the need to translate it for a particular culture has been well appreciated, but it is only just being appreciated that ecclesiologies are consciously contextual. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen provides a survey of some of these, including AICs and the "Shepherding Movement" as representatives of pentecostal ecclesiologies although much of the work here is of a preliminary nature.[9]

Stephen Bevans starts his review of contextual theologies by stating: "There is no such thing as 'theology'; there is only *contextual* theology."[10] Bevans has provided a useful guide to contemporary models of contextual theology seeing such theology as a dialogue between the "experience of the past" ("recorded in scripture, preserved and defended in tradition") and the "experience of the present (context)" which is personal, communal, cultural and social.[11] He outlines six models that follow a spectrum depending on whether the stress is placed on the past or the present. The models cannot avoid some basis in translating a gospel message given by God, but "an adequate theology cannot be reduced to a mere application or adaptation of a changeless body of truths. Even the biblical message was developed in a dialogue with human experience, culture, and cultural and social change."[12] It is worth briefly outlining the six models as the background for our considerations in this Chapter. At one end of the spectrum is the "countercultural model" that sees the present context as not simply neutral but positively "antithetical to the gospel" and in need of challenging "by the gospel's liberating and healing power."[13] Here we have the Spirit convicting the world of sin (cf. John 16). At the other end of the spectrum is the "anthropological model" that stresses the need to preserve the "cultural identity of a person of Christian faith," given the goodness of the human

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[8]Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? the Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 2003), 97.
[9]Kärkkäinen, *Introduction to Ecclesiology*, 194–210.
[10]Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology, Revised Ed.* (New York: Orbis, 2002), 3.
[11]Ibid., 7.
[12]Ibid., 32–33.
[13]Ibid., 118.

person created and indwelt by God.[14] The stress is on present human experience based on a universal working of the Spirit in all creation.

These two models may represent crucial models in particular contexts, but in general they represent too simple a resolution of the tension between past and present. Between these two models lie a number of others, the most common of which is the "translation model" which insists "on the message of the gospel as an unchanging message" which is translated into particular cultures.[15] The present culture was not so much good in itself but a "convenient vehicle for this essential, unchanging deposit of truth."[16] The emphasis here is on the work of the Holy Spirit in revelation and Scripture, and in bringing Christ to others. Conversely, the "praxis model" starts with its "feet on the ground" of a particular context and then reflects on that context (drawing on scripture and tradition), before aiming at action that changes the context for the better.[17] This approach is most commonly associated with liberation theology and draws together the primacy of context (particularly in terms of social change) with the Christian tradition in order to follow Christ in the world. The Spirit is seen as enabling life-giving action in a world that is often hostile to life, peace and justice.[18] Action in the "transcendental model" starts with self, particularly with ones transcendental experience "determined at every turn by one's context."[19] It is the relationship with God and revelation from God within that are central to this model and contextual theology results in changed people as scripture, tradition and context are brought together in a personal way. Here we find deep inner, personal working of the Spirit as fed by past and present, in a way that connects with work on spirituality.[20] The "synthetic model" of contextual theology that sits at the centre of Bevans' spectrum, "midway between emphasis on the experience of the present... and the

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[14]Ibid., 54–55.
[15]Ibid., 37.
[16]Ibid.
[17]Ibid., 76–77.
[18]For one exploration of this see Jürgen Moltmann, "The Mission of the Spirit: The Gospel of Life," in *Mission - an Invitation to God's Future*, ed. Timothy Yates (Sheffield: Cliff College Publishing, 2000), 19–34.
[19]Bevans, *Models*, 104.
[20]Bevans, *Models*, 103. Bevans points to Bernard Lonergan in this regard, and we might also consider the work of William Johnson, *Mystical Theology: The Science of Love* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995).

experience of the past... takes pains to keep the integrity of the traditional message while acknowledging the importance of taking all aspects of the context seriously"[21] This model requires an "attitude of openness and dialogue" and in its desire to learn from all "witnesses to the true universality of Christian faith."[22]

These contextual models for theology and mission propose different approaches to the underlying tension that exists between past and present, between church and culture, the gospel and the world. There is no resolution to this tension and indeed there remains, says Andrew Kirk quoting Emilio Castro, a "permanent and creative tension" that is the "basic mission challenge."[23] Without this tension existing within our ecclesiology there would be no mission challenge and the model of mission being used in this project is rooted in this tension between the particular and the universal, the context and the church seen as a polarity which the Spirit moves us between.[24] Bevans with Roger Schroeder has produced an extensive review of the theology of mission that speaks in terms of *constants* in *context*, which is another way of stating this tension. They suggest the need for an approach to the theology of mission that is rooted in *prophetic dialogue* – there needs to be an ongoing dialogue between the constants and the context, between church and culture. Yet there needs to be a prophetic element to this dialogue, what Bevans had earlier called the vital need for "translating a gospel message given by God." Bevans and Schroeder root their approach in a trinitarian theology and work it out in terms of a holistic understanding of the practice of mission. They see the vital importance of *synthesis* for twenty-first century mission whilst developing a theological basis that values the distinctive Christian missionary tradition.[25] Here, it seems to me, is a synthetic translation model of contextualisation that tries to hold together past, present and gospel – perhaps the simple dual tension is not sufficient to cover a deeper look at mission

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[21]Bevans, *Models*, 88–89.
[22]Ibid., 93–94.
[23]Emilio Castro, "Themes in Theology of Mission Arising Out of San Antonio and Canberra," in *The Good News of the Kingdom: Mission Theology for the Third Millennium*, eds Charles Van Engen, Dean Gilliland, and Paul Pierson (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993), 129–30 quoted in Kirk, *Mission*, 94.
[24]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 86–89,136–138.
[25]Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 284.

history and theology. At the same time, it has to be acknowledged that our past and present experiences and our understanding of the gospel shape each other and cannot be held as completely distinct arenas.

Colleen Mallon asks a significant question relating to dialogue: "Can we talk? Can we engage in authentic dialogue in a globalized world composed of competing particularities?"[26] For those of us in the West it is important to recognise that "our conditioned, historical existence and the depth at which the rationalities inscribed within delimit the world we perceive without."[27] She argues that the dialogue between past and present needs to be "contrite and responsible" and unmask our "ideological commitments."[28] Mallon suggests that dialogue is possible because the "life of the Triune God invites us into the depths of our historical, cultural reality and asks us, 'Can we talk?'"[29] From an ecumenical perspective, Hans Waldenfels picks up similar themes in arguing that contextual theology needs to be about "'dialogics,' that is, as a theory of behavior based on dialogue and partnership which takes into account the conditions of an all-embracing, communications-oriented society."[30] From an evangelical perspective, Roy Musasiwa argues that contextualisation must be dialogical and remain open-ended although with primacy given to the Bible.[31]

These suggest that from a mission perspective the engagement of the church with the world is shaped around approaches to contextualisation. Such approaches have three main elements: the past (church tradition), the present (context) and the gospel (Scriptures). These elements interact through dialogical processes or in partnership relationships (a theme that resonates with our last chapter). The result of such a contextualisation is a prophetic challenge to the context and also, I would suggest, to the church and our understanding of the gospel.

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[26]Colleen Mary Mallon, "Dialogue and Its Discontents," *Missiology* XXXVI, no. 4 (2008): 499.
[27]Ibid.
[28]Ibid., 500.
[29]Ibid.
[30]Hans Waldenfels, "Contextual Theology," in *Dictionary of Mission: Theology, History, Perspectives*, eds Karl Müller, et al. (New York: Orbis Books, 1997), 87.
[31]Roy Musasiwa, "Contextualization," in *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations*, ed. John Corrie (Nottingham: IVP, 2007), 70.

7.2 Pentecostal World Engagement

In order to develop a pentecostal understanding of contextual world engagement within a network ecclesiology we turn again to the elements of our methodology. Here we seek to discern how pentecostals have engaged with the world, how particular Scriptures support this and how our ecclesiology contributes to such understandings. The theme of discernment is crucial and so further reflections are offered on this theme.

7.2.1 Pentecostal Experience of the World

In discerning pentecostal approaches to context we need to examine wider questions of pentecostal approaches to engagement in the world/culture – both in terms of their experiential engagement and reflection on such engagement. There is a difficulty regarding terminology in that the terms "church" and "world" have been used in disjunct ways – as if they are separate entities. Yet the church is clearly a part of the world, as the methodology chosen for this project assumes. There is a need for the purposes of this chapter to be able to explore the engagement of the church with the world beyond the church, between church networks and those that do not see themselves as part of the church. We could use terminology such as "church" and "non church" but I have chosen to continue with the terms "church" and "world" with qualifications at times. In some ways this is unavoidable given the prevalence of such language in the literature, yet I hope to build on the particular overlapping understanding developed in this project. Starting with a look at pentecostal world engagement I pick up on a number of models that have been suggested for discerning the nature of pentecostal engagement.

In looking at how pentecostals have viewed engagement with the world, it is important to note how their view of things has changed over time. As regards pentecostal self-understanding, Augustus Cerillo has summarised how pentecostals have approached this over the years. He suggests that the pentecostal writers, up until the 1950s, "largely viewed Pentecostalism's arrival as a providentially generated, end-time religious revival

fundamentally discontinuous with 1,900 years of Christian history."[32] There was little consideration of the role of human agency and wider religious and social movements within history. In the 1960s and 1970s new pentecostal histories were written that assumed continuities between pentecostalism and previous Christian movements, starting particularly with the Wesleyan roots but gradually expanding to consider other roots.[33] In 1979 Robert Anderson offered a significant account of American pentecostalism "that located the movement's wellsprings in the social and cultural setting of early twentieth-century American history."[34] The black origins of pentecostalism came more into focus during the 1980s. Cerillo sees the need for more work to discern the continuities and discontinuities between pentecostalism and preceding religious movements.[35] He also sees the charismatic movement as raising questions about pentecostal origins within wider Christian movements, "beyond the pre-1900 Protestant Holiness and evangelical subcultures."[36] Thus Cerillo sees a movement within pentecostalism towards a more positive view of wider forces on the movement. There has been an increase in sources considered and a more developed approach to discernment – considering the continuities and discontinuities between the pentecostal church and the world.

Grant Wacker, in his study of pentecostal culture in the United States from 1900 to 1925, suggests that this tension between continuity and discontinuity was present from the start in pentecostal experience. He uses the terms *pragmatic* and *primitive* to explain the tension and his overall argument is that the "genius of the Pentecostal movement lay in its ability to hold two seemingly incompatible impulses in productive tension. I call the two impulses the primitive and the pragmatic... for now we might simply think of them as idealism versus realism, or principle versus practicality."[37] He links this to a "fundamental problem" in

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[32]Augustus Cerillo, "The Beginnings of American Pentecostalism: A Historiographical Overview," in *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism*, ed. Edith L. Blumhofer, Russell P. Spittler, and Grant A. Wacker (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 229.
[33]Ibid., 231.
[34]Ibid., 234; Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).
[35]Cerillo, "Beginnings," 247.
[36]Ibid., 254.
[37]Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10.

Christian thinking, that of negotiating between the spiritual and the material and suggests that the pentecostal emphasis on the Holy Spirit held this tension in a way that has kept the faith very much alive for decades.[38] Wacker argues that there is a natural positive engagement with culture through unexamined continuities. He sees that "the typical convert parallels the demographic and biographical profile of the typical American in most but not quite all respects."[39] In particular they shared with all Americans a love of their continent.[40] From the observation that "personal autonomy" was an "exception emphasis" by Americans, Wacker suggests that this was the basis of pentecostals "exceptional geographical mobility" in mission.[41] Hence an instinctive pragmatism led to productive continuities between church and culture that "helped [pentecostals] come to grips with modern life."[42] This argument goes against those earlier pentecostal writers that Cerillo identifies as seeing early pentecostalism as over-against the world. Indeed Wacker argues that pentecostals should have been more discerning and distanced themselves from the culture in which they were set. He admits that they saw the United States as falling into judgment, but that they excluded themselves from the judgment that perhaps should have been due.[43] In terms of the models examined in the last section, this suggests that many early pentecostals were consciously "countercultural" in outlook, but unconsciously "anthropological" in some of the ways they lived.

Over the years, the discernment of both the conscious and unconscious engagement with culture has developed. A recent study has suggested that a significant number of pentecostal churches are seeking to engage positively with the world, to transform social realities for the better. Donald Miller and Tetsuano Yamamori argue from a survey of indigenous churches in the developing world "that some of the most innovative social programs in the world are being initiated by fast-growing pentecostal churches."[44] They suggest that there are three

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[38]Ibid., 268–9.
[39]Ibid., 205.
[40]Ibid., 239.
[41]Ibid., 212,214.
[42]Ibid., 235.
[43]Ibid., 219.
[44]Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 6.

unconscious, indirect, ways in which pentecostals engage as agents of social transformation: (1) by providing a vision of a better life that can motivate political engagement; (2) through the "social uplift" that occurs as people take up "moral proscriptions"; (3) through an emphasis on us being made in the image of God and all having gifts from God in ways that highlight human rights.[45] Although for many pentecostal churches this may be the limit as they focus on "personal purity" and maintain a "wall of separation between themselves and the world."[46] Yet Miller and Yamamori identify a new strand of "Progressive Pentecostalism" which is "not afraid of interaction with the world" and indeed it notable for "the heroic intensity of the ministries."[47] Here there is a positive engagement with local communities, with the "needs of the community" of significant influence on the kind of social ministries that are engaged in.[48] Pentecostalism is seen as "a highly adaptable movement and typically incorporates features of the local cultural context."[49] In terms of our contextual models, here we have something more of a praxis approach although unlike Liberation Theology (which takes such an approach) pentecostals tend to focus less on "structural evil" and more on personal and community problems.[50] This approach needs to be linked with what Miller and Yamamori see as "the root of Pentecostal social engagement," that is "the experience of collective worship. It is a divine-human encounter that empowers people to help their immediate neighbor as well as engage in various community-building activities."[51] Admittedly such engagements are still relatively new and can be "highly dependent on the creative drive of the founding leader."[52] Yet they need not be and point the way towards a more nuanced pentecostal engagement with the world.[53]

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[45]Ibid., 32–34.
[46]Ibid., 127.
[47]Ibid.
[48]Ibid., 55–56.
[49]Ibid., 20.
[50]Ibid., 182–183,216.
[51]Ibid., 132, cf. 221.
[52]Ibid., 128.
[53]As an example of an approach that encourages all pentecostals to engage positively with culture is that of the Embassy of God in the Ukraine, Sunday Adelaja, *Church Shift* (Florida: Charisma House, 2008).

Amos Yong gives a three-fold typology of pentecostal approaches to society and culture: sectarianism, conservatism and progressivism.[54] These pick up on some of the themes already identified and are instructive if not exhaustive.[55] He notes a tradition of sectarian holiness and Oneness pentecostalism in North America shaped by the cultural issues of the time. In other cultures, for which he reflects on Chinese and Nigerian examples, he suggests that pentecostal sectarianism takes different forms. Whilst not "otherworldly or even against this world without qualification" this type of pentecostalism does prefer to distinguish itself in comparison with its cultural setting, but usually without a conscious decision to do so – its theological outlook in other areas drives it in this direction.[56] In contrast Yong sees pentecostal conservatism as taking "more conscious counter-cultural as well as counter-ideological stances."[57] Here he turns to the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul as an example of a church that seeks to preserve a conservative, understood as "biblical," morality. Yong also sees such an outlook in the rather different contexts of Native American pentecostals and pentecostalism amongst the Urapmin tribes of Papua New Guinea. These show a desire to conserve cultures that had been repressed or in need of postcolonial reclamation. Hence cultural engagement is rooted in a desire to conserve certain "essentials" that are seen as under threat in the host culture. Finally, Yong turns to the kind of progressive pentecostalism we saw noted by Miller and Yamamori. He broadens their argument by appealing to what he calls the "prophetic tradition of Afropentecostalism" noting an example of churches developing "holistic soteriologies focused on saving the 'whole person,' on linking conversion to community building, and not dichotomizing spiritual from social transformation."[58] In short, we can say that Yong sees pentecostals as engaging in a generally unconsciously negative way, a consciously conservative way, and in a consciously progressive way to culture. He is supportive of the latter, as is James Smith who feels that although pentecostals "have often

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[54]Amos Yong, *In the Day of Caesar*, MS.29–39, 1.3.
[55]Yong is not attempting to cover all pentecostal experience, Amos Yong, Email, March 19th (2009).
[56]Amos Yong, *In the Day of Caesar*, MS.33, 1.3.1.
[57]Ibid., MS.33, 1.3.2.
[58]Ibid., MS.36, 1.3.3.

accepted rejections of the world... the core elements of a Pentecostal worldview aim towards an affirmation of the fundamental goodness of spheres of culture related to embodiment."[59]

There is a movement that Yong reflects, towards an appreciation of the diversity of pentecostalism around the world in ways that are seen to arise out of a variety of cultural adaptations of the pentecostal movement. In 1999 pentecostals gathered to reflect on the "globalization of pentecostalism" reflecting in part on pentecostalism as a "global culture."[60] This raised a question that remains about how coherent and unified such a culture is and how it relates to other global movements.[61] A useful contribution to this question has been recently debates in terms of mission studies, with Ogbu Kalu suggesting we need to think in terms of "global processes" and "local identities."[62] Rather than look to a simple concept of globalization, he argues that the last century has seen a focus on both the global and the local, with a variety of global processes (or movements) being appropriated in different contexts to form particular local church identities. A number of scholars examine how this has happened in particular pentecostal churches. Edith Blumhofer examines Pandita Ramabai and the pentecostal revival in India, suggesting that a truly indigenous church arose from the positive interaction of various movements she experienced – the movements longing for revival that saw evidence in the Welsh revival; the Keswick Convention; educational work in India; the Church of England; and the later pentecost at Azusa Street.[63] Feiya Tao studied the Jesus movement in China and sees it as a form of truly contextual Christianity formed from the pentecostal missionary movement; Chinese Taoism and Confucianism; and the social gospel movement prevalent at the time.[64] It is notable that this study which does not generally

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[59]James K.A. Smith, "Thinking in Tongues," *First Things* April (2008).
[60]Murray W. Dempster, Bryon D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen, eds, *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999), xiii-xvi.
[61]See here the reflections of Samuel, "Pentecostalism."
[62]Ogbu U. Kalu, ed., Alaine Low, associate editor, *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity: Global Processes and Local Identities*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 3–23. See also my "Review of *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity*," *Penteco Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 127–29.
[63]Blumhofer, "Consuming Fire."
[64]Feiya Tao, "Pentecostalism and Christian Utopia in China: Jing Dianying and the Jesus Family Movement," in *Interpreting Global Christianity*, ed. Ogbu U. Kalu, associate editor Alaine Low (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2008), 238–52.

interact with pentecostal scholarship recognises the significant nature of pentecostalism in adapting global cultural and religious processes to form particular indigenous local pentecostal identities.[65]

7.2.2 The Narrative of Acts and the World

Pentecostal engagement with the world tends to be motivated by understandings of Luke-Acts and related Pauline texts and we will turn to focus on these in a moment. First it is important to note that many Scriptures that are central to understanding God and the church's relation to the world come from outside this focus. In his brief survey of the work of the Holy Spirit in creation, Yong surveys texts throughout Scripture that fit with the themes of the original creation, the re-creation and the final creation.[66] In a much more detailed, yet evangelical, perspective Chris Wright surveys the biblical materials they see God relating to creation, to humanity in God's image and to the nations.[67] He argues that the whole earth is the sphere of God's mission activity, drawing largely on the Old Testament vision of YHWH's creation together with its continuity found in Jesus as Lord of creation.[68] For Wright, engagement with the world is built on creation's *intrinsic* value to God, not simply as a consequence of human need or evangelistic fruitfulness.[69] Within creation Wright argues for the need to value humanity in particular as created in God's image and hence have individual dignity as well as shared sinfulness, and is created in relationship – engagement with the world has a personal focus. Relationships naturally form communities that live in particular places and hence it is not surprising to find that the "nations of humanity preoccupy the biblical narrative from beginning to end."[70] Wright sees the nations as part of created and redeemed humanity,

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[65]Other examples of pentecostal formation of local identities, often referred to in the literature, that could be considered here are Marthinus L. Daneel, *African Earthkeepers: Wholistic Interfaith Mission* (New York: Orbis ; Northam: Roundhouse, 2000); Eldin Villafane, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 1993).
[66]Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 35–42.
[67]Christopher J.H. Wright, *Mission of God*, 393–530.
[68]Ibid., 397–403.
[69]Ibid., 419.
[70]Ibid., 454.

subject to God's judgment and mercy, with their histories under God's control. Nations witness to the people of God, benefit from the blessings of God's people and one day will bring their worship to God.

Walter Brueggemann reflects on similar themes in exploring God's partnership with Israel, human persons, the nations and creation – focusing on the "unsolicited testimony" to God that relates beyond the people of God. Such partnership involves mutuality and a commitment to freedom and passion, themes pertinent to our last chapter.[71] Brueggemann argues that Yahweh is always "Yahweh-in-relation" and so testimony of God must also relate to Yahweh's partner.[72] Also, Yahweh's partners cannot be thought of, from an Old Testament standpoint, independently of Yahweh – thus to be human is not to be autonomous, but to be in relation.[73] Although Israel is presented as "Yahweh's preferred and privileged partner" it lived its life in a world in which Yahweh governs beyond the boundaries of Israel.[74] Brueggemann speaks of Yahweh's "rich field of engagement with the nations" in ways that challenged Israel and prevents simplistic views of where true testimony can be found.[75] At the root of such a view of God's engagement with the world is a belief in "a *limitless generosity* that intends an extravagant abundance" that encompasses the whole of reality.[76] Yet that reality is also characterised by a "deep, radical, painful, costly *fissure*," a brokenness into which God speaks hope as the "promise-maker and promise-keeper."[77]

Here we glimpse the wide Scriptural witness to God's engagement with the whole of creation, particularly through partnership with humanity and the communities of nations in which hope is brought even in pain and brokenness. This is the background within which the narrative of Luke-Acts is set and within which I want to highlight the stories of Cornelius and Paul in Athens, two significant events in the narrative that connect the church with wider

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[71]Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Fortress Press, 1997), 410–11.
[72]Ibid., 409.
[73]Ibid., 450–51.
[74]Ibid., 492–93.
[75]Ibid., 525–27.
[76]Ibid., 559.
[77]Ibid., 560,561.

socio-religious realities. F. Scott Spencer describes Peter's encounter with Cornelius as "the most radical socio-religious breakthrough thus far in Acts."[78] It is made so partly through the irony of the narrative – "the one most resistant to this progressive mission is the apostle Peter."[79] Indeed Peter seems repeatedly put on trial by the church for his actions in a way that seems to question his identity as a true apostle of Jesus. Is it possible that God could work beyond the boundaries of the existing church community? The supernatural events surrounding the meeting with Cornelius are taken as evidence that the answer to this is affirmative. The importance of the affirmative answer is strengthened by the "surprising twist in the narrative" in that Peter's speech is interrupted by the falling of the Holy Spirit which Spencer sees as a call to immediate decisive action rather than more explanations.[80] Hence the immediate baptism that confirms God's wider working that has brought a new community into the partnership of hope. It might be argued that this story simply fits with a wider purpose of the author to commend Christian faith in a Roman setting and thus says more about their pro-Roman outlook than about God's actions.[81] Yet the focus on supernatural confirmations and the way this story develops that of Philip with the Ethiopian and indeed the conversion of Paul speak of the importance of the theological theme of God's reaching beyond the boundaries.[82] Spencer notes how in the story of Cornelius the theme of "sending" is significantly repeated and how this relates to the prophetic nature of what Peter is doing.[83] In this, he suggests, Peter is following the pattern given of Jesus in Luke as one sent and also as a prophet. Behind this might be the Old Testament example of the prophet Jonah who was reluctant to go to those outside the people of God.

Once the reality of God's engagement with people beyond the church is faced, the question then was as to how such people were to follow Christ: were they to be incorporated

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[78]F. Scott Spencer, *Acts*, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 103.
[79]Ibid.
[80]Ibid., 116.
[81]For a summary of debates over the purpose of Acts see Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 55–60 and in the current context Spencer, *Acts*, 110.
[82]This is a point noted by Pelikan, *Acts*, 128.
[83]Spencer, *Acts*, 104–5.

into the existing form of church, or does the understanding of church itself need to change as a result? Robert Gallagher, in his pentecostal review of Protestant understandings of the work of the Holy Spirit in the world, affirms the working of God outside the church insofar "as they are on the way towards accepting the truth that is in Christ Jesus."[84] He uses the example of the story of Cornelius in support of this but does not, in my opinion, connect his positive view of God's engagement with the whole world with the importance of this reshaping the church through encounters such as that of Cornelius. Andrew Walls, a missiologist, points further in considering what he calls the debate over "converts or proselytes" in the early church of Acts.[85] The example of Cornelius, he suggests, points to the vital need for a conversion that is "culturally and intellectually dynamic, creative, and innovative."[86] It would have been safer to have Cornelius as a proselyte, called to Torah and circumcision as a vital part of his membership of God's church. Yet in the end the church decided in favour of a conversion that meant that turning all Cornelius' existing experience in the direction of Christ. We might say that God's working in all people was in this event turned firmly in the direction of Jesus. As Walls puts it, "The way of proselytes is safe... Converts face a much riskier life. Converts have to be constantly, relentlessly turning their ways of thinking, their education and training, their ways of working and doing things towards Christ... The distinction between proselyte and convert is vital to Christian mission. It springs out of the very origins of that mission, demonstrated in the first great crisis of the early church."[87] Here there is a more than superficial overcoming of the brokenness that exists between different races, through a deep appreciation of creation and redemption in the movement of mission in the early church.

If the narrative relating to Cornelius shows something of the prophetic creativity that comes from the churches connecting with God's working outside its boundaries, the story of Paul in Athens illustrates a greater appreciation of the way God may be glimpsed within

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[84]Robert L. Gallager, "The Holy Spirit in the World: In Non-Christians, Creation, and Other Religions," *AJPS* 9, no. 1 (2006): 31.

[85]Andrew F. Walls, "Converts or Proselytes? the Crisis Over Conversion in the Early Church," *IBMR* 28, no. 1 (2004): 2–7.

[86]Ibid., 6.

[87]Ibid.

another philosophical outlook. Before we look at this episode we must recognise that there are questions over its historicity, particularly in relation to Paul. Robert Wall admits that we must question whether Paul here is simply an invention of Luke, with "most scholars" doubting this is Paul.[88] Yet Wall disagrees and Joseph Fitzmeyer sees "echoes of Pauline teaching" in the passage, particularly from a Jewish background.[89] N.T. Wright takes this further in suggesting that Paul's speech in Acts 17 fits well with the Pauline literature's theological themes, although our narrative approach is not dependent upon Pauline authenticity here.[90]

Paul was brought to Athens and "deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols" he began arguing in the synagogues and market-place (17:16-17). He was brought to share with the philosophers in the Areopagus and speaks in a way that is both affirming of God's work in the Athenians and yet also critical. James Dunn sees the speech as being one primarily of protest and yet it is seen by others as a more detailed and positive development of the argument presented earlier in the narrative at Lystra (14:15-18), particularly in its focus on God as creator.[91] Pelikan finds in this passage both an "affinity" and "difference" between Christian faith and the Greco-Roman philosophy found in Athens.[92] The affinities in the Stoic and Epicurean systems mentioned in the passage were to influence later Christian theology, but here it is clear that Paul is seen to find in these systems ideas that have affinities with his belief in "one God as the sovereign creator and sustainer of everything in the universe, including human beings," to quote Spencer.[93] This enables him to see the altar for worship "to an unknown god" (17:23) as being in fact to the known God of Jews and Christians. It also enables him to link this God with the wisdom of the poets who suggest that "in him we live and move and have our being" (17:28). Chris Wright develops this theme further in his consideration of the way in which the Old Testament wisdom literature provides a link with

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[88]Robert W. Wall, "The Acts of the Apostles," in *New Interpreter's Bible, Volume X*, ed. Leander E. Leck (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 243.
[89]Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 602.
[90]N.T. Wright, *Paul*, 38.
[91]So Pelikan, *Acts*, 198 Dunn, *Acts*, 230–31.
[92]Pelikan, *Acts*, 190.
[93]Spencer, *Acts*, 174.

the wisdom outside the people of God through an appreciation of God as creator.[94] Wall, building on the work of Robert Garland, suggests that here Paul is fulfilling the Athenian religious expectations of how a new religion should be established.[95]

Yet this focus on God as creator also provides a difference in that God is self-sufficient and has "independence from the world he created."[96] Hence the distress over idols, a very Jewish response as Wall notes.[97] Paul was rejecting "unequivocally... [the] Greco-Roman polytheism of myths and theogaries."[98] The theological move in this narrative to an appreciation of God as creator thus meant both an affirming of the wisdom of those outside the church, as originating in God, and yet also a critique of that wisdom insofar as it goes against a Jewish-Christian understanding of God as creator. It is worth noting that here is both a very Jewish approach and yet one subtly transformed in the conclusion to the speech by its mention of resurrection related implicitly to Christ. Admittedly there is little Christology in this speech, but the way the narrative leads towards Christ is significant and provokes a mixed response (17:32-33). The need for repentance and turning to the one God has appointed and raised from the dead is clear (17:30-31). Returning to N.T. Wright, here there is a clear link with what he sees as "a vital underlying principle of all Paul's thought... on the belief that the one true God is the creator, the ruler and the coming judge of the whole world."[99] Wright explores this in relation to Colossians 1:15-20, 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 1-11 in which he sees the themes of creation and covenant as linked. There is creation, covenant and judgment that require a discerning recognition of the ways in which God is at work in the world, not just in the church. Such discernment prevents "Christian discipleship turning into a private cult, a sect, a mystery religion" and instead requires the church to engage with the world in ways that

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[94]Christopher J.H. Wright, *Mission of God*, 441–53.
[95]Wall, "Acts," 245; Robert Garland, *Introducing New Gods: The Politics of Athenian Religion* (Duckworth, 1992), 18–19.
[96]Spencer, *Acts*, 174.
[97]Wall, "Acts," 244.
[98]Pelikan, *Acts*, 190.
[99]N.T. Wright, *Paul*, 12.

are a dangerous counter the imperial theology of the day.[100] It is a discernment that both affirms and critiques both the world and the church as it seeks to be ever true to Christ.

7.2.3 Pentecostal Ecclesiology and the World

I have argued elsewhere that pentecostal approaches to contextualisation can be considered "irregular" in a similar way to which Frank Macchia suggests early pentecostal theology was "irregular."[101] In other words, pentecostals contextualise without great thought or planning and largely due to the experiential basis of the faith. There is a need for a deeper theology as a basis for pentecostal contextualisation and I have previously suggested this on the basis of the Holy Spirit seen as *life giver*, *sender*, *revealer* and *gift giver*.[102] The methodology used in this project has led us to a more trinitarian theology and this suggests a different approach. From the above we can see that pentecostalism has always engaged with the world, if often unconsciously, driven often by its pragmatic impulses. Yet there has been an increasing movement towards a more conscious and positive engagement with the world, in terms of pentecostal praxis and theological reflection. This engagement has tended to address social and religious cultural issues rather than political issues, although the recent contribution of Yong is notable here.[103] Discernment is a vital need in such pentecostal world engagement and the need for further reflection is evident. This project reflects the increasing movement to positive pentecostal engagement with the world, contributing particular theological reflections in the task. Before proceeding it is important to look at the way in which this project has already reflected on this task.

The choice of Amos Yong's methodology was based on the need for an ecclesiology shaped by an understanding of mission that valued God's working in the world. We are building on his understanding of all experience, whether in the church or not, as

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[100]N.T. Wright, *Resurrection*, 729.
[101]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 93–96; Macchia, "Struggle," 10–11.
[102]Andrew M. Lord, "The Holy Spirit and Contextualisation," *AJPS* 4, no. 2 (2001): 209–13.
[103]Amos Yong, *In the Day of Caesar*.

"theologically, essentially of the Spirit."[104] Thus all experience has a "religious dimension" rather than being divided into Christian and non-Christian categories.[105] In this Yong builds on the philosophical work of C.S. Pierce and Donald Gelpi and uses the terminology "church" and "world" as overlapping entities – Yong shares with many scholars a desire to overcome simple dualisms. Hence we have addressed questions that arise as regards the distinctiveness of the church and its witness to Christ through the Scriptures, affirming that experience can be affirming or challenging in nature and needs to be discerned through Word and Community as well as by the Spirit. Thus the ecclesiology developed here presupposes a church engaged with the world if only because it shares much with the world. This is an understanding that is being explored in different ways by the pentecostal scholars we considered in Chapter 3. Whilst some like Simon Chan prefer to limit the Spirit and mission to the church, many scholars have been considering different ways in which ecclesiology is linked with the transformation of the world, and indeed all of creation.[106] A broadly shared hesitation, seen most clearly in the pentecostal dialogue with Jürgen Moltmann, is to ensure the Spirit can challenge the world and that creation is seen as moving eschatologically towards Christ. Yong has maintained these pentecostal concerns through a philosophical approach rooted in a form of American pragmatism that requires constant fallible movement forwards in discovering truth, with a focus on Christ and a challenge to all that hinders what is true.[107] He has done this in a different way to those pentecostals who are more influenced by Karl Barth.[108]

In developing a network ecclesiology, this project commented on the importance of networks in society to the development of pentecostal networks from the outset of the movement. More recently the growth of the so-called "network society" has influenced the form of some pentecostal movements, such as those in the UK studied by William Kay.[109] I

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[104]Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 121.
[105]Ibid., 122.
[106]For example, Land, *Spirituality*, 175; Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 118; Macchia, *Baptised in the Spirit*, 117.
[107]See Chapter 2 Section 3 for a more detailed introduction on these points.
[108]For example, Frank Macchia. Yong joked that he didn't read much Barth in response to a question at the Society of Pentecostal Studies, Eugene OR, 2009.
[109]Kay, *Apostolic Networks*.

argued that the overlap of networks in society and in the church has been important since the early church of Acts. It is not possible to separate the church in Acts from its historical setting and the importance of cities, road networks, philosophical ideas, social networks and political stability to the growth of the church. I then developed a trinitarian understanding to underlie my development of networks in which there is a reflection of the Trinity seen in those networks in the world as well as those in the church. The relational nature of God is seen in the whole of creation, in which a *perichoretic* distinctiveness and relatedness is reflected in the web or network of communities in the world. I have argued that it is the shared reflection of the Trinity in the world and within the church that provides an essential basis for mission and enables contextual mission. Yet church networks remain distinctive in their belief and acknowledgement of Jesus as the Messiah of God, in their *indwelling* and not just the *presence* of the Holy Spirit, and in their response to the Father's call to go with good news. I later developed a sacramental outlook within which the Father works through all creation by the Spirit through particular events or signs that draw people in an eschatological direction to Christ. Pentecostal churches can be seen as marked by the particular sacrament of Spirit baptism by which the holistic, eschatological and missionary graciousness of God is mediated. The missionary nature of God requires world engagement and this has been expressed in terms of a dynamic catholicity that moves the church towards a geographical universality that is incomplete until the eschaton.

In the last chapter I argued that church networks can be seen to form a visible embodiment of this dynamic catholicity. Partnership characterises such networks in terms of particular understandings of mission, of specific tasks, of being with God and in ways of sharing together. There is diversity as well as a unity within these networks and such network partnership was seen in praxis, within Scripture and as rooted in theology and needs to remain prophetic in nature for the health of the networks. It is worth noting at this point that my definition of partnership arises out of the Christian tradition and yet the broad categories can be applied beyond the church. Other networks beyond the church, perhaps involving people of

other faiths, can also be seen in terms of mission, specific tasks, being with God, and sharing – although some would want to omit God and all would probably define the terms slightly differently. Partnership is a term used in secular work for specific tasks undertaken together within an overall vision, thus omitting our third aspect of partnership but still allowing church and secular partnership co-operation. The overlaps in self-understanding between church and non-Church networks point, I would suggest, to creative possibilities for mission and world engagement. But before we consider this further we need to reflect on discernment.

7.2.4 Discernment and Mission

We have seen that there is a growing positive engagement with the world by pentecostal churches. This can be seen as going alongside a greater appreciation of some of the theological themes that link church and world – that all experience is related to God, that God is the creator of all, and that the trinitarian nature of God finds a reflection in communities in the world as well as the church. Yet the desire and need for discernment is ever present and this takes two general forms. Firstly, there is the discernment between the continuities and discontinuities between the church and the world, between the gospel and culture, between church fellowship and society. Within this there is a discernment of how the global processes at work in the church and world shape local identities. These two approaches can be seen as a particular synthetic approach to contextualisation in which the discernment is at all levels and equally applied to church and world which interact in many ways. Secondly, there is a discernment that more clearly focuses on how the church life, message and Scriptures are translated into particular contexts – the translation approach to contextualisation. It is possible to see both at work in Acts as the church wrestled with what was simply cultural in their background. This was forced by God's approval of Cornelius and Paul's listening to Athenian culture and caused both a reworking of the faith of the early church alongside a continuing translated sharing of the gospel that had deep Jewish theological roots. Such discernments are always fallible and partial within the eschatological movement that is important in our

methodology. There is no perfect discernment or contextualisation this side of the "new heavens and the new earth" when all evil is done away with. With our finite nature our discernment can only be partial and take in only part of the many aspects of any culture within any part of the world. Yet the movement does drive continued attempts at discernment and contextualisation as a part of the mission of the church.

I want to suggest that the mission of the church can be expressed through discerning partnerships between church networks and world networks. This develops the understanding of mission utilised in this project in giving a more community-based and practical basis. In this view we see the importance of developing partnerships between the church community and the communities that the church relates to. Such partnerships will be inspired on the church side by a vision of God's mission and the continual reality of being with God. Yet the particular task and the practicalities of sharing in this task might have much in common with those outside the church, as might the overall mission and an acknowledgement of God (if people of other religious faith are involved). These tasks can be seen as carried out through sacramental events which are marked, for pentecostals, by the reality of Spirit baptism – of an overflowing experience of the Holy Spirit enabling such mission tasks. This coming together of church and community inevitably involves a discerning contextualisation as differences come to light between church and world. This can happen unconsciously but I have argued the need for more conscious approaches. Such approaches will be synthetic in wanting to give space for God's prophetic challenge to the church as much to the world, noting the ways God's working outside the church challenges the church to transform its life. They will also involve a translation of the trinitarian essence of the church, as described in Chapter 5 where we commented on the contextualisation rooted in the self-giving Father, the incarnate Son and the transforming Holy Spirit.

7.3 Issues of Power and Place

Before we move towards the practice of contextualisation it is important to address two questions that arise from the discussions so far. Firstly, the last chapter highlighted the issues of power that so often shape partnerships in negative ways. Questions of imperialism and the history of colonialism continue to challenge understandings of the church's mission today and we need to ask how power might be positively exercised in the partnerships and contextualisation envisioned here. For this we will utilise the work of Michael Welker on the Spirit of power. Secondly, we must recognise that partnerships between the church and world often arise because of shared geography and always need shared places in which the shared tasks are carried out. To put it another way, contextualisation requires a context that cannot be separated from place. This may seem obvious, yet is a challenge to our approach that is based on networks for which geography has not been a concern. We need to consider the importance of place alongside that of network and John Inge provides important insights here.

The partnership network approach developed in this project needs to take account of the challenge given by issues of power. In the last chapter we saw how crucial an issue this has been in relationships between churches across the world during times of transition out of colonial models. This can remain an issue in any partnership unless it is addressed, and here the question is how our theology addresses questions of power. In the last chapter, I noted the comments of Andrew Kirk and Michael Gorman that from the biblical materials it is possible to take a positive approach to power. Stephen Sykes in his perceptive study of power and theology argues that the church cannot avoid issues of power.[110] He argues for a positive critical Christian approach to the exercise of power that he characterises as "realistic." Here I want to utilise the theological insights of Michael Welker who sees such a positive approach in his understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Admittedly, Welker is not pentecostal and his approach has been critiqued as lacking an appreciation of the mystical aspects of the

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[110]Sykes, *Power*, vii-xi.

Spirit's working as seen in speaking in tongues.[111] This he admits to, although he has been keen to engage with pentecostal understandings of the Spirit and his more recent work acknowledges more of pentecostal experience.[112] In terms of this project, Welker appreciates the need for any theology to be grounded in wider human experience, to link theology within the church to recognition of the Spirit's working in all experience.[113] Our concern here is not his methodology of "realistic theology" but rather his understanding of the Spirit of power. The "Spirit of God makes God's power knowable" in everyday life in society in a way that affects all.[114] This action of God in power is pluralistic and is for the sake of God's righteousness.[115] The Pentecost narrative points to the pluralistic nature of the Spirit's power, a power that is sensitive to differences, rather than a power that forces others to conform to a single pattern of life. The power is also serving a wider purpose – that of God's righteousness, which Welker describes in terms of justice, mercy and the knowledge of God.[116] This is a power that seeks "to deliver persons and groups of people of all times, and historical worlds of all times, from the demonic clutches of sin."[117] It is a power for "renewal" and freedom that is rooted in Jesus as "the bearer of the Spirit," particularly in "the experience and knowledge of the cross and resurrection."[118] It is a "world-overcoming power" that liberates people in terms of justice and mercy, but also in terms of knowledge of God.[119] This knowledge of God finds a focus in the Spirit of "self-giving, self-withdrawal... for the benefit of the world" that is seen in the "selfless person of the Crucified One."[120] Thus the power of God works through self-giving for the benefit of others and in the direction of a universal differentiated community

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[111]Frank D. Macchia, "Discerning the Spirit in Life: A Review Of *God the Spirit* by Michael Welker," *JPT* 10 (1997): 14–15.

[112]His important work is Michael Welker, *God the Spirit*. More recently, he has explored a number of inter-disciplinary research projects including Michael Welker, ed., *The Work of the Spirit: Pneumatology and Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 2006). His response to pentecostal critiques can be found in Michael Welker, "Spirit Topics: Trinity, Personhood, Mystery and Tongues," *JPT* 10 (1997): 29–34.

[113]Michael Welker, *God the Spirit*, xi.

[114]Ibid., 2,21.

[115]Ibid., 25.

[116]Ibid., 40–41.

[117]Ibid., 209.

[118]Ibid., 209,158.

[119]Ibid., 307.

[120]Ibid., 310,311.

that overcomes what Welker sees as the "internal disintegration" that characterises contemporary society.[121]

In more recent work Welker reiterates this outlook although using different terminology. He asserts that according "to the biblical traditions, the Spirit is context-sensitive and individuality-sensitive."[122] This is seen as compatible with the Spirit's powerful moving towards unity through an understanding of the Spirit's vulnerability, the resistibility of the Spirit.[123] Hence the "power of the Spirit and the subtlety and sensitivity of its working do not contradict each other."[124] It is this power that counters "evil and the forces of sin... often come in most astounding modesty."[125] Welker gives a greater appreciation to the pentecostal claim that "deep, ecstatic experiences of an awesome power are characteristic of the experience of the Spirit" and yet focuses on the way Spirit baptism leads to "truth-seeking communities."[126] Although Welker starts from a different place to that taken in this project, his insights rooted in the biblical and theological traditions provide a useful complement to our understanding of partnership particularly in regard to contexts. The sharing in partnership for particular tasks in mission is undertaken "with God," in the power of the Spirit. The power of partnerships can be seen in a vulnerability and self-giving that reflects the cross of Christ and the resistibility of the Spirit. It is a power that is sensitive to contextual difference and yet does not give up on working towards a world where evil and sin are overcome and the realities of justice, mercy and the knowledge of God are evident in every situation. This is an understanding that gets beyond some of the images of the past that have given mission a negative feel, but one that does not simply abandon the language of power. We cannot avoid a discussion of power when considering world engagement, but the question is more how we approach and use power creatively for the good of all.

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[121]Ibid., 108.
[122]Michael Welker, "The Spirit in Philosophical, Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives," in *The Work of the Spirit: Pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, ed. Michael Welker (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 2006), 226.
[123]Welker points to 1 Thes. 5:19; Eph. 4:30; Acts 5:9; Heb. 10:29, Michael Welker, "The Spirit in Philosophical, Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives," 227.
[124]Michael Welker, "The Spirit in Philosophical, Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives," 227.
[125]Ibid., 229.
[126]Ibid., 230,231.

For most of church history there has been an unalterable link between church and place: the city churches of Paul; church as a congregation in a given place; a diocese with given boundaries; national churches; etc. Sometimes church has been defined by its longing for place, such as the church in southern Sudan that has at different times become a refugee church.[127] Within the Anglican church in England this emphasis on place is most clearly seen in the Parish system, whereby every part of the country belongs to a specific parish and churches were established to serve those parishes. Much missionary work has developed on the assumption that churches were to be planted in other places where churches did not as yet exist.[128] Within ecumenical discussions one of the most contentious issues is that of proselytism, already mentioned, which can also be seen as a situation in which two churches (e.g. Orthodox and pentecostal) claim involvement in one place, where the ecumenical suggestion has been to limit one church to one place.[129] The ecclesiology developed here has started with roots in networks of faith rather than in places, building on one sociological insight about contemporary culture. It is important to engage theology with insights from sociology, with Mark Cartledge having challenged pentecostals to embrace dialogue with social sciences in developing practical theology.[130] We need to recognise the complexity of contemporary social analysis and John Inge from a theological perspective usefully engages with sociological insights that challenge those we have developed in support of networks.

Network has been valuable in our rethinking of the meaning of the universal nature of the church. As we shift to thinking about particular contexts then we must not dismiss or downplay the importance of place. Inge defines "place" in contrast to "space": "When we think of space, most of us will tend to think of 'outer space' and 'infinity', but when we think of place, on the other hand, we will tend to think of locality, a particular spot. What is undifferentiated space becomes for us significant place by virtue of our familiarity with it."[131]

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[127]Andrew Wheeler, ed., *Land of Promise: Church Growth in a Sudan at War*, Faith in Sudan, no. 1 (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1997).
[128]G.R. Evans, *The Church and the Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 63.
[129]Ibid., 69–70.
[130]Cartledge, *Practical Theology*, 11–31.
[131]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 1–2.

He notes the cultural move away from network to place, but sees this in a negative light that challenges network approaches such as the one here. Inge argues that within the Western intellectual tradition "the subordination of place to space culminated in the seventeenth century, and that the overcoming of space by time continued during the next two-and-a-half centuries."[132] Postmodern thinking gives Inge hope that its "suspicion of grand narratives" and its value of the particular will encourage a reappreciation of the role of place.

The greatest danger, perhaps, in stressing networks over places is that we can disconnect humanity from creation, imagining that we can define culture in isolation from the created order within which it is situated. We might imagine encountering God as individuals and communities in ways that are "spiritual" rather than "physical." It is then a short step to ignore some of the physical, social issues that arise when we ask how networks relate to one another in a given place. A significant current issue in British media is how networks of the comfortable "middle class" relate to the networks of asylum seekers as they seek to share the same place to live. Inge argues that place is a primary category of biblical faith, building on the work of Brueggemann who notes "the preoccupation of the Bible for placement."[133] This starts with the Garden of Eden, develops during the journey to the Promised Land, is longed for in Exile, and is to come in the New Jerusalem. Here we may see God the Father who longs to develop places for his people, places where he is encountered and socially aware communities are built up. Summarising the Old Testament evidence Inge argues that "the narrative would find foreign any notion that place is not integral to our experience of God or the world but simply exists alongside us as an added extra."[134] Of course, it has been argued that the New Testament shows a move away from a "territorial chrysalis" towards a focus on Jesus, to use the terminology of W.D. Davies.[135] We might also argue that Jesus' coming shows a marked move away from the particular place of the Temple as a place of encounter

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[132]Ibid., 9.
[133]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 33 pointing to Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (London: SPCK, 1978).
[134]Inge, *Theology of Place*, 47.
[135]Ibid., 50; W.D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

with God, towards an understanding that any place can become a place of encountering God as Jesus is there. N.T. Wright particularly notes this move to replace the Temple with Jesus himself within the Gospels, culminating in Jesus' "temple action."[136] Inge focuses on an understanding of the incarnation and focuses on Jesus' coming to a particular place and people. Here is an outlook that starts with God's creation of place within which all people can encounter God and grow in their humanity. This relationship between God, people and place is developed in Inge's sacramental outlook that we have utilised already. He provides a strong critique of the desire to leave place behind and develops a strong biblical argument for the need not to forget place in our encounters with God. He mentions pilgrimages that resonate with pentecostal pilgrimages to places of notable encounter with God.[137] Inge provides a positive appreciation of place that challenges a simple reliance on networks. There is a need to integrate our understanding of networks based on partnership with the recognition that such partnerships always have places in which they take place. Partnerships, networks and place come together in sacramental encounters and contextual practices.

Yet we must recognise the limits of Inge's sociological engagement and his resulting ecclesiological assumptions. He tends to put all the emphasis on place to the extent that networks do not get considered, despite their clear relevance in contemporary society. This lays him open to the charge that his understanding of culture and community assumes a uniformity of culture in places where that is no longer the case. The reality is that most places have within them different networks that span far beyond the particular geographical place, and these should not be ignored in any contemporary contextualisation. Inge's ecclesiology, whilst affirming God's work outside the church, ends up developing a "come to us" ecclesiology where this wider working of God is left aside in an almost counter-cultural model

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[136]N.T. Wright, *Jesus*, 432–37.

[137]One such recent example is that of the Lakeland outpouring under Todd Bentley, sympathetically but critically reviewed by Nigel Scotland, "'The Lakeland Outpouring': A Florida Curate's Egg," *ANVIL* 26, no. 1 (2009): 43–60 and Stephen Hunt, "The Florida 'Outpouring' Revival: A Melting Pot for Contemporary Pentecostal Prophecy and Eschatology?" *PentecoStudies* 8, no. 1 (2009).

of contextualisation.[138] For our purposes, we utilise Inge's work on sacramental encounters and his challenge to a simple network approach, whilst wanting to develop a wider world engagement than he allows for in his ecclesiology.

7.4 Practice of Contextualisation

Having developed an understanding of contextualisation from our methodology and within the wider mission setting, and having considered questions related to power and place we now turn to the practice of contextualisation. I want to suggest contextualisation incorporate a pentecostal distinctive of hospitality, developing Yong's more recent work. This is important as we recognise that the personal aspects of partnership have so far received little attention and it is hard to imagine a pentecostal approach to contextualisation that is not personal.

7.4.1 Pentecostal Hospitality

Yong has developed the systematic foundations of his theology for his recent work on disability and I want to consider his anthropology and its contributions to partnerships in ecclesiology in terms of personhood and friendship.[139] Building on this Yong has written on the contribution of hospitality to the development of mission practices, particularly in the context of people of other faiths.[140] I want to suggest that partnerships can be seen as practices in hospitality, thus making more explicit how they might contribute to the church's engagement in a world of many faiths. This enhances the ecclesiology developed so far in a pentecostal direction that appreciates friendship and hospitality as integral to the churches mission.

In *Theology and Down Syndrome* Yong develops a Christian systematic theology that is shaped around the theme of disability. This is an attempt that arises out of growing up with his

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[138]Originally I argued that Inge represents a synthetic model in that he engages positively with sociological analysis, Lord, "Searching". Yet I now recognise a more counter-cultural result – in conversation with Inge further to my article he indicated that he sees his approach as more a counter-cultural or translation model rather than a synthetic approach.
[139]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*.
[140]Amos Yong, *Hospitality*.

brother who lives with Down syndrome. Narrative reference is made to this at the start of each chapter and it informs his reflections on friendship. This is an interdisciplinary approach that interacts with the literature on disability and is pentecostal in its desire to develop an appropriate pneumatological imagination.[141] From our perspective it is important to note the way in which Yong develops his previous Christian theological anthropology through an understanding of "embodiment." He seeks to develop a "multi-level emergentist anthropology" rooted in the Spirit that implies an anthropology "of human beings in the image of the triune God (as *imago trinitas*) as embodied or material, as interdependent or interrelational, and as transcending or spiritual."[142] Such embodiment allows us to "appreciate, account for, and nurture created particularity, uniqueness, and difference" and by the Spirit sees "the energy for 'unleashing multiple forms of corporeal flourishing.'"[143] This develops Yong's earlier understanding of the Spirit and relationality, rationality and the *dunamis* of life.[144] In particular Yong sees here the work of the Holy Spirit in terms of the "bond of human friendship" based on the universal experience of the "breath of life" and the Spirit "poured out on all flesh."[145] Friendship is thus "one of the gifts of God" empowered by "self-sacrificial mutuality" and through which "grace is mediated" for the "glory of God."[146] This fits well with our previous reflections on the nature of partnerships and suggests that the sharing envisioned in any partnership must be embodied in people who grow in mutual friendship, one that (from the Christian side) is seen as enabled by God.

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[141]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 101–11. From a more pentecostal perspective see Amos Yong, "Many Tongues, Many Senses: Critical Reflection at the Intersection of Disability Studies and Pentecostal Studies," SPS Presidential Address 2009 (Eugene, OR, 2009).

[142]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 181.

[143]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 181 quoting Sharon Betcher, "Monstrosities, Miracles, and Mission: Religion and the Politics of Disablement," in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, eds Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera (St Louis: Chalice, 2004), 82. Yong also picks up briefly on the insight of Emmanual Levinas "who insisted that the other is revealed to me through his or her face," Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 183. For more on this see David F. Ford, *Self and Salvation* although Yong does not develop this thinking.

[144]Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 85.

[145]Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome*, 185–86.

[146]Ibid., 187.

Partnerships serve tasks for the purposes of the mission of networks, within the wider eschatological movement of the church. Yong suggests that the journey through and beyond life is one into a fuller image of God (*imago Dei*), one that sees "the ultimate reconciliation involves the flourishing of love between God's creatures and between creatures and their Creator."[147] Hence friendship is placed within eschatological visions in which communities are formed that "actualize the healing and saving grace of God in eternity."[148] Here it is important that the church see its mission as taking place through partnerships that grow friendships that enable everyone to flourish in love, a love that will last. Developing this for ecclesiology in the present Yong stresses the need for inclusion, for the "church considered as a charismatic and inclusive fellowship of the Spirit."[149] L'Arche communities are seen as an example of a "communal vision" in which "the mystery of love is central" in ways that develop mutuality between members, whether disabled or not.[150] Yong considers that a church seen in terms of networks and communities is better able to express such inclusivity than might otherwise be the case.[151]

Yong is here developing an ecclesiology that is more concerned in how the church welcomes others in rather than in how it reaches out to those outside church. Drawing on Stanley Hauerwas, Yong suggests that "the church is measured by how well it embodies the life of Christ, how extensively it welcomes and is constituted by the weak, and how prophetically it holds up the mirror of the gospel to an unbelieving world."[152] He turns to the theme of hospitality as an important practice of the church in this context, as a "charism of the Holy Spirit, who invites, lives, embraces, and nurtures human life in the discipleship of Jesus."[153] This is a valuable enriching of our understanding of partnerships within church networks, although we need to turn to Yong's later work for the development of hospitality in

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[147]Ibid., 285.
[148]Ibid.
[149]Ibid., 203.
[150]Ibid., 201–2.
[151]Ibid., 198.
[152]Ibid., 199.
[153]Ibid., 222.

the partnerships being considered in this chapter. In *Hospitality and the Other* Yong aims to contribute to a Christian theology of religions from a pentecostal perspective that starts with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He places this work in what he sees as a world context of terrorism and interreligious violence within which also takes place "positive interreligious relations featuring hospitality, dialogue, and mutuality among people of different faith traditions."[154] Yong hence seeks to develop a "constructive pneumatological theology of hospitality that will be capable of providing sound theological justification" for the various Christian practices necessary in interreligious relations.[155] Whilst he focuses on what we might call partnerships between the church and other faith communities, his theology of hospitality can be applied to partnerships in general. Here I want to outline Yong's proposal as relevant to my pentecostal rooting of partnership in friendship and hospitality.

Turning to Luke-Acts, Yong argues that Jesus "represents and embodies the hospitality of God" in the way he both offers and receives hospitality.[156] Jesus offered hospitality to all, although "the most eager recipients of the divine hospitality were not the religious leaders but the poor and the oppressed."[157] We can hence see a prophetic element to hospitality in that it is offered to the "alien and stranger," perhaps enhanced by Jesus' dependence upon the welcome of others seen in the stories of him as a guest of others.[158] This pattern seen in Jesus is repeated in Acts in the lives of Peter and Paul: "As with Jesus and Peter before him, Paul is also both a recipient and conduit of God's hospitality."[159] The giving and receiving central to sharing in partnership is here reworked through the theme of hospitality, with Yong seeing that what "is of central import for our purposes both in the life of Jesus and in the ministry of the early church is the themes of household relationships, table fellowship, and journeying and itinerancy. In all of these cases, not only is the Christian life and Christian mission mutually

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[154]Amos Yong, *Hospitality*, 37.
[155]Ibid., 100.
[156]Amos Yong, *Hospitality*, 151. On the importance of hospitality within pentecostalism and Luke-Acts see also Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 152–54.
[157]Amos Yong, *Hospitality*, 102.
[158]Ibid., 108.
[159]Ibid., 104.

intertwined, but we have seen that the roles of guests and hosts are fluid, continuously reversing."[160]

Yong argues that "a Lukan theology of hospitality reflects the trinitarian character of the hospitable God."[161] Also that "those who were hospitable to receive Jesus, they are now empowered by the same Spirit to walk in the footsteps of his filial obedience, and to bear witness to the redemptive hospitality of God."[162] It is impossible for a church in mission to avoid the "many practices of hospitality" that are seen "through ever-shifting sets of human relationships."[163] Yong sees this as a natural development of the "ancient Israelite wisdom" seen in the Old Testament.[164] He then goes on to interact with the philosophy of Jacques Derrida. Significant for our discussion is Yong's observation that "because Christian hospitality proceeds from the magnanimous hospitality of God, it is founded on the incarnational and pentecostal logic of abundance rather than that of human economies of exchange and of scarcity."[165] At times partnership has been expounded in terms of "exchange," in that one person or community gives *in exchange for* receiving from another person or community (perhaps in a different country). Simon Barrington-Ward develops an understanding of mission communities rooted in the church Fathers image of an "exchange" between God and ourselves.[166] He sees partnership as reflecting such a mutuality of exchange that is central to his understanding of what it means to share in partnership.[167] The challenge Yong brings here, I believe, is to guard against a sharing in which the amount given is equal to the amount received and there is only contentment when this is so. Yong points rather to what "we might call the trinitarian logic of abundance."[168] The problem with exact exchanges is that hospitality under these conditions cannot be true hospitality – if what is given is seen as

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[160]Ibid., 105.
[161]Ibid.
[162]Ibid., 106.
[163]Ibid., 107.
[164]Ibid., 112–17.
[165]Ibid., 118.
[166]Barrington-Ward, *Love Will Out*, 67.
[167]Simon Barrington-Ward, Personal Email (4 July 2008).
[168]Amos Yong, *Hospitality*, 121.

owed in return then there is no freedom in the giving or response. The abundance of God is reflected in the desire to give without control over the return.[169] Yet this is to raise the question as to whether there are limits or conditions to hospitality and Yong goes beyond Derrida in suggesting there are, on the basis that there cannot be hospitality without boundaries.[170] There are boundaries between those in the church community and those outside it, as presumed in our understanding of networks and partnership. This means the need for a "distinctively Christian communal identity" but with "openness" that means "interacting with rather than isolating ourselves from our neighbors."[171] Also, hospitality can be refused and there is a need for hospitality to include a challenge to what is evil. Yet we should aim to offer and receive hospitality whilst being discerning over how the other responds.

Yong summarises his "pneumatological theology of guests and hosts" in terms of four theses. Firstly, Christian life reflects the hospitality of God through the paradox of living a distinctively Christian communal life whilst being "inclusively incarnational" to others.[172] Secondly, "the gift of the Holy Spirit signifies the extension of God's economy of abundant hospitality into the whole world."[173] Thirdly, "the grace of God overturns the world's economy of exchange so that there is only an endless giving and receiving that now characterizes the relationship of the church and the world."[174] Finally, we are always "guests and hosts" and as "guests and hosts, sometimes simultaneously, we are obliged only to discern the Spirit's presence and activity so that we can perform the appropriate practices representing the hospitable God."[175] Yong then goes on to develop an understanding of Christian mission as "nothing more or less than our participation in the hospitality of God. God is not only the principal 'missionary' but also the host of all creation who invites the world to 'God's banquet of salvation.'"[176] Here the "eschatological hospitality of God" is tasted in the present by the

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[169]Ibid., 120.
[170]Ibid., 123.
[171]Ibid., 125.
[172]Ibid., 126.
[173]Ibid.
[174]Ibid., 126–27.
[175]Ibid., 127.
[176]Ibid., 131.

Spirit through relationships of friendship to others.[177] In this Yong is taking a different approach to the understanding of mission than that utilised in this project. Recalling some of the discussion in the last chapter, Yong might be accused of confusing the aims and means of mission.[178] In this project an understanding of the aims of mission is used that is rooted in an eschatological understanding of the kingdom of God, and in this and the last chapter we have linked this with the means of partnership. Thus a partnership rooted in friendship and hospitality can be seen to enable the churches mission rather than to be the churches mission in its entirety. This also helps move beyond the critique that Edmund Rybarczyk makes of Yong in this regard – he sees Yong as blurring the distinction between creation and redemption.[179] Although Rybarczyk bases his critique on a few quotations and leaves aside Yong's previous works, it is a danger that mission *as* partnership rather than *through* partnership might be content with a settled hospitable community to the detriment of the eschatological movement of mission.

7.4.2 Trialectic of Contextualisation

We have given a significant background understanding of contextualisation that picks up on a number of themes, including creation, generosity, abundance, place, hospitality, the primitive impulse (linked with the Scriptures), global movements, discernment, the prophetic working of the Spirit and transformation. Such themes inspire a pneumatological imagination and can now be brought together to outline a three-fold pentecostal practice of contextualisation.

We have been focusing on the partnerships that exist between people, church centres and networks within the church and people, communities and networks in the world outside of the church. Thus there are a variety of partnerships that exist in general terms, and we have considered them particularly within the context of the churches mission. Partnerships between

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[177]Ibid., 140,150.
[178]See the discussion relating to Skreslet, "Empty Basket."
[179]Edmund J. Rybarczyk, "Review of Amos Yong, *Hospitality & the Other*," *PNEUMA* 31, no. 1 (2009): 139–41.

those inside and those outside the church are of vital importance within our understanding of mission, one rooted in the movements of the Spirit between the church and the world beyond. Such partnerships are not abstract but are embodied in relationships between people, relationships that can grow into friendships. They are practised with a desire to offer and to receive hospitality in ways that reflect God's abundant giving to us. Given such human partnership relationships it is inevitable that there will, at times, be particular situations in which Christ is revealed or witnessed to. In terms of our previous chapter, sacramental events take place that draw people in the direction of Christ. I now want to suggest that it is in the context of such events, within the practice of hospitable partnerships, that it is good to consider the task of contextualisation. Sacramental events can be celebrated in themselves for the way in which God is at work, for their part in evangelism, and for the ways the enable more human and godly relating. Yet if they reflect something of God's engagement with the material creation then they naturally raise issues of contextualisation. The question often is: do we take up these issues, do we ignore them, or do we simply respond unconsciously? One way of responding positively is to undergo three stages in contextualisation: reflect, discern and act. This is a similar approach to that of Robert Schreiter who speaks of examining roots and discerning through a dialectical engagement of these roots in order to produce a new local theology.[180] Such an approach represents a more conscious engagement with the task of contextualisation, one rooted in the narrative of everyday life.

First, I want to suggest that a sacramental event can cause us to *reflect* on the context, on the nature of God and on the Scriptures. The context has a number of aspects, many of them shaped by the place and the networks that use that place – herein can lay a wealth of cultural, social, political and religious reflection. These will involve both local and global processes, and both inner and outer aspects of reality.[181] As an example to help root the outline here, during a recent conversation with a friend who doesn't attend church he said that he had not

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[180]Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 20–21. This is similar to the "See, judge, act" paradigm originally suggested by Joseph Cardijn which influenced the development of contextual liberation theology.
[181]On the latter see Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 129–30.

realised how Jesus must have felt on the cross, given his present experience of grief over the loss of a loved one. Here is an event in which Jesus is made real to one outside the church and is important for itself. Yet it might also raise questions about the prevalence of grief within a community, health issues that are remaining unaddressed, and whether the church has dwelt together on the themes of the cross and loss. A multitude of reflection is possible and my purpose here is not to repeat the work of others in such areas but to place them within a particularly pentecostal framework that fits with the ecclesiology. Other works can be consulted for the specifics of how such reflections can be done – it is expected that there will an abundance of such ways, reflecting the manifold wisdom of God.[182] That God is at work in such events naturally provokes reflection on how and what this says about the nature of God. This leads into the realm of theological reflection inspired by the Christian tradition – into the community of those who have reflected deeply on similar events, the church through history. A part of this, and yet often initially separate to it, is a fresh reflection on the Scriptures. In this project we have particularly noted the importance of missionary and narrative readings of Scripture. In other words, sacramental events provoke reflections in the areas of Spirit, Word and Community. The approach to contextualisation suggested here fits naturally with the methodology adopted and utilises many of the same resources.

Having reflected and gathered material we then have to *discern* what are the ways in which God is affirming and challenging the existing ways of the church and world. This discernment can be seen as taking two forms within a pentecostal approach, reflecting the synthetic and translation models of contextualisation. Yong's hesitation in the usual pentecostal rush to Christological categories for discernment amidst the experience of other faiths represents the need here to pause before rushing to a translation model.[183] Such a pause can be seen in terms of a synthetic, or correlation, of the reflections of Spirit, Word and Community as they touch on both church and world, the past and the present. This allows a

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[182]Many examples could be quoted here, but the approach of Robert Schreiter is illustrative, *Constructing Local Theologies*.
[183]On this see Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 200–202.

better discernment of the continuities and discontinuities between church and world which clarifies ways forward that better seek the kingdom of God. For example, the experience of grief put alongside the passion narratives within a local community where loss is a dominant theme might clarify the need for the healing dimension of the kingdom of God. Such discernment relies on and feeds into the development of what Yong calls the pneumatological imagination. Our imaginations might thus be fired in ways that draw us more deeply into the Scriptures and Christian reflections on them, into a fresh awareness of the local community and its needs. It becomes clear that discernment is "a holistic activity focused on the various dimensions of human life, which include the charismatic experiences of discerning the spirits as enabled by the Holy Spirit."[184] Three elements of such a holistic discernment are identified by Yong in terms of experiential, moral and theological aspects of discernment, what he calls the phenomenological-experiential, the moral-ethical and the theological-soteriological.[185] We might hence ask questions such as: how is the Spirit at work in experience? what are the moral challenges being given? what are the theological implications? The context of hospitable worship for discernment is important here (cf 1 Cor. 12-14), but it goes wider than this. There is a discerning of the Spirit's presence, activity and absence in the "varied dimensions of human experience in all of their interconnectedness and complexity."[186] A synthetic approach will seek to apply such discernment within the evidence collected in the first stage. Yet alone this approach is not sufficient as there remains the pentecostal movement outwards into the entire world to share the life discovered in Jesus. This sharing is sensitive and contextual, aware of the issues of power that so easily slip into the process. Vulnerable discerning of the ways in which the church understands the gospel, the good news of Jesus, through Spirit, Word and Community and in which it can translate this gospel for the bettering of the world are to be sought. Thus we might discern how best to retell the passion narrative in the light of the friendships we have in a community.

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[184] Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 149–50.
[185] Amos Yong, *Discerning*, 250–54.
[186] Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 165.

Having discerning something of the ways of truth and goodness, we are led to *act*. Three ways in which this action takes place become clear from our earlier discussion. Firstly, there is action to transform the church and/or world. How things are becomes transformed in the light of the discernment, so that the kingdom of God is better reflected in the church and world. For example, we might develop an existing churches healing ministry to touch those who grieve beyond the church doors. Secondly, there is prophetic action to challenge the way things are in the church and/or world. These are more critical and urgent forms of action than is usually the case for transformation. If transformation tends to build on the good that is always there, the prophetic challenges the evil currently present.[187] We might thus challenge the way hospitals have cared badly for those who have lost loved ones or rebuke those who pray for others without embracing the Cross. These two forms of action are usually carried out in partnership and in relation to the task that provoked the contextual reflection. Thirdly, it is worth noting an important subset of these two ways of action, the actions that focus on reforming communal identity. The discussion on global processes and local identities highlights the importance of communities and their identities to contextualisation. Actions relate not just to tasks in general but also to those that help reform the identity of church communities and communities outside the church. We might perhaps reform our identity from being a strong people (in the Spirit) into one of a wounded people in the presence of the wounded Healer, Jesus whose Spirit gently leads us.

Having acted, it is inevitable that the events that follow from such action will eventually provoke further reflection and contextualisation, since God is at work in all. Contextualisation is part of an eschatological process that continues up until the time of the "new heavens and the new earth." In this way we can see contextualisation as the process by which the continual development envisioned by C.S. Peirce is moved forwards. Each of the stages of contextualisation is incomplete and fallible – not all can be reflected upon at once, and even

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[187]These are the 'life-giving' and 'critical-prophetic' aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit in the underlying model of mission, Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 136.

within the focused reflection not all will be discerned truly. Hence the process will continue in a vital but humble way, always open to further insights. This approach to contextualisation might be seen as a "pentecostal trialectic of contextualisation" in its three-fold stages with a three-fold process of reflection and three-fold set of resulting actions. This counters any attempts at more dualistic approaches and complements the trilectic within the methodology adopted by this project. Contextualisation, I would argue, needs reflection, discernment and action; it needs to give weight to Spirit, Word and Community; and it needs to act in transformation, in prophetic and community reforming ways. The outline here is designed to provide a theologically grounded approach to pentecostal contextualisation that can be further developed and tested in particular contexts. I leave it to others to consider whether and how other models of contextualisation might be engaged with from a pentecostal perspective and it is probable that the praxis, transcendental and countercultural models can also be a rich source for future reflection. The approach here resonates well with the "prophetic dialogue" proposed by Bevans and Schroeder and hence can provide a useful basis for further ecumenical interaction.

7.5 Summary

This chapter has sought to explore how a network church might engage with the world through engagement with the mission concern for contextualisation. This concern was introduced through mission scholarship as a backdrop for developing a new pentecostal approach to contextualisation that arises out of the work so far. Within our methodology we considered how experience, Scripture and aspects of the theology developed come together in a pentecostal understanding of contextualisation. Issues related to power and place were examined before a hospitable trialectic pentecostal approach to contextualisation was proposed – a theologically grounded church practice that represents a new contribution to pentecostal scholarship. It extends the pentecostal trend towards more positive world engagement and also contributes to mission studies. The practice proposed fits with synthetic

and translation models of contextualisation and is rooted in the network church developed through this research. Through the last four chapters we have addressed the need for structural and contextual concerns to be addressed within a pentecostal ecclesiology. It now remains to summarise the results of our research in the concluding chapter.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

Given the current state of pentecostal scholarship, we posed the initial research question: *how might a pentecostal ecclesiology that is structured and contextual be constructed?* I advanced the thesis that *networks contribute a new structure to pentecostal ecclesiology, one that enables a fresh approach to contextualisation*. I now want to summarise the way this project supports this thesis and provides a positive answer to the research question through a review of the significant contributions it makes. Then I want to reflect critically on the projects general contributions, defending the thesis against possible weaknesses and challenges. Such reflections will suggest future developments to pentecostal, systematic, mission and biblical scholarship and to church practices. In other words, to critique the project in the light of our methodology of Community (pentecostal, systematic, mission), Word (biblical) and Spirit (church practices).

8.1 Significance of the Research Project

The ecclesiology developed is distinctively *pentecostal* in part because of its use of a pentecostal methodology. The existing doctoral projects of Shane Clifton and David Morgan utilise non-pentecostal methodologies and this project is significant in being the first attempt using a pentecostal systematic methodology. Given this, and the general lack of pentecostal systematic methodologies, it was important to devote Chapter 2 to a critical review of the methodology of Amos Yong adopted in this project. In itself this is a significant contribution to pentecostal scholarship, given the continuing discussions over Yong's methodology.[1] It is common for pentecostals to note the lack of ecclesiological thought within the movement, perhaps pointing to only one or two significant contributions that have been made. Whilst

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[1] Amos Yong, et al., "Christ and Spirit"; Amos Yong and Kenneth Archer, "Dialogue on Methodology," Theology Seminar at SPS 2009 (Eugene, OR, 2009).

acknowledging this lack, which strengthens the case for the need for this project, Chapter 3 presents a significantly greater variety of pentecostal contributions to ecclesiology than is usually noted. I argue for a complex set of reflections that are going on within the pentecostal community and from this suggest that the particular issues of church structure and world engagement are in need of further exploration. Chapter 4 argues that the structure of networks is important in pentecostal growth and a significant new reading of Acts is offered that resonates well with such structures. Further, the chapter argues that social trinitarian approaches in systematic and mission thinking can lead to the neglect of structural concerns. Hence a pentecostal approach that combines some social and Latin trinitarian insights is suggested as a good basis for ecclesiology. This then suggests a more detailed understanding of networks.

The stress on networks as key, and as yet under-developed, structures for ecclesiology give rise to new questions of catholicity. Chapter 5 is significant in developing a new understanding of catholicity that has a common essence and mission movement; one that is trinitarian, pentecostal and missionary. In place of the common pentecostal emphasis on catholicity via the local congregation or a more Roman Catholic and Orthodox emphasis on the global church, we developed a catholicity of trinitarian shared essence coupled with a catholicity of mission movement toward unity. An original pentecostal understanding of the *esse* of church is proposed that is trinitarian and sacramental, with a new appreciation of the "sacramental" and the "marks of the church" developed. In Chapter 6 I argue that dynamic catholicity occurs through the practice of partnership. The theme of partnership is well developed in mission circles although has not been studied from a pentecostal or systematic ecclesiological viewpoint. Hence this study represents a significant new appreciation of partnership developing a theology appropriate for this project. It also contributes an understanding of the character of networks.

Any ecclesiology shaped by mission must devote space to the nature of the relationship between the church and those outside the church within the created world, which in mission

circles comes under the theme of contextualisation. This is often omitted and Chapter 7 represents a significant contribution to a pentecostal understanding of the mission engagement of the church through contextualisation. It also provides a theological underpinning to contextualisation often missed in mission studies and outlines a new three-fold pentecostal contextual practice of contextualisation.

In short, the outcome of this project supports the thesis that a focus on networks leads to an original contribution to pentecostal ecclesiology. It is a contribution that builds on wider trinitarian reflections on ecclesiology, on issues in mission studies and on narrative readings of Luke-Acts. It addresses the common ecclesial concerns regarding community, *koinonia*, *esse*, catholicity, marks and engagement with the world – reframing them in a new way that can contribute to the wider thinking on ecclesiology. We now look critically at the contributions and possible future developments of this project in regard to pentecostal studies, mission studies, systematic theology, biblical studies and church practice.

8.2 Pentecostal Studies

This research project contributes to pentecostal scholarship in terms of its methodology and ecclesiology. Amongst other things it reinforces the significance of Amos Yong's contribution to systematic methodology through its positive application to the area of ecclesiology. Here is a methodology rooted in pentecostalism that engages with a range of scholarship in developing fresh ways in theology. It is no longer possible to say that pentecostals lack a distinctive systematic approach to the theological task.

A critique of Yong's work that could also be made of the present project is regarding the extent to which it is distinctively pentecostal. This can be seen in comparison with the pentecostal methodology of Ken Archer who uses the tridactic structure of Spirit, Scripture and Community. The most noticeable difference from Yong is Archer's focus on Scripture read in the context of a local pentecostal Community as led and guided by the Holy Spirit.[2]

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[2]Archer, *Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 212–52.

This comes out of a reading of the story of early pentecostalism and has a stress on narrative. Utilising Archer's methodology would have required us to root the ecclesiology within a particular pentecostal narrative within which Scripture is understood. In a similar way Steven Land develops his understanding of missionary fellowships in terms of the "five-fold gospel" within the narrative of the early pentecostal community. In this he recognises that pentecostals have a Christocentric gospel and an emphasis on the "witness, power and presence of the Holy Spirit."[3] Land points the way forward in arguing for a "revisioning of Pentecostal spirituality" particularly in a more trinitarian direction.[4] Whilst this project develops such trinitarian thinking the choice was made to focus on a narrative reading of Luke-Acts rather than one based on the "five-fold" framework that would be seen as more distinctively pentecostal by many classical Pentecostals. Interestingly, Yong has utilised such a framework in his latest work on political theology and so it could be utilised within the methodology adopted in this project.[5] Future research could usefully be undertaken using an adapted version of Yong's methodology, valuing the "five-fold" gospel and discerning the Spirit within a particular pentecostal narrative. Also of value would be future research in ecclesiology utilising Archer's methodology which could then be compared to that developed here.

Having said this, I would maintain that this project is authentically pentecostal given the understanding of pentecostal identity developed in Chapter 1 and in terms of the methodology adopted in Chapter 2. Rather than choose one particular concrete pentecostal identity within which to frame this research I argued for the mixed nature of pentecostalism. This develops a favourite theme of Yong's, that of the Spirit "poured out on all flesh" as implying the need for "all flesh" to contribute to the theological task. Indeed it has only been possible to develop pentecostal ecclesiology in the direction of partnership and greater contextualisation through the integration of a wider range of insights than might be included in a single pentecostal identity where these themes might as yet be unexplored. I would argue that rather than starting

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[3]Land, *Spirituality*, 123–24.
[4]Ibid., 192.
[5]Amos Yong, *In the Day of Caesar*.

with a narrow identity and developing a narrow ecclesiology, which would struggle to interact with broader pentecostalism (let alone the wider theological community), it is good to start with a broad identity and then recognise where the distinctives come. Future research into the nature of global pentecostalism is still required if we are to avoid pentecostalism being defined only in terms of one of its many expressions.

Tan-Chow May Ling has developed an approach to pentecostal theology and mission based on a description and analysis of LoveSingapore, a strategy for mission based on "strategic partnerships" and a desire to contextualise the Gospel.[6] She argues that "rationality or sociality is the ministry of the eschatological Spirit – the Spirit of fellowship" and hence life is to be lived "face to face with God" and in "radical openness" and hospitality with others.[7] Tan-Chow concludes by proposing an outline "ethic of negotiation" to be utilised within the mission of the church in Singapore's multicultural and multifaith context.[8] Her development of the themes of partnership, contextualisation, hospitality and fellowship resonate well with the ideas in this project and helpfully support our broader approach to pentecostalism. Tan-Chow also challenges the present study in extending its thinking on the passion, Resurrection and Pentecost – she argues forcefully for the need to recognise "the interconnection between the passion of Christ and the power of the Spirit."[9] Future research in pentecostal ecclesiology would benefit from a wider biblical and theological exploration of these themes.

The current project contributes significantly to the appreciation of the theme of networks within pentecostal narratives even if one particular narrative was not chosen as a focus. This structural focus fits with the need to recognise the work of the Spirit in "visible" church structures and not just in the "invisible" church. Evan Kuehn has recently posed helpful questions about how the "fullness of the Spirit" is linked with the "fullness of catholicity"

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[6] Tan-Chow May Ling, *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-First Century: Engaging with Multi-Faith Singapore* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 65,97.
[7] Ibid., 130,131.
[8] Ibid., 157–66.
[9] Ibid., 102.

seen in "full visible unity."[10] It also fits with thinking on the transnational nature of pentecostalism, the theme of a recent European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism (Glopent) conference.[11] In this Afe Adogame commented on the "fluid processes of transnational networks, links and residences" in new African churches.[12] Future study around the nature of the "visible" and "invisible" church and the nature of transnational networks would be of benefit to pentecostal ecclesiology.

8.3 Mission Studies

This research project has developed an ecclesiology shaped by a particular understanding of mission, yet the project can also be seen as contributing to the development of my prior understanding of mission. I had suggested that charismatic mission communities should see "mission as something done together and not alone" and gave some brief reflections on church structures and partnership.[13] The present work develops these brief initial thoughts in far more depth in ways that raise questions about the *means* of mission in a way I had not previously considered. Mission movements of the Spirit were central to my earlier work and the two basic movements have proved valuable in provoking questions about ecclesiology in the present work. This project has contributed a more communal and personal understanding of these movements that had been lacking in the more abstract conclusions of the previous work.[14] There is still much future research required in the area of pentecostal mission studies that could build on the missionary understanding of the church developed here.

The current project can also be seen as developing some of the concerns that have arisen from the influence of the great mission statesman Lesslie Newbigin. His mission

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[10]Evan F. Kuehn, "'Fullness of the Spirit' and 'Fullness of Catholicity' in Ecclesial Communion," *IJST* 11, no. 3 (2009): 271–92.
[11]See www.glopent.net.
[12]Afe Adogame, "Transnational Migration and Pentecostalism in Europe," Paper presented, The European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism (Glopent) (Birmingham, 2009), 7; Afe Adogame, "Contesting the Ambivalences of Modernity in a Global Context: The Redeemed Christian Church of God," *Studies in World Christianity* 10, no. 1 (2004): 25–48.
[13]Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission*, 115,118–120.
[14]Ibid., 135–42.

understanding continues to influence pentecostals and those keen to investigate links between the gospel and culture. Michael Goheen sees in Newbigin someone who recognised that "a missionary encounter with modern western culture was the most urgent item on the agenda of missiology."[15] He suggests that Newbigin encouraged believers to develop their mission "in culture," yet there is a danger of reading his approach to contextualisation in a counter-cultural way.[16] Goheen feels that the North American *Gospel and Our Culture* (GAOC/NA) movement has followed a more counter-cultural approach that limits its effectiveness and in contrast notes the more mixed-models of contextualisation suggested by Newbigin. The present research project shares the concern of Goheen and Newbigin for a missionary ecclesiology for Western culture, and contributes a more mixed model of contextualisation. Future research could usefully examine the links between the present project and those influenced by Newbigin.[17]

Paul Pomerville, in his still significant book in pentecostal mission studies, integrated theology with biblical studies and mission practice in a way that resonates with the current project. He concluded with a brief reflection on the work of the Holy Spirit as "the agent of [the] restoration of unity" seen at Pentecost.[18] Our consideration of catholicity and partnership contributes towards the development of Pomerville's thinking on the nature of mission. Yet he might critique the present project as lacking a clear enough focus on the "Great Commission mission" that he sees as central to a "biblical perspective" on the missionary work of the Spirit.[19] Has an evangelistic focus, supported by signs and wonders, been lost amidst broader mission and ecclesiological concerns? The case for this could be strengthened by the observation that the theme of salvation, significant for pentecostals as Yong notes, is largely absent from our study.[20] In defence, the aim of this project was not to revisit fundamental

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[15]Goheen, *"As the Father Has Sent Me"*, 371.
[16]Ibid., 435–40.
[17]For a recent pentecostal evaluation of Newbigin see Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Church in the Post-Christian Society Between Modernity and Late Modernity: Lesslie Newbigin's Post-Critical Missional Ecclesiology," paper presented at Conference to mark the centenary of Lesslie Newbigin (Birmingham, 2009).
[18]Pomerville, *Third Force*, 163.
[19]Ibid., 163, cf.70–73.
[20]Amos Yong, *Spirit Poured Out*, 81–82.

questions about the nature of mission that I had addressed previously. Rather I have developed particular themes absent in most pentecostal ecclesiology and developed the mission theme of partnership that Chris Sugden had challenged pentecostals about.[21] Yet future research that considers particularly the communal nature of salvation and the evangelistic nature of networks would be of great benefit in the development of pentecostal ecclesiology.[22]

It is fair to say that this research has largely drawn on Western traditions in theology to the neglect of the non-Western traditions that are integral to pentecostalism. This, as was said in the introduction, is a result of a focus on existing pentecostal scholarship which is shaped by Western traditions even when practised by non-Western theologians. Allan Anderson laments the continued dominance of Western models of theology in theological education.[23] The contextual nature of pentecostalism demands a much deeper interaction with non-Western experience and thinking, including the area of ecclesiology. There is much to develop in this regard in future research and this will require the accumulation of more source materials. Anderson has provided a useful initial review in regard to African Initiated Churches which Kärkkäinen also notes, but this only scratches the surface of our need for non-Western ecclesiologies.[24]

8.4 Systematic Theology

Systematic theology is a discipline that continues to explore its own nature, as seen in our opening chapter. This research project utilises the methodology of Yong in a way that contributes to the wider integration of biblical studies into systematic theology. Although there had been something of an "iron curtain" between these disciplines the current study demonstrates the fruit of combining the two.[25] In addition Yong's methodology forces

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[21]Sugden, "International Partnership."

[22]On salvation a useful starting point is Twelftree, *People of the Spirit*, 45–51.

[23]Allan Anderson, "Pentecostal-Charismatic Spirituality and Theological Education," *PentecoStudies* 3, no. 1 (2004): 3–7.

[24]Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Asmara: Africa World Press, 2001); Kärkkäinen, *Introduction to Ecclesiology*, 194–201.

[25]This phrase is picked up by Joel B. Green, "Scripture and Theology," 23 quoting Brevard Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), xvi.

reflection on discerned experience, the kind of Christian Theological Experience that Ellen Charry argues is important.[26] Alongside these disciplines I have placed aspects of mission studies as a shaping context for systematic theology. This may be more controversial given the lack of explicit attention to mission in a recent survey of systematic theology.[27] Yet this project contributes to the argument that it is important for theology to be shaped by mission in terms of how particular mission concerns (partnership and contextualisation) can productively be brought into dialogue with more traditional systematic concerns. In critique, this project would have benefited from engagement with other disciplines notably that of sociology when considering the nature of networks. Limits had to be chosen in order to focus this work and future research is needed to provide a greater depth of sociological engagement with contemporary culture.

It is worth considering again the critique of ecclesiologies made by Nicholas Healy and Roger Haight we commented on at the start of this project. In particular we need to address the question: does the approach taken here leave us with a blueprint ecclesiology when it should be concrete? Reflecting on Healy's fivefold categorisation of blueprint ecclesiologies we can see that the approach taken here does not fall exactly into the blueprint category.[28] We have used the single image of network in developing the ecclesiology but have assumed that this is a way in which ecclesiology can be stimulated to wider thinking. In the development of a network approach we have seen a number of words that are significant and illustrate the variety that there is within the image of a network: *trinitarian*, *dynamic, catholicity*, *partnership* and *contextualisation*. Our trialectic methodology challenges assumptions of bipartite structures to the church – we are not assuming that an "ideal" church is manifested in the "visible" church but rather that there is a *perichoretic* movement between the concrete discernment of the Spirit and the perhaps "ideal" biblical and theological insights. This is a

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[26]Charry, "Experience."
[27]John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[28]Healy, *Church*, 26–31.

systematic methodology that argues for networks to be a more normative element of ecclesiology, but one based on the particular concrete experience of networks in church life. Also we outlined a three-fold practice of contextualisation for church life. Admittedly, we have noted how our study has not been rooted in a concrete church narrative and so is not a concrete ecclesiology in Healy's sense. Hence compared with Morgan who, utilising Healy's methodology, gives chapters devoted to a study of worship and prophecy in two particular churches, the project here addresses more systematic than practical theological concerns.[29] Yet I would suggest that this project supports the proposition in our opening chapter that there are ecclesiologies that lie between the simple distinction of concrete and blueprint ecclesiologies. The ecclesiology developed here could be termed a "mixed concrete blueprint ecclesiology," perhaps with more blueprint than concrete in the mix but not simply one or the other. In a similar way, I would conclude that the ecclesiology here is also a mix of what Haight terms the "church from above" and the "church from below."[30] We have worked with a network context, have attempted an ecumenical approach that does not tie networks to one particular Christian tradition or denomination, have drawn on some experience rooted in the work of the Spirit and developed our structures around community. In all this the present work represents an understanding of "church from below." Yet, as noted, there are limits to the experience drawn upon and there has not been the historical depth that is characteristic of Haight's work – thus the ecclesiology here also represents elements of "church from above." Future research would develop the historical and contemporary experience of pentecostal churches, particularly in the way they interact with the discussions on networks, partnership and contextualisation.

Future research could also develop other images of the church alongside that of networks, such as those Paul Minear outlines.[31] His images of *dispersion*, *exiles* and *exodus* speak to the movement inherent in networks, whereas images relating to the *people of God*

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[29]Morgan, "Priesthood, Prophethood."
[30]Haight, *Christian Community 1*, 18–25,56–65.
[31]Minear, *Images*.

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and to *new creation* speak to questions relating to the church being distinctive and yet part of the world. Such research might provide a positive link with evangelical ecclesiologies that are influential within pentecostalism. Brad Harper and Paul Metzger have summarised evangelical ecclesiology through the distinctive themes of the church as the "people of God," the "body and bride of Christ," the "temple of the Holy Spirit," and comprised of those "who have experienced salvation through faith in Jesus Christ."[32] Future work would benefit from further thinking in regard to such themes, although the work of Harper and Metzger would benefit from some of the insights into the mission nature of the church, particularly in the area of partnership and contextualisation.

There are moves to draw together the elements of ecclesiology distinctive to particular traditions and across the traditions – such as Harper and Metzger within the evangelical tradition, and Haight across the traditions. This can be seen as a desire for a correlation of consent to common understandings. Thomas Oden, in the consensual approach of his systematic theology, states that his "aim has not been to survey the bewildering varieties of *dis*sent, but to identify and plausibly set forth the cohesive central tradition of general lay *con*sent to apostolic teaching."[33] He links this with the work of the Spirit in bringing things together towards a final consummation and in developing his ecclesiology Oden correlates three expressions of the church. In contrast, the present project starts with the theme of networks which is a *dissent* from existing ecclesiologies which have not been developed with this in mind. Yet the result of such a dissent has been a realisation of the need for partnership *consent* in the means of a missionary church. This poses two questions: does aiming at consent exclude practical realities not yet studied? and is not dissent essential to the task of seeking true consent that goes beyond a simple restating of existing differences?[34] I would suggest that the focus on networks has provided a healthy dissent within pentecostal

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[32]Brad Harper and Paul Louis Metzger, *Exploring Ecclesiology: An Evangelical and Ecumenical Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009), 16.
[33]Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, vii.
[34]In this regard we might note how Robert Jenson recognises the gains of "convergence" theologies yet suggests that these are not sufficient to overcome divisions between churches, Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology, Volume 1: The Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), viii.

ecclesiology and that future research might explore how the results of this dissent may stimulate a more inclusive consent between different pentecostal traditions.

8.5 Biblical Studies

Reading Acts has been important in our study of networks and this project contributes a narrative reading of Acts that finds its basis in the significance of the church within the mission of God. This contrasts with approaches that start with literary concerns and consider the church as a separate theological category. For example, Luke Timothy Johnson notes the literary structure of Acts around geography and prophecy – in terms of geography there is the literary movement to Jerusalem in the Gospel and the move away from Jerusalem in Acts. Only then does he consider the nature of the church in terms of one of the main "religious themes" of Acts, drawing on different passages.[35] In a similar way Wall considers Acts as literature, noting the plotline that progresses along geographic and chronological lines before reflecting on the theology of Acts in which the church community is central.[36] What has been attempted here is more akin to the approach of Anthony Thiselton who starts with the theme of the church and then reads Acts in the light of the mission of God. Like the present project he concludes that Luke pays particular attention to the "*institutional* and *empirical* structures of the early church" and that some church infrastructure is needed to serve the mission.[37] Of course, only certain texts in Acts have been examined in this project and future research into a narrative reading of Acts as a whole in which the church and the mission of God are central would be of benefit.

It is useful to compare our mission inspired reading of Acts with the missional hermeneutic suggested by Chris Wright. He argues the need to read Scripture "in the light of God's purpose for his whole creation" which is about God's mission "for the redemption of

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[35]Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Sacra Pagina Series, v.5 (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 15.
[36]Wall, "Acts," 13–14, 22–26.
[37]Thiselton, *The Hermeneutics of Doctrine*, 492,508.

the whole creation."[38] Wright develops a biblical ecclesiology that follows this approach by means of the Pauline material, Old Testament texts relating to Israel and the themes of Exodus and Jubilee.[39] The choice of focal biblical texts clearly shapes the resulting ecclesiology and our approach contributes more on Acts but does not appreciate the election of Israel and the links between the Exodus and Acts (and the Pauline literature) that Wright utilises. David Seccombe argues that Luke had the nature of the church as one of his "major purposes in writing" and roots this in an argument for Luke seeing the new people of God in terms of the restoration of Israel.[40] Although we have referred to some of the work of N.T. Wright that develops such themes, future research could usefully explore a wider range of biblical texts and themes in the development of pentecostal ecclesiology.

In this John's Gospel would provide significant insights, with a few passages touched on in the present project. Johan Ferreira develops a "christological ecclesiology" based on a study of John 17 which points to the centrality of a "close relationship between Jesus and the community" of the church.[41] J.C. O'Neill sees the Johannine church as one that sees visions of the glory of Jesus, nurtured by "seers who were given visions of heaven."[42] Andreas Köstenberger and Peter O'Brien highlight the importance of sending to the mission of Jesus in the Gospel and the call for the church to bear fruit in its emulation of Jesus.[43] Future research could build a pentecostal ecclesiology in which the experiences of the glory of God by the Spirit are integrated with a study of John's Gospel and theological reflections on "union with God" and "imitating Jesus."

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[38]Christopher J.H. Wright, *Mission of God*, 67.

[39]Ibid., 191–323.

[40]David Seccombe, "The New People of God," in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson (Cambridge: Eerdmanns, 1998), 371,349.

[41]Johan Ferreira, *Johannine Ecclesiology*, JSNT Sup Series 160 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 202,203.

[42]J.C. O'Neill, "A Vision for the Church: John's Gospel," in *A Vision for the Church: Studies in Early Christian Ecclesiology*, eds Markus Bockmuehl and Michael B. Thompson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 92.

[43]Andreas J. Köstenberger and Peter T. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove: IVP, Apollos, 2001), 203–204,216.

8.6 Church Practice

Yong sees theology as transforming the imagination and the practical actions of the individual and the church. This is summarised in his theme of the "pneumatological imagination" and, within this, his recent focus on religious practices. The present project has contributed to such an imagination through the symbol of networks as it touches on different aspects of ecclesiology. There has been a focus on the particular practices of partnership and contextualisation which have much to contribute to pentecostal ecclesiology. The nature of these practices has been examined and proposals developed for the way networks might be characterised by partnership and for a three-fold method of contextualisation. Future research is needed to suggest how these might challenge and develop the existing practices in particular pentecostal networks. Such studies would help clarify the particularly pentecostal ways of relating across networks and the both informal and ordered ways such relationships occur. Also, research regarding the existing relationships between churches both within and outside of any one country would help develop our understanding of prophetic partnerships across cultures and social settings.

As mentioned above, a critique of this project is its lack of engagement with a particular pentecostal narrative setting. For future research it is worth considering how the present project might link with the author's particular setting within the Church of England. Pertinent in this regard are recent discussions about the nature of the church in the report *Mission-Shaped Church*. This was the result of a working group chaired by Graham Cray, who was previously the leader of the charismatic church of St Michael le Belfrey in York. The theology underlying the report is not systematic but rather designed to present its understanding of the church in mission for church leaders. The church is seen as reflecting the trinitarian God and at the heart of God is mission: hence worship and mission are at the heart of the nature of the church – it "is therefore of the essence (the DNA) of the Church to be a missionary community... apart from worship, everything else is secondary to this."[44] The report links

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[44]Archbishops Council, *Mission-Shaped Church*, 85.

mission with God's creative and redeeming work in creation, his "kingdom agenda" which the church joins in with. This gives rise immediately to questions regarding the church and culture which the report explores in terms of Christology and pneumatology and here a translation model is assumed, as Cray develops in earlier work informed by Lamin Sanneh.[45] Given the reports roots in previous discussions on church planting it is not surprising that this forms a significant part of the understanding of mission: "the Church is designed to reproduce."[46] Yet this is seen within a wider catholicity and unity of the church at embraces diversity and network connectedness.[47]

In critique of this report, John Hull argues that the theological framework of *Mission-Shaped Church* is not "adequate to the needs of the church and Christian faith today."[48] He argues for a lack of clarity in the report which he sees as at times arguing for contradictory or ambiguous views – a confusion between understandings of the church, mission and the kingdom.[49] He also notes the lack of appreciation of those of other faiths, or indeed other Christian denominations.[50] Hull's discussion on other groups and issues of diversity raise questions related to the catholic nature of the church, although surprisingly he does not raise this issue as pointedly as he could have done.[51] Issues of contextualisation are raised and Hull wants the report to be more theologically contextualised – which I would suggest is due to the reliance on a translation model – and also to be more culturally challenging or prophetic. There is much in *Mission-Shaped Church* that resonates with the ecclesiology developed in this project, particularly in its trinitarian, missionary and contextual priorities. The current project can be seen as contributing to the development of the network understanding assumed in the report, broadening its approach to contextualisation, and addressing questions of catholicity in some detail. These address some of the concerns highlighted by Hull and

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[45]Graham Cray, "New Churches for a New Millennium," *AfR* 78 (1999): 15–18; Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message* (New York: Orbis Books, 1989) See also my discussion in Lord, "Searching," 191–93.
[46]Archbishops Council, *Mission-Shaped Church*, 93.
[47]Ibid., 96–98.
[48]Hull, *Mission*, x.
[49]Ibid., 1–6.
[50]Ibid., 6–9.
[51]Ibid., 10–16.

suggest that future research into Anglican charismatic ecclesiology would benefit from the work here.

8.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research project represents an original contribution to the body of pentecostal research in ecclesiology. It supports the thesis that *networks contribute a new structure to pentecostal ecclesiology, one that enables a fresh approach to contextualisation*. The project is significant and moves pentecostal scholarship forward in its critical review and appropriation of Amos Yong's methodology, its review of existing pentecostal ecclesiology, its understanding of network church and the related trinitarian concerns, its fresh approach to catholicity, its new appreciation of partnership and its understanding and practice of contextualisation. The project might be critiqued in terms of its pentecostal distinctive, its lack of a concrete pentecostal narrative setting, its lack of evangelistic focus, its Western sources, its lack of engagement with certain sociological and theological themes, its more blueprint than concrete nature and its focus on particular biblical passages. This chapter has addressed such critiques in terms of the aims and scope of the present project and has suggested areas for future research that such critiques would suggest. From this we can see the following questions remain for future research:

1. how can the present work relate to particular pentecostal narratives and historical contexts?

2. what particular church practices can be developed that encourage partnership and contextualisation?

3. how might a reading of the biblical materials through the lens of the "five-fold" gospel and the themes of Cross and Resurrection contribute to pentecostal ecclesiology?

4. how can biblical materials outside of the usual pentecostal focus of Luke-Acts and certain Pauline passages contribute to pentecostal ecclesiology?

5. how might the image of the church as a network interact positively with other images of the church?

6. how can wider mission studies, such as Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology, contribute to pentecostal ecclesiology?

7. how would a pentecostal ecclesiology based on Archer's methodology differ from that developed here?

Much has been achieved, but there is still plenty of scope for development in pentecostal ecclesiology.

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