

**The Trinitarian Culture and Corporate Worship Practices of Canadian Pentecostals:
A Contribution from the Theology of Colin Gunton**

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ABSTRACT

The Trinitarian Culture and Corporate Worship Practices of Canadian Pentecostals: A Contribution from the Theology of Colin Gunton

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This thesis represents a unique analysis of the trinitarian impulses of an important corporate worship practice among the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC), the largest Evangelical denomination in Canada. It considers whether an inconsistency exists between the PAOC's trinitarian statement of faith and formative expressions of this denomination's belief conveyed in 82 of the most commonly used contemporary worship songs from April 2007 to March 2013. Lyrical music, it is defended, represents a forming, measurable, and confirming indicator among the PAOC of contemporary religious understanding. In order to assess the trinitarian dispositions of the PAOC music lyrics, Colin Gunton's theology is utilized as a framework for this evaluation. Gunton was a leading figure in the advancement of trinitarian theology before his untimely death in 2003. His balanced integration of the notions of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis* provides the rationale for eight qualitative content analyses that are original to this project and intended to verify the trinitarian views in the PAOC lyrics. This analysis is oriented around three major areas of trinitarian assessment: the doctrine of God, human personhood, and cosmology. The data from these content analyses are compiled, presented, and carefully analysed. Then, returning to the trinitarian work of Gunton, implications and considerations for the PAOC are offered. This study shows that Gunton's trinitarian theology provides a resource to identify and correct the trinitarian deficit and individualistic and cosmologically dualistic orientation of PAOC commonly used songs. Ultimately, this thesis proposes that Gunton, in accordance with several key Pentecostal and worship studies interlocutors, can serve as a helpful theological source for the dynamic practice of a trinitarian faith among the PAOC.

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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If it is true, as Colin Gunton submitted, that human community ought to be an “echo” of the life of the Godhead, then I humbly submit this thesis has provided me with a quintessence of what this “echo” looks like in the form of human collaboration. This to say, if my dissertation is viewed as an achievement, many people deserve credit. I could not have done this without you.

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INTRODUCTION

A) The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and the Doctrine of the Trinity

The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) is the largest Evangelical denomination in Canada. With approximately 1,100 churches and 150,000 regular Sunday morning attendees,¹ the PAOC is an Evangelical denomination with extensive national and religious influence across Canada. The PAOC declares a theological foundation, demonstrated by a written *Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths*, that is trinitarian. Article 5.2 of the PAOC's *General Constitution and By-Laws* reads, "The Godhead exists eternally in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having the same nature and attributes and are worthy of the same homage, confidence, and obedience."² While this statement finds its precedence in the ancient Christian creeds, it also bears historical significance for those associated with the PAOC. The history of the PAOC in the early twentieth century is uniquely rooted in encounters between oneness and trinitarian Pentecostals. Following the Assemblies of God in the United States, the PAOC made trinitarianism an essential component of what it means to be associated with their religious community in the 1910s. In this respect, a theological statement concerning the doctrine of the Trinity is a central precept of the PAOC's statement of faith.

What is less certain within the contemporary PAOC ecclesial context, however, is whether a theological statement regarding the doctrine of the Trinity forms this religious environment in meaningful ways. It is plausible that in many Canadian Evangelical churches today, PAOC churches included, a trinitarian doctrine of God, if addressed at all, presents itself

1 Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *Fellowship Statistics (as at January 5, 2015)*, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/fellowship-services-docs/fellowship-stats-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=0> (accessed January 27, 2015).

2 Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *2014 Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths*, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/paoc-family-docs/what-we-believe/statement-of-fundamental-and-essential-truths.pdf?sfvrsn=4> (accessed December 19, 2014).

as more of a disconnected, mathematical conundrum than a faith-building motivation. This reinforces Catholic theologian Karl Rahner's now famous 1970s quip that "should the doctrine of the Trinity have to be dropped as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged."³

Still, one might expect that a particular group of Canadian Pentecostal Christians who makes faith claims concerning the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity also exhibits certain observable traits that reflect this theological belief. Addressing this very idea, Pentecostal scholar, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen has submitted, "authentic theology sooner or later shows its value in and is being tested through the rigors of everyday Christian life and liturgy."⁴ Likewise, Catherine Lacugna commented directly on the practical nature of a trinitarian statement of faith, saying, "The doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life."⁵ Furthermore, David Wells, who currently serves as the general superintendent of the PAOC, recognizes this same idea and has asked pointed questions about the implications of stated beliefs within his own Pentecostal denomination:

it is my confidence that we have an excellent theological foundation—demonstrated by our *Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths*—that is biblical and defensible.... [T]he core beliefs of what it means to be a Canadian Pentecostal in our day are biblically solid.... Certainly, we have areas where we need to learn and grow, but overall, the theological moorings are strong. Questions still flood in: Are we doers of the words as well as hearers? Are we better at "defining" that "doing"? I am motivated to call you, as leaders and members of our family of churches, to consider afresh what we say we believe and see if it is, in fact, how we live and minister.⁶

It follows from Well's statement that, if the doctrine of the Trinity matters to the PAOC, then the lives of PAOC members and the ministries and worship practices of PAOC churches, leaders,

3 Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph F. Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 10–11.

4 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Trajectories of the Contemporary 'Trinitarian Renaissance' in Different Contexts," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 3 (2009): 14.

5 Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (Harper & Row, 1991), 1.

6 David Wells and Van Johnson, eds., *Authentically Pentecostal: Here's What We See* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, 2010), 5–6.

and songwriters should be marked by expressions of trinitarian belief.

This project seeks to identify measurable expressions of belief in the doctrine of the Trinity among the PAOC. In doing so, it attempts to determine whether an inconsistency exists between the PAOC's trinitarian statements of faith and common expressions of belief associated with the PAOC religious experience. In other words, this project begins the process of trying to answer the question of whether Evangelical Christians in the PAOC live and act "trinitarianly."

B) Lyrical Music as an Expression of Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Belief

What, then, can be measured as a reasonable reflection of the PAOC's deepest and truest ecclesial and theological ethos? Admittedly, as a religious group rooted in an oral tradition and not a written liturgy, the PAOC is not an easy group to appraise. That said, I will argue that the lyrics of contemporary worship music, utilized most often in experiences associated with Pentecostal corporate worship participation, provide an ideal and measurable indicator to advance the purposes of this study. Indeed, there are functional music entities in place [my study will utilize data gathered from Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) from April 2007 to March 2013] to confirm which songs were used most frequently in PAOC churches.

The role of music as both a reflection and a formative agent of worshippers' conceptualizations of God, themselves, and their world is well founded.⁷ Johnathan Alvarado has written, "The way a people worships both reveals their understanding of God and contributes to their spiritual formation."⁸ Regarding the ability of contemporary worship music to affect

7 The ancient maxim, "*lex orandi, lex credendi*" ("the law of prayer is the law of belief"), reinforces the intimate relationship between doxology and doctrine, liturgy and theology. For more, see: Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life*, repr. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

8 Johnathan E. Alvarado, "Worship in the Spirit: Pentecostal Perspectives on Liturgical Theology and Praxis," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 21, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 135; See also: Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 4.

people's beliefs, Lester Ruth says, "Songs will form faith one way or the other."⁹ Similarly, Rosalind Brown has described the influence of songs with these observations: "We are far more likely to find ourselves humming something we sang in church when we go home than we are to find ourselves meditating on a phrase in the sermon.... Words set to music engage the emotions and lodge in our memory. The refrains of hymns and choruses are even more likely to stick in the mind, simply because they are sung more frequently."¹⁰ To this extent, the impact of music and their lyrics cannot be denied.

Moreover, music serves as a confirming expression of the beliefs already held by worshippers. A worshipper's ability to respond to God's character is considerably affected by the role of corporate singing.¹¹ Robin Parry has expounded on this idea, writing, "Singing has been part of Christian worship for as long as there has been Christian worship, and it has been part of the worship of the Jews for a good while longer than that. While one can worship without singing, believers across many ages and diverse cultures have found singing to be of enduring value as a means of expressing and evoking praise."¹² This idea is reinforced by songwriter, Keith Getty, who has said rather bluntly "One thing is for sure—today we are what we sing."¹³

Furthermore, the close connection between singing and the formation and expression of faith is particularly strong among Pentecostals. Music has always represented an integral part of Pentecostal worship expression. Referring in part to the Pentecostal musical experience, Robert Cotton has stated, "Pentecostals have always been known for whole-hearted, even exuberant,

9 Lester Ruth, "Don't Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters," *The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies Blog*, February 1, 2006, 3, <http://www.iws.edu/2006/02/lester-ruth-dont-lose-the-trinity/> (accessed January 18, 2013).

10 Rosalind Brown, *How Hymns Shape Our Lives* (Cambridge, UK: Grove Book Limited, 2001), 21; as cited in: Robin Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship* (UK; Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2005), 7.

11 Mark Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church* (London: Equinox, 2006), 13.

12 Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 122.

13 Keith Getty as cited in: Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, xii.

expression of worship. This comes with wanting all God has for them. There is a boldness and an excitement among such worshippers. There is a healthy allowance for the whole person to get involved in worship.”¹⁴ While other Christian denominations may follow a formal liturgy that includes prescribed prayers, readings, actions, and traditional songs, Pentecostals rarely acknowledge these sorts of ritualistic forms. Pentecostal scholar, Daniel Albrecht has said,

When one speaks to Pentecostals about their worship, they generally avoid the language of “liturgy.” This could be because they know little of the historic idioms of liturgy, and/or they see their worship-forms and the drama of their worship services as quite distinct from so-called liturgical worships. Perhaps an even more fundamental reason they avoid the terminology of liturgy lies in the fact that Pentecostals have produced very little *written* liturgy. Oral liturgy dominates. Orality in general continues as a highly held value among Pentecostals. Pentecostal liturgies and their spirituality in general move in and through a kind of oral subculture. The virtual absence of written liturgies among Pentecostals around the world should not lead one to conclude that “Pentecostal liturgy” is an oxymoron. While Pentecostals often fail to recognize their practices of ritual as being such, nonetheless their worship rites subsist while being shaped, performed, and transmitted orally. [italics in original]¹⁵

As such, the music in the congregational worship experience of the PAOC tends to be high-spirited and spontaneous, according to the direction of a worship leader or pastor. Parry has argued that in churches, like those in the Pentecostal tradition, that do not have a formal written liturgy, “the burden of guiding the encounter falls heavily upon the songs. In many charismatic churches, the songs play the dominant role in shaping the worship-encounter.”¹⁶ This reality heightens the important influence of music within Pentecostal churches. Kenneth Archer has described Pentecostalism as,

an affective-experiential theological tradition, and to keep it as such we need an integrative methodology contextualized in an actual worshipping community. Our theological explanations can become a critical reflection upon our doxology with our acts of worship always informing our doxology. Orthodoxy has more to do with our primary

14 Roger Cotton, “What Does It Mean to Be Pentecostal? Three Perspectives,” *Paraclete* 28, no. 3 (June 1, 1994): 12.

15 Daniel E. Albrecht, “Worshipping and the Spirit: Transmuting Liturgy Pentecostally,” in *Spirit in Worship-Worship in the Spirit* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 224.

16 Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 14.

way of doing theology, which is worship, than the secondary critical reflective activity—the production of official dogma or right believing (orthopistis). Worship is our primary way of doing theology.¹⁷

In other words, many Pentecostals prefer to engage with theology through means of worship such as corporate singing rather than through reflective thinking or discourse about particular aspects of doctrinal tradition. Given this inclination, it is reasonable to suggest that the study of contemporary song lyrics in this thesis offers insight into the ongoing formation and current expression of PAOC worshippers' appreciation for the doctrine of the Trinity.

C) The Trinitarian Work of Colin Gunton as an Evaluative Framework

If the lyrics of commonly used songs in the PAOC are a significant and measurable determining factor of PAOC theological expression, then this project requires a theological framework for the evaluation of this worship practice. There are several reasons why the trinitarian theology of Colin Gunton serves as an adequate operational measure for this purpose. Firstly, Gunton was a leading trinitarian scholar and formidable voice in British theology before his untimely death in 2003. Actively engaged in ecumenical work, particularly with the World Council of Churches, Gunton proved himself to be a respected Reformed scholar who endorsed an open exchange of ideas across many disciplines and with many conversation partners. By drawing upon his work, this project is grounded upon the competence of a formidable and appreciated trinitarian theologian.

Secondly, Gunton was convinced that the way people think about the doctrine of the Trinity has far-reaching application. This permits his work to act as a catalyst for the type of multidimensional assessment applied in this project. Drawing from Eastern Christian resources,

17 Kenneth J. Archer, "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 11; For a similar idea, see: Don E. Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 39–48; Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed*, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement* (Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 37.

Gunton contended that our views about the doctrine of the Trinity have a profound effect on the way we perceive the nature of God, human personhood, and the world. For example, deficient views concerning the doctrine of the Trinity lead, according to Gunton, to myriad problems including theological modalism, human fragmentation, and dualistic perceptions of temporality and materiality. Positively, though, he believed that a robust trinitarianism provides the impetus for proper understanding and experiences of communion and interrelationality. These convictions form the theological backdrop for the lyrical analysis that follows.

Thirdly, Gunton's integration of the notions of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis* in his seminal 1993 work, *The One, the Three and the Many*, provides a worthy trinitarian model that does not err on either the extreme of theological modalism (i.e. overemphasizing divine oneness) or tritheism (i.e. overemphasizing divine threeness). Gunton was well aware of the dangers of both extremes and his trinitarian theology exemplifies the work of a cautious and constructive theologian. As will be discussed, the acumen, breadth, and evenness of Gunton's trinitarian theology make it a reasonable choice as an analytical framework for the completion of a qualitative lyrical content analysis of PAOC songs.

D) Chapter Overview

In chapter one, through an interdisciplinary literature review, the three major disciplines associated with this project are discussed—trinitarian theology, Pentecostal studies, and Christian worship studies. Chapter two provides an opportunity to explain the theology of Gunton as the primary source of trinitarian thinking for this project. Chapter three identifies components that are essential to the methodology employed for the lyrical content analysis in this study. Specific details are provided, for example, about the PAOC as a sample group and the development of the project's 82 song corpus. These technicalities represent the justification for a

lyrical assessment of the most commonly used PAOC songs from April 2007 to March 2013.

Additionally, drawing on Gunton's theology, chapter three provides the rationale for an articulation of eight important project questions and content analyses, uniquely developed for this thesis, and intended to gauge trinitarian views about God, human personhood, and cosmology. Concerning views about God, Gunton's trinitarian theology forms the basis for the following lyrical analyses:

- 1) Particular Identification in Divine Naming (i.e. *Do the songs, explicitly and/or implicitly, name and identify all the persons of the Trinity?*)
- 2) Recognition of Divine Action in Salvation History (i.e. *Do the songs speak of the actions of the triune God with reference to salvation history as recorded in biblical scripture?*)
- 3) Acknowledgment of Inter-Trinitarian Relationality (i.e. *Do the songs acknowledge the perichoretic relationality that exists among the persons of the immanent Trinity?*)

Concerning views about human personhood, Gunton's trinitarian theology forms the basis for the following lyrical analyses:

- 4) Singularity/Plurality of Human Self-Identification (i.e. *Is human self-identification in the songs depicted as singular, plural, or neutral?*)
- 5) Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality (i.e. *Do the actions of the worshipper in the songs acknowledge the horizontal-orientation of human relationality?*)
- 6) Expressions of Mediatorial Worship (i.e. *Do the songs reinforce the mediatorial worship of the worshipper as to, in, and through the different persons of the Trinity?*)

Concerning views about cosmology, Gunton's trinitarian theology forms the basis for the following lyrical analyses:

- 7) Cosmological Correspondence between Time and Timelessness (i.e. *What is the perception of time in relation to the action of the worshipper in the songs?*)
- 8) Cosmological Correspondence between Material and Immaterial (i.e. *Is there a balance between material and immaterial objects in the songs?*)

Chapter four provides the results compiled from the eight qualitative analyses of the selected lyrics. Finally, chapter five returns to the trinitarian work of Gunton as a descriptive and prescriptive instrument in response to the observations gleaned from the previous chapter. In addition, the contribution of various Pentecostal scholars and practitioners is added to this discussion. Implications and proposals are presented to advance trinitarian views about God, human personhood, and the world as it particularly and uniquely relates to the PAOC community.

E) Project Limitations

At the outset, various limitations of this project must be acknowledged. Firstly, this is not a study extending an understanding of trinitarian theology in the broadest sense. As will be shown in the following chapter, there are many expressions of trinitarian theology today. This project utilizes only one of these theological approaches (i.e. Gunton's trinitarian theology). Conceivably, there are many others that could have been utilized for this project. Secondly, this study is not one that represents the musical expressions of *all* Canadian Pentecostals. The PAOC represents about 60% of the Canadian Pentecostal population.¹⁸ In chapter three, I will more extensively qualify that, while an analysis of a particular worship practice of the PAOC may raise relevant issues for other Pentecostal and Canadian Evangelical denominations (that tend to use the same commonly used songs), data derived from a study of this nature ought not be

18 For statistical verification, see: Bruce L. Guenther, "Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants in Canada," in *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, ed. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 365–414.

overgeneralized to represent an entire population of individuals in the PAOC denomination.

Thirdly, this project does not analyze the PAOC for trinitarian impulses beyond the parameters of lyrical content analyses of their most commonly used songs. It is assumed, for example, that there are other ways to analyze the strength of trinitarian expressions within a PAOC worship setting, but this project is limited to an eight question framework specifically directed toward assessment of commonly used PAOC song lyrics.

Furthermore, while I will defend the utilization of Gunton's theology in the following chapters, I must also acknowledge some limitations associated with the use of Gunton as my primary interlocutor. Certainly, Gunton is unapologetically a Reformed theologian. Some may question how a high-churched, Reformed theologian from England can be utilized to evaluate and inspire an Evangelical, Pentecostal religious group in Canada. There is no denying that this project's application of Gunton's trinitarian theology represents a unique appropriation and provides an original contribution associated with his work.¹⁹ Again, Gunton is not the only interlocutor I could have utilized for this project. In the end, however, choosing the trinitarian theology of a particular theologian as a theoretical framework proved far more manageable than trying to synthesize broad and divergent views on the doctrine of the Trinity developed over the past century. Moreover, as will be discussed below, I contend that Gunton's emphasis on God the Holy Spirit and his awareness of the potential this has for an emerging Pentecostal theology endears him as a worthy, albeit unique, dialogue partner for this project.²⁰ In chapter three, I will explain in greater detail other delimiters related to this thesis' methodology.

19 A rare exception to this is Craig Bartholomew's utilization of Gunton's trinitarian theology as an assessment tool for an Evangelical, Reformed church. See: Craig G. Bartholomew, "The Healing of Modernity: A Trinitarian Remedy? A Critical Dialogue With Colin Gunton's 'The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity,'" *European Journal of Theology* 6, no. 2 (January 1, 1997): 111–30.

20 For a comment from Gunton on Pentecostalism, see: Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, repr. (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), xv.

F) Clarification of Recurring Project Terminology

In addition to the above-mentioned limitations, some clarification of terminology choices in this thesis should be addressed. Firstly, I acknowledge that the PAOC, as a group of Protestant, Evangelical Christians, is hesitant to self-identify as a religious “denomination,” opting instead to call themselves a “fellowship” of churches.²¹ PAOC pastor, William Sloos has written, “Pentecostalism is a movement not a denomination and its identity lies in its inherent ability to reinvent itself with the foundational and missional message of Christ for generations to come.”²² Likewise, Lyle Dabney has described Pentecostalism as being “made up of a complex set of interconnected ecclesiastical groups and institutions best described as a ‘movement’ rather than a ‘church.’”²³ While I wish to acknowledge these Pentecostal scholars’ preference for other terminology, nonetheless, I choose to use the term “denomination” in association with the PAOC throughout this thesis because, beyond PAOC circles, this is precisely what they are perceived to be by scholars, theologians, and social scientists. For example, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC), the largest national association of Canadian Evangelicals and churches, identifies the PAOC as one of their forty-three “affiliate denominations.”²⁴

Secondly, when the divine title “God” is used throughout this thesis, I prefer to avoid a modalistic interpretation of this divine title as much as possible. In most cases, I purposefully use terms such as “divine persons,” “triune God,” and “the Godhead.” However, to use this language in every case throughout this thesis would be cumbersome. So, I acknowledge some inconsistencies in the utilization of these titles among the various quotations throughout the

21 David Wells, *What I See* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2008), 31, 39, 41, 58.

22 William Sloos, *Defining Pentecostal Identity: Differences between Charismatics and Classical Pentecostals*, The Theology Study Commission (Mississauga, ON: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2010), 14.

23 D. Lyle Dabney, “Saul’s Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today,” *Pneuma* 23, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 118.

24 See: <http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/denominations> (accessed March 12, 2014).

chapters. Thus, when I choose to use the term “God,” both in textual form and in selected quotations, it is done with an implied understanding of the particular relations that exist among the divine persons of the Trinity.

Furthermore, while I generally try to curb the use of patriarchal titles associated with the triune God in favour of more inclusive language, nonetheless, I choose to use the divine titles “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit” throughout this thesis for three primary reasons. Firstly, this is the language my primary interlocutor, Gunton, chose to use. Secondly, this language is most pervasive in the lyrics of the song corpus I decided to assess.²⁵ Thirdly, these divine titles are consistent with those used in the Niceno-Constantinople Creed. It is my hope that these personal decisions will not inhibit the reader’s evaluation of my work.

G) Uniqueness of this Study and Extenuating Circumstances

To date, a detailed study that considers whether a trinitarian framework truly informs the corporate worship expression of a Canadian Evangelical denomination has not yet been made. The reasons for this may be somewhat speculative, but I will offer a few of them. Firstly, a study like this may not yet have been undertaken because assessment of contemporary worship music tends to be, at best, perfunctory. There is a general sense that, if contemporary worship music offers an authentic expression to God, then it defies the need to be assessed. This is confirmed by Monique Ingalls’ 2008 dissertation that evaluated the reluctance of Evangelicals and their music leaders to critique the commonly used music utilized in various worship settings.²⁶ My thesis seeks to go beyond this reluctance and analyse the lyrics that Canadian Evangelicals in the PAOC regularly utilize.

25 For another defense of the use of patriarchal divine titles, see: Christoph Schwöbel, *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 34.

26 See: Monique M. Ingalls, “Awesome in This Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship” (University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

Secondly, a project of this nature may not have been completed because there tends to be an uncritical approach when it comes to assessing Pentecostalism from within its own ranks.

Pentecostal scholar, Grant Wacker has provided one such concession, describing early Pentecostalism in this way: “they could not imagine, even for a moment, that their own theological posture might need some therapy.”²⁷ As will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter, Pentecostalism has tended to be especially resistant to critique.

Thirdly, this sort of study is less likely to occur because thorough and comprehensive theological, ethnographic, and sociological research associated with Canadian Evangelicalism is currently underdeveloped. Since George Rawlyk’s comprehensive study of Canadian Evangelicals in 1997,²⁸ no comparable research of this magnitude has been initiated. Recent ad hoc studies conducted by the EFC and some independent researchers are commendable.²⁹ Beyond this, a segment of research also exists that tends, I argue, to caricaturize and misrepresent Canadian Evangelicals and add very little to an accurate depiction of this religious movement in Canada.³⁰ Beyond this, no other research currently exists. As a result of the modest

27 Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 183.

28 George A. Rawlyk, *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, McGill-Queen’s Studies in the History of Religion (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997).

29 Reginald Bibby, “Restless Gods and Restless Youth: An Update on the Religious Situation in Canada” (presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Sociological Association, Ottawa, 2009); Samuel H. Reimer, *Evangelicals and the Continental Divide: The Conservative Protestant Sub-Culture in Canada and the United States* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003); Samuel H. Reimer and Michael Wilkinson, “A Demographic Look at Evangelical Congregations,” *Church and Faith Trends* 3, no. 2 (August 2010): 1–21; John G. Stackhouse, “Defining Evangelical,” *Church and Faith Trends* 1, no. 1 (October 2007): 1–5; Jonathan Malloy, “Bush/Harper? Canadian and American Evangelical Politics Compared,” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 39, no. 4 (2009): 352–63; David Haskell, *Through a Lens Darkly* (Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2009); Lydia Bean, “The Politics of Evangelical Identity in the United States and Canada” (Harvard University, 2009); Samuel H. Reimer and Michael Wilkinson, *A Culture of Faith: Evangelical Congregations in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015); The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, *The Canadian Bible Engagement Study* (Ottawa, ON, 2014), www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/bibleengagementstudy (accessed December 10, 2014); The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, *Hemorrhaging Faith: Why and When Young Canadians Are Leaving, Staying, and Returning to the Church*, 2012, www.hemorrhagingfaith.com (accessed December 10, 2014).

30 Marci McDonald, *The Armageddon Factor* (Toronto: Random Press, 2010); Dennis Gruending, *Pulpit and Politics: Competing Religious Ideologies in Canadian Public Life* (Cochrane, AB: Kingsley Publishing, 2011);

representation of research concerning Canadian Evangelicals, a denomination like the PAOC may engage in national studies of churches in their own denomination, but do so with certain inherent biases without a larger comparative body of work from which to glean. In this respect, my thesis extends the parameters of the research that currently exists.

H) Personal Motivation

I am motivated to pursue the research associated with this project because I consider it part of my responsibility to engage in the process of challenging Canadian Evangelicals to live in a manner that demonstrates a consistency between our actions and our professions of faith. As a Canadian Evangelical and ordained minister, I have pastored in Evangelical churches and studied in Evangelical theological institutions. I care about these organizations and the people associated with them. Therefore, my approach in this thesis is intended to be constructively critical.

Moreover, I wish to state that, generally speaking, I do not have objections to the use of contemporary worship music. Neither do I desire to argue over whether certain songs are *better* or *worse* than others. Rather, this project is intended to provide an overview of the basic lyrical trends in a representative corpus of commonly used songs in the PAOC. In this respect, it is important to articulate the overarching purpose and methodology of the project. I seek to view the lyrics of the 82 songs in this study as a collective whole and ask pertinent questions about the underlying messages embedded in them to determine, conceivably, how the repetition of these messages or, conversely, how the absence of other messages, affect the ongoing development of theological understanding in the PAOC. As such, I agree with Nick Page, who has said, “I like worship songs. If I didn’t like them I wouldn’t get so annoyed about them. If I didn’t feel they were worth arguing over I’d go and do something else with my time. I believe that the modern

Tom Warner, *Losing Control: Canada’s Social Conservatives in the Age of Rights* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010); Rob Warner, *Reinventing English Evangelicalism, 1966-2001: A Theological and Sociological Study*, Studies in Evangelical History and Thought (Milton Keynes; Bletchley: Paternoster Press, 2007).

worship song is an immensely powerful vehicle for worship, and a major factor in encouraging, sustaining and strengthening the spiritual lives of many millions of Christians around the world.”³¹ Essentially, I am motivated in this project by a desire to see Canadian Evangelicals know, understand, and live informed by a dynamic trinitarian theology.

Thus, this thesis advances with a representative Canadian Evangelical denomination to assess (i.e. the PAOC), a worship practice to evaluate (i.e. contemporary worship music expression), and a framework of trinitarian theology (i.e. Gunton’s trinitarian theology).

Ultimately, this thesis declares that the contemporary renewal of trinitarian theology, represented by the work of Gunton, can serve as an important theological resource for the future advancement of the PAOC.

31 Nick Page, *And Now Let’s Move Into a Time of Nonsense: Why Worship Songs Are Failing the Church* (Franklin, TN: Authentic Publishers, 2005), 5.

CHAPTER 1: RESOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY, PENTECOSTAL STUDIES, AND WORSHIP STUDIES

This chapter provides a literary background and context for the integration of the three major disciplines associated with this project—trinitarian theology, Pentecostal studies, and worship studies. The first section, on trinitarian theology, provides an historical overview of the study of the doctrine of the Trinity and articulates the essential theological approaches that have been developed in the Eastern and Western Church. More particularly, I will introduce and propose the trinitarian theology of Colin Gunton as a viable interlocutor that advances the purposes of this study. The second section describes the historical interchange between trinitarian theology and twentieth and twenty-first century Pentecostalism. Specifically, the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) is historically located as a Canadian Evangelical denomination that offers a compelling selection for this case study based on its unique history in the oneness-trinitarian debates of the early twentieth century. In the third section, research in the field of worship studies is explored, especially in relation to the evolving industry of contemporary worship music utilized in many Evangelical corporate worship settings around the world today. Of particular relevance to this project, I will also consider how scholars in the field of worship studies have begun to examine connections between the renewed emphasis on trinitarian theology and contemporary music expression. By examining the intersection of these three major disciplines—trinitarian theology, Pentecostal studies, and worship studies, this chapter represents the rationale for conducting a lyrical content analysis of trinitarian impulses of commonly used PAOC congregational songs.

A) Trinitarian Theology

In this first section, I will provide a concise historical overview of trinitarian theology in

order to reveal how contemporary trinitarian theologians view the doctrine of the Trinity as a significant topic that shapes understandings about God, human personhood, and the world. This provides the theological building block for my thesis project that considers the trinitarian impulses in PAOC music. In this section, I will also introduce key terms pertinent to this study, such as *perichoresis* and *hypostasis*. In this context, Colin Gunton's gradual embrace of the doctrine of the Trinity in the second half of the twentieth century is also examined to show how he emerged as a leading voice in contemporary trinitarian theology discussion. The section closes with an assessment of how Gunton's legacy is interpreted and also identifies seminal work that has been completed to advance Gunton's trinitarian claims.

i) Historical Overview: The Study of the Doctrine of the Trinity

The systematic study of the doctrine of the Trinity represents a considerable body of work. The concept of the Trinity developed as an expression of the ancient Church's understanding of God as triune—three persons, one deity.¹ Many studies affirm the ways in which the notion of the Trinity was conceptualized by the fourth century Church at the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople, in large part, as a response to the Arian controversy.² Through

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- 1 See: Andrew Stirling, "The Church Challenged: The Trinity and Modern Culture," in *The Trinity: An Essential for Faith in Our Time*, ed. Wolfhart Pannenberg (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Publishing House, 2002), 160; Thomas F. Torrance, "The Trinitarian Foundation and Character of Faith and of Authority in the Church," in *Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Scottish Academic Press, 1985), 96; Brad Harper and Paul Louis Metzger, *Exploring Ecclesiology: An Evangelical and Ecumenical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2009), 27.
 - 2 For more on the development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the fourth century, see: Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); John Behr, *The Nicene Faith, The Formation of Christian Theology* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004); Richard P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318-381*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); Boris Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1999); Vincent Twomey and Lewis Ayres, *The Mystery of the Holy Trinity in the Fathers of the Church: The Proceedings of the Fourth International Patristic Conference, Maynooth, 1999*, Irish Theological Quarterly Monograph Series (Dublin; Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 2007); Arthur C. Coxe and Philip Schaff, *A Select Library of Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*; vol. 38 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905).

these councils, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit were affirmed as “eternally begotten” or *homoousios* (i.e. of the same divine substance) with God the Father. While these creedal outcomes refuted certain heresies, the Church Fathers did not, at that time, determine precisely *how* the three divine persons comprise one God. For centuries, this has been left for theologians to consider.

Although contemporary protests against sweeping observations are increasing, this reflection has followed two basic lines of reasoning.³ Drawing in large part upon the undertakings of the Cappadocian Fathers—Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea,⁴ and Gregory of Nazianzus⁵—scholars with Eastern Christian partialities are inclined to utilize the Cappadocians’ understanding of the triune God in terms of interdependence, dynamism, particularity, and mutual indwelling.⁶ In this respect, the three divine *hypostases* (i.e. emphasizing threeness, *prosopon*, or person) are delineated from the divine *ousia* (i.e. emphasizing divine substance or essence).⁷ Popularized by John of Damascus in the eighth century, the Greek term *perichoresis* is a descriptive word utilized by those, particularly in the Eastern tradition. The term connotes the mutual and dynamic interrelationality of the three divine persons with one another—yet not to

3 See: Michael A. Fahey and John Meyendorff, *Trinitarian Theology East and West: St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Gregory Palamas* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1979); Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*, New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies Series (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002), 60.

4 Basil of Caesarea, “Letters 38.7,” in *The Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol. 8, Second Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), 202.

5 Gregory of Nazianzus, “Orations 29.16,” in *The Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol. 7, Second Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), 306–307.

6 For analysis of the Cappadocian Fathers and their trinitarian teachings, see: Bobrinskoy, *The Mystery of the Trinity: Trinitarian Experience and Vision in the Biblical and Patristic Tradition*; Vladimir Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God* (New York: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974); Dumitru Staniloae, Jerome Newville, and Otilia Kloos, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Practical Guide for the Faithful and a Definitive Manual for the Scholar* (South Canaan: St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2002); John A. McGuckin, *Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2001); John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 5.

7 Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 10.

the detriment of the divine particularity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.⁸ This notion continues to inform a stream of trinitarian scholarship today that seeks to redeem an understanding of *both* the particularity *and* the relationality that not only is evident within the triune Godhead, but also, is axiomatic in conceptions of human personhood and the created order.

An emphasis upon perichoretic distinction in relation is sometimes contrasted with perceived trinitarian developments in Western Christianity since the early Christian councils. In particular, the work of Augustine of Hippo, specifically *De Trinitate*, is viewed as foundational for Western theologians' interpretations of the doctrine of the Trinity and the priority given to trinitarian oneness.⁹ While the basis of the argument is being increasingly challenged,¹⁰ some contend that Augustine's embrace of divine simplicity represented a problematic overemphasis on divine essence at the expense of the diversity of the three divine persons. In this respect, Augustine is said to have over-utilized neoplatonic and psychological vestiges associated with

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- 8 For more on *perichoresis*, see: Jürgen Moltmann, "Perichoresis: An Old Magic Word for a New Trinitarian Theology," in *Trinity, Community, and Power* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2000), 111–25; Michael G. Lawler, "Perichoresis: New Theological Wine in an Old Theological Wineskin," *Horizons* 22, no. 1 (March 1, 1995): 49–66; Stanley J. Grenz, "The Social God and the Relational Self: Toward a Trinitarian Theology of the *Imago Dei*," in *Trinitarian Soundings in Systematic Theology* (New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 96; Miroslav Volf, "'The Trinity Is Our Social Program': The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Shape of Social Engagement," *Modern Theology* 14, no. 3 (July 1, 1998): 409; John P. Egan, "Toward Trinitarian Perichoresis: Saint Gregory the Theologian, (Oration) 31.41.," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 39, no. 1 (March 1, 1994): 83–93; Daniel F. Stramara, "Gregory of Nyssa's Terminology for Trinitarian Perichoresis," *Vigiliae Christianae* 52, no. 3 (August 1, 1998): 257–63; Verna E.F. Harrison, "Perichoresis in the Greek Fathers," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (January 1, 1991): 53–65; Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998), 53–54.
- 9 Augustine, *De Trinitate: Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill, 2nd ed. (Hyde Park, NJ: New City Press, 2012); Mark J. Cartledge, "Empirical-Theological Models of the Trinity: Exploring the Beliefs of Theology Students in the United Kingdom," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 19, no. 2 (November 2006): 140.
- 10 See, for example: Bradley Glen Green, *Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine: The Theology of Colin Gunton in Light of Augustine* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011); Keith E. Johnson, *Rethinking the Trinity and Religious Pluralism: An Augustinian Assessment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011); Michael R. Barnes, "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology," *Theological Studies* 56, no. 2 (June 1, 1995): 237–50; Robert D. Crouse, "*Paucis Mutatis Verbis*: St. Augustine's Platonism," in *Augustine and His Critics* (London: Routledge, 2000), 37–50; George Lawless, "Augustine of Hippo and His Critics," in *Augustine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 3–28; Robert Dodaro and George Lawless, *Augustine and His Critics: Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000); Travis Ables, *Incarnational Realism: Trinity and the Spirit in Augustine and Barth* (London: T & T Clark International, 2013).

the human self.¹¹ Building on this premise, scholars have associated a perceived overemphasis on divine simplicity with a medieval theological tendency to favour the primordial oneness of God (i.e. *de Deo uno*) while reducing the emphasis on God's tripersonhood (i.e. *de Deo trino*) to a theological afterthought.¹² This critical assessment is typically found among those who associate Thomistic scholasticism, based upon rational observation within the cosmos and reflections upon the divine essence, with a general hesitation to express the knowability of the immanent Trinity. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen has stated, "Building on Augustine's legacy and subsequent tradition, Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* provides a prime example here: it begins with unity and then discusses triunity (articles 1-26 and 27-43, respectively, in *Summa Theologiae*)."¹³ This, it is argued, also leads to a reluctance to attribute particular expressions of God's redemptive self-revelation in the world to the divine economy.¹⁴

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- 11 See, for example: Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004); Allan Coppedge, *The God Who Is Triune: Revisioning the Christian Doctrine of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 108-109; Edmund J. Fortman, *The Triune God: A Historical Study of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, Theological Resources (Philadelphia; London: Westminster Press; Hutchinson, 1972), 140-141; Christoph Schwöbel, *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 4-5; Cartledge, "Empirical-Theological Models of the Trinity: Exploring the Beliefs of Theology Students in the United Kingdom," 143.
- 12 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen wrote, "While there has been no era that did not confess belief in the Trinity as a defining tenet of Christian faith, the doctrine was also often relegated to second place after the doctrine of the one God. In other words, the oneness (and unity) of God came first; Trinity followed." Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Trajectories of the Contemporary 'Trinitarian Renaissance' in Different Contexts," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 3 (2009): 7; See also: Dwight J. Zscheile, "The Trinity, Leadership, and Power," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 6, no. 2 (Fall 2007): 46.
- 13 Kärkkäinen, "The Trajectories of the Contemporary 'Trinitarian Renaissance' in Different Contexts," 8 n.3.
- 14 For limitations in Thomistic trinitarianism emphasizing oneness, see: Rik Van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Peter Wawrykow, *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005); Francis L.B. Cunningham, *The Indwelling of the Trinity: A Historio-Doctrinal Study of the Theory of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008); Gilles Emery and Francesca Murphy, *The Trinitarian Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); D. Juvenal Merriel, *To the Image of the Trinity: A Study in the Development of Aquinas' Teaching*, Studies and Texts (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1990); Cartledge, "Empirical-Theological Models of the Trinity: Exploring the Beliefs of Theology Students in the United Kingdom," 140; A medieval exception against this inclination toward trinitarian oneness is expressed in the work of twelfth century mystic, Richard of St. Victor, who defended the existence of three persons in God based on the premise that supreme charity required shared interpersonal love. See: Nico den Bok, *Communicating the Most High: A Systematic Study of Person and Trinity in the Theology of Richard of St. Victor*, Bibliotheca Victorina (Paris: Brepols, 1996); Hugh of Saint Victor et al., *Trinity and Creation: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Richard and Adam of St. Victor*, Victorine Texts in Translation: Exegesis, Theology and Spirituality from the Abbey of St. Victor (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 2011); Recent

While it is contended that the Protestant Reformers may have avoided medieval scholasticism's suspicions regarding the knowability of the triune God, some scholars have noted, nevertheless, that the Reformers tended to view the doctrine of the Trinity with lesser value compared to what was perceived to be the more pressing theological importance of that day, mainly soteriology.¹⁵ Likewise, scholars detect an historical hesitation toward the doctrine of the Trinity throughout the Enlightenment period in favour of an emphasis on rationalism.¹⁶ Conceivably, if the doctrine of the Trinity is impossible to reason, then Enlightenment thinkers, it is argued, elevated reason as the chief arbiter of truth.¹⁷ By the turn of the twentieth century, it is commonly held that the study of the doctrine of the Trinity was either uncontested as an ontological assumption or dismissed altogether as an irrelevant theological doctrine.

scholarship, however, has begun to challenge this generalized interpretation of Thomistic trinitarian oneness arguing that it misrepresents Aquinas. See: Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering, *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine of the Triune God*, Thomistic Ressourcement (Washington: Catholic University of America, 2011); Michael Dauphinais, Barry David, and Matthew Levering, *Aquinas the Augustinian* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2007); Gilles Emery et al., *Trinity in Aquinas* (Ypsilanti: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria College, 2003); Matthew Levering, *Scripture and Metaphysics: Aquinas and the Renewal of Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Jeffrey M. McCurry, "Trinitarian Theology after and with -but Not against- Aquinas?," *Modern Theology* 21, no. 3 (July 1, 2005): 497–509.

- 15 Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*, 14–15. In this respect, T.F. Torrance boldly argued that the God proclaimed in the Westminster Catechism is "not essentially or distinctively Christian." Thomas F. Torrance, *The Mediation of Christ* (Paternoster Press, 1983), 101; For views on the Reformers and the doctrine of the Trinity, see: Dennis Bielfeldt, Mickey L. Mattox, and Paul R. Hinlicky, *The Substance of Faith: Luther's Doctrinal Theology for Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008); Edward A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952); Wilhelm Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1980); Christine Helmer, *The Trinity and Martin Luther: A Study on the Relationship between Genre, Language and the Trinity in Luther's Works (1523-1546)* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1999).
- 16 It is noted, for example, that Charles Hodge's entire three volume systematic corpus offered only a few pages to address the doctrine of the Trinity. Charles Hodge, "The Trinity," in *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1871), 1:6.
- 17 See: Alister E. McGrath, "The Doctrine of the Trinity: An Evangelical Reflection," in *God the Holy Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 17–35; Immanuel Kant argued that "The doctrine of the Trinity ... has no practical relevance at all." See: Immanuel Kant, George Di Giovanni, and Allen W. Wood, *Religion and Natural Theology*, Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 264; An exception to this norm is represented by the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher who, though perhaps limited by an anthropocentric perspective, nonetheless argued for understanding beyond rational proofs. Schleiermacher is commonly viewed as paving the way for the trinitarian theology renaissance that took place in the second half of the twentieth century. The same could be said of Georg Friedrich Hegel who, though far more philosophical than theological in orientation, offered a framework to mutually consider the oneness and threeness of the doctrine of the Trinity that was later embraced as part of the renewal of trinitarian thought.

A change in perspective, however, took place in the mid-twentieth century mainly due to the work of prominent theologians, Karl Barth and Karl Rahner. While scholars argue that Barth, himself, may not have fully escaped the modalistic tendencies he sought to critique,¹⁸ by emphasizing God's active and revelatory self-disclosure in the human salvation event, Barth is widely considered to having introduced a corrective trinitarian shock-wave through Western theology.¹⁹ According to Barth, the Christian doctrine of the Trinity had laboured for centuries under the speculative, metaphysical burden of natural theology. Against this, Barth sought to reincorporate a sensitivity to the threefold self-revelation of God in the economy of salvation (i.e. *oikonomia*). Barth's claims were augmented by Karl Rahner, who, for his part in opposition to classical Western theology, presented a formula that has generally become known as *Rahner's Rule* —“the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity.”²⁰ This axiom has had a profound impact on trinitarian conversations in recent

18 See: David Curry, “The Trinity: An Essential for Faith in Our Times,” ed. Andrew Stirling (Evangel Publishing House, 2002), 256; Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003), 4; Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Grundfragen Systematischer Theologie* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), 96–111; Cornelius Plantinga, “Social Trinity and Tritheism,” in *Trinity, Incarnation, & Atonement* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 32–33; LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*, 252; Alan J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation with Special Reference to Volume One of Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 251.

19 For Barth's most extensive work on the Trinity see: Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*: vol. 1, pt 1: *The Doctrine of God*, ed. Geoffrey William Bromiley and Thomas F. Torrance, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), 295–489; For secondary work on Barth and the doctrine of the Trinity, see: Otto Weber, *Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953); Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979); Stephen W. Sykes, *Karl Barth: Studies of His Theological Method* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979); R.D. Williams, “Barth on the Triune God,” in *Karl Barth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 147–193; Colin E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); George Hunsinger, “Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five Theses on the Theology of Karl Barth,” *Modern Theology* 24, no. 2 (April 1, 2008): 179–198; Eberhard Jüngel and J. B. Webster, *God's Being is in Becoming: The Trinitarian Being of God in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001); Paul D. Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: In Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology* (Edinburgh; London; New York: T. & T. Clark, 2002); Thomas F. Torrance, “Problem of Natural Theology in the Thought of Karl Barth,” *Religious Studies* 6, no. 2 (June 1, 1970): 121–35; Thomas F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology, 1910–1931* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000); Williams, “Barth on the Triune God.”

20 Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph F. Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 22; For more on Rahner's trinitarian position: see: Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith* (Seabury, 1977); Herbert

decades.²¹

The second half of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century evidenced a surge in dialogue concerning issues associated with trinitarian theology and God's historical and economic engagement with the world. This is verified by a large quantity of trinitarian scholarship that cannot be reduced to a particular theological discipline, or a specific branch of learning.²² Even a scant appraisal of the contemporary literature related to the doctrine of the Trinity reveals a wealth of application in the following areas: feminist theology, missional theology, process theology, analytical philosophy, worship studies, pastoral ministry, political theology, ecclesial studies, inter-religious studies, mystical studies, creation studies, egalitarianism, liberation theology, historical studies, liturgical/sacramental studies, socio-economics, natural theology, and cultural studies.²³ This incomplete list indicates how

Vorgrimler, *Understanding Karl Rahner: An Introduction to His Life and Thought* (New York; London: Crossroad; SCM Press, 1986); Mary E. Hines and Declan Marmion, *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Patrick Burke, *Reinterpreting Rahner: A Critical Study of His Major Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002).

- 21 See: Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology*, 217; In assessing Rahner, however, I would argue that he comes dangerously close to denying that God is triune apart from salvation history. Miroslav Volf expresses this same apprehension arguing that there is always a surplus in the immanent Trinity that the economic Trinity does not express. Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Sacra Doctrina: Christian Theology for a Postmodern Age (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 407.
- 22 Three recent texts that offer commendable insight into the breadth of discussions associated with contemporary trinitarian theology are: Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering, *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Peter C. Phan, *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Wozniak, eds., *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark International, 2012).
- 23 See: Donald Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity: An Introduction to Theology with the Help of the Church Fathers* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009); Keith E. Johnson, "Does the Doctrine of the Trinity Hold the Key to a Christian Theology of Religions?," in *Trinitarian Theology for the Church* (Nottingham, England: Apollos, 2009), 142–60; Johnson, *Rethinking the Trinity and Religious Pluralism: An Augustinian Assessment*; Gerald L. Bray, *We Believe in One God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009); Gerald L. Bray, "The Trinity: Where Do We Go from Here," in *Always Reforming* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2006), 19–40; Michael L. Chiavone, *The One God: A Critically Developed Evangelical Doctrine of Trinitarian Unity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009); John L. Gresham, "The Social Model of the Trinity and Its Critics," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 46, no. 3 (January 1, 1993): 325–43; Stephen R. Holmes, "Three versus One? Some Problems of Social Trinitarianism," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 3, no. 1 (2009): 77–89; Mark Husbards, "The Trinity Is Not Our Social Program: Volf, Gregory of Nyssa and Barth," in *Trinitarian Theology for the Church* (Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: InterVarsity Press; Apollos, 2009), 120–41; Ted

multifaceted the topic of the Trinity has become.

However overgeneralized and despite their obvious limitations, the perceived differences mentioned above between Eastern Christianity (with its proclivity for trinitarian threeness) and Western Christianity (with its proclivity for trinitarian oneness) offer a way to conceptualize common arguments associated with the renewed interest in the doctrine of the Trinity. Another typology that proves helpful in this regard is Millard Erickson's comparison of "gradationists" (or "complementarians") and "egalitarians" (or "social trinitarians").²⁴ The relationship of authority and submission among the divine persons of the trinitarian Godhead is of primary

Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993); Peter Toon, *Our Triune God: A Biblical Portrayal of the Trinity* (Wheaton, IL: Bridgepoint/Victor, 1996); Peter Toon and James D. Spiceland, *One God in Trinity* (Westchester, IL: Cornerstone Books, 1980); David S. Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology, Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (London: Blackwell, 1998); Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self, The Matrix of Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001); Robert W. Jenson, *The Triune Identity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1982); LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (Harper and Row, 1991); Lossky, *In the Image and Likeness of God*; Alister E. McGrath, *Understanding the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988); M.D. Meeks, *Trinity, Community, and Power: Mapping Trajectories in Wesleyan Theology* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2000); Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004); Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Eternity, Time, and the Trinitarian God," in *Trinity, Time, and Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 62–70; Aristotle Papanikolaou, *Being with God: Trinity, Apophaticism, and Divine-Human Communication* (South Bend, IN; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); John C. Polkinghorne, *The Trinity and an Entangled World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010); Fred Sanders, *The Deep Things of God: How the Trinity Changes Everything* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010); Schwöbel, *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act*; Stephen A. Seamands, *Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian Service* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005); Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation with Special Reference to Volume One of Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*; James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster Press, 1996); S. Mark Heim, *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000); Torrance, "The Trinitarian Foundation and Character of Faith and of Authority in the Church"; Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997); Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*; Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, *God's Life in Trinity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006); John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1985); Leonardo Boff and Paul Burns, *Trinity and Society* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988); Marc A. Pugliese, *The One, the Many and the Trinity: Joseph A. Bracken and the Challenge of Process Metaphysics* (Washington: Catholic University of America, 2011); Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (Norwich: SCM Press, 1981); Gerald O'Collins, *The Tripersonal God: Understanding and Interpreting the Trinity* (New York: Geoffrey Chapman, 1999); Millard J. Erickson, *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1995).

24 See: Millard J. Erickson, *Who's Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2009).

interest to both theological groups. This was evidenced when an argument arose in 2006 among the Evangelical Theological Society's 4000-person membership over the issue of functional and eternal submission among the persons of the Godhead. The primary figures in this energized debate were theologians Kevin Giles (advancing the egalitarian view) and Bruce Ware (advancing the gradationist view). Later, in 2008, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School hosted an event in which Ware and Wayne Grudem debated Tom McCall and Keith Yandall on the following question, "Do relations of authority and submission exist eternally among the persons of the Godhead?" Gradationists like Ware, Grudem, and Gerald Bray are committed to a proper respect for the transcendent, ontological mystery of God and the eternal, functional submission of the Holy Spirit and the Son to the Father.²⁵ Emphasizing trinitarian oneness, they uphold that there is one, unified, and divine Godhead that, nevertheless, exists via an eternally-fixed, subordinational, and hierarchical relationship between the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.²⁶ However accessible the revealed God is, it is contested that God can never be fully grasped by the finite, human mind.²⁷ The doctrine of the Trinity, then, is perceived as an important, albeit second order and extra-biblical doctrine that serves to clarify the more primary doctrines of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.²⁸

In response to the recent twentieth century shift toward the reappropriation of trinitarian

25 For examples of the gradationist/complementarian position, see: Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Downers Grove, IL; Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press; Zondervan, 1994); George Angus Fulton Knight, *A Biblical Approach to the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1953); Bruce A. Ware, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Relationships, Roles, and Relevance* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005); J. Scott Horrell, "Toward a Biblical Model of the Social Trinity: Avoiding Equivocation of Nature and Order," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 3 (September 2004): 399–421; Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology and Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2004); Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, "A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42, no. 3 (September 1999): 461–76; Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: In Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology*.

26 For early expressions of "eternal or ontological subordinationalism" commonly drawn upon by contemporaries, see the work of Origen, Novation, and Hilary of Poitiers on the doctrine of the Trinity.

27 Curry, "The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Renewal of the Church," 249–250, 258.

28 See: Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life*, 185.

theology, gradationists express concern that recent developments by social trinitarians represent veiled attempts to manipulate the doctrine of the Trinity to fit the whims and impulses of modern, social, and political agendas.²⁹ It is further argued that trinitarian discussion frequently devolves into a form of tritheism in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are conceived as three divine centres of consciousness, reflecting three exclusive divine persons.³⁰ This, it is contended, is a grievous deviation that devalues the doctrine of the Trinity and misconstrues God's eternal existence.

On the other hand, those sometimes called egalitarians or social trinitarians (such as Erickson, Giles, McCall, and David Cunningham) are inclined to laud the trinitarian renewal associated with the twentieth and twenty-first century. Together, these scholars tend to emphasize the temporal and functional subordination of God the Son to God the Father. Accordingly, the Son condescended in temporary, functional submission to the Father for the express purpose of executing the redemption and incarnational project of the triune God. Otherwise, the emphasis of egalitarians is for equality and particularity among the divine persons.³¹ As such, social trinitarians tend to utilize trinitarian axioms to advance an

29 For critiques of social trinitarianism, see: Karen Kilby, "Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity," *New Blackfriars* 81, no. 957 (November 2000): 440; Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life*, 184; Fred Sanders, "The Trinity," in *Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 38; Brian Leftow, "Anti-Social Trinitarianism," in *Trinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 203–249; Husbands, "The Trinity Is Not Our Social Program: Volf, Gregory of Nyssa and Barth," 120–141; Stephen R. Holmes, *The Quest for the Trinity: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2012).

30 Plantinga, "Social Trinity and Tritheism," 34.

31 For examples of this view, see: Erickson, *Who's Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate*; Kevin Giles, *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002); Kevin Giles, "The Trinity without the Tiers," *St. Mark's Review*, no. 215 (February 1, 2011): 39–62; Thomas H. McCall and Keith E. Yandell, "On Trinitarian Subordinationism," *Philosophia Christi* 11, no. 2 (January 1, 2009): 339–58; Kevin Giles, *The Eternal Generation of the Son: Maintaining Orthodoxy in Trinitarian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012).

understanding of a personal, agential, relational, and revelatory God.³² Far from advancing the notion of a distant, aloof, and even tyrannical deity manifested in an eternal hierarchical structure, it is reasoned that God, in three distinct, yet equal divine persons, has engaged humanity and the created world.

As such, the interrelationality associated with the divine persons in the Trinity serves, albeit in a limited way, as a relational archetype of God's self-revelation expressed to humanity in a way that ought to be grasped and understood.³³ Social trinitarians assert that a longstanding concession to speculative divine oneness has descended into a form of modalism in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit often lack appropriate distinction and particularity.³⁴ In this respect, it is commonly posited that, as far back as Augustine, Christians have rooted trinitarian theology in misguided overstatements about the unity of the Trinity to the detriment of the triune God's plurality.

The abundance of current literature related to treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity affords the contemporary theologian an excellent opportunity to weigh out a variety of well-developed arguments. My assessment on this matter is that an overemphasis in either direction, toward divine oneness or divine threeness, can become problematic. An elaboration on divine oneness, for example, may well contribute to contemporary versions of Sabellianism and modern forms of modalism. In these cases, the failure to adequately draw distinctions between the actions of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, becomes, as will be discussed in the treatment of Gunton's trinitarian theology in the next chapter, very problematic. Further, I argue that an over-commitment to God the Son and God the Holy Spirit's subordination to God

32 John D. Witvliet, "The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature," *Institute of Sacred Music: Colloquium Journal* 2 (2005), http://www.yale.edu/ism/colloq_journal/vol2/witvliet1.html (accessed December 9, 2013).

33 Stirling, "The Church Challenged: The Trinity and Modern Culture," 166.

34 Plantinga, "Social Trinity and Tritheism," 42.

the Father may expose complementarians to the perils of modern Arianism with its diminished importance upon christology and pneumatology.

On the other hand, I contend that restraint and control is needed to recognize the limits of carelessly advancing a social model of the doctrine of the Trinity. Diligent recognition of the boundaries of applied human analogies to the doctrine of the Trinity is imperative. Unequivocal association of the relationality within the immanent Trinity and God to human or human to human engagement ought not to be made. Those who place an overemphasis on the economic Trinity, for example, are sometimes susceptible to losing deference to the eternal being of God.³⁵ Similarly, a preoccupation with the narrative of salvation history to the detriment of an appreciation of the mystery of God should be avoided. Further, an unqualified and predominantly modern understanding of the term “person” (i.e. emphasizing freedom and autonomy), when indiscreetly applied to the divine persons, moves dangerously close to the threat of tritheism. In this respect, social trinitarians, unrestrained and uncontrolled, may well reinforce their detractor’s concerns about perceived ulterior motives behind the recent resurgence of trinitarian theology. I suggest that balance is needed in both theological directions.

Notwithstanding, this thesis advances on the premise that the emphasis on perichoretic relationality in modern trinitarian theology reflects a compelling theological development. This argument finds its basis in three fundamental convictions that continue to emerge from the modern trinitarian literature. Firstly, while the mystery of God is beyond human comprehension, there are aspects of God’s revelation that can, indeed, be understood and realized.³⁶ Consider, for example, Jesus’ command in the Sermon on the Mount, “Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48). As T.F. Torrance wrote,

35 Sanders, “The Trinity,” 41.

36 McGrath, “The Doctrine of the Trinity: An Evangelical Reflection,” 22.

This does not mean of course that we can now comprehend God or grasp what God is, for it is quite impossible for us to get behind the being of God and seize it with our minds. But it does mean that God who is ultimately ineffable, surpassing all created being, has incomprehensibly made himself personally and intimately accessible to us in Jesus Christ within the conditions of our human existence in space and time in a way that is utterly faithful to and consistent with what God eternally is in himself.³⁷

Similarly, I argue there are human correspondences to the triune God that can be embraced in relation to a renewed interest in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Secondly, the relational and communal model of the doctrine of the Trinity benefits from biblical support.³⁸ Admittedly, certain biblical passages (e.g. Eph 1:9-11; 3:14-15; Rom 8:29, 32; Jn 8:29; Jas 1:17), taken at face value and in isolation, appear to favour eternal subordination within the divine relations. That said, other texts (e.g. Mt 25:31-32; Mk 1:12; Phil 2:4-11; Heb 5:8) and particularly those in the Johannine scriptures (e.g. Jn 5:18) offer a compelling argument for a perichoretic, relation in distinction image of the Trinity.³⁹ Passages that attribute, for example, similar actions to different divine persons reinforce this claim.⁴⁰ While it may well be that some scholars overemphasize the relational nature of the Trinity to advance particular (and, perhaps, personal) agendas, this does not negate the fact that there is biblical support for arguments associated with relational trinitarianism.

Thirdly, in a culture torn between a fixation on the inherent value of individual autonomy on the one hand and a consumeristic obsessiveness on the other, I suggest theological arguments that lead to a humble emphasis on the significance of relationality, communion, and responsibility to our neighbours merit some consideration. As this thesis seeks to defend,

37 Torrance, "The Trinitarian Foundation and Character of Faith and of Authority in the Church," 80.

38 Ronald J. Feenstra and Cornelius Plantinga, *Trinity, Incarnation, & Atonement: Philosophical & Theological Essays*, Library of Religious Philosophy (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 24–27; Erickson, *Who's Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate*, 109–138.

39 Colin E. Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 181.

40 e.g. divine indwelling (in believers): of Jesus, 2 Co 13:5; of the Holy Spirit, 1 Co 3:16, and of the Father: Jn 14:23.

relational trinitarianism centres the worship of God by challenging a contemporary obsession with the personal and human experience and embracing an awareness that humanity finds its true being in relational communion with God and others.⁴¹

This section has provided a brief historical sketch of significant developments in the study of the doctrine of the Trinity. In recent decades, there has been a surge of renewed scholarship related to this topic. This renewal continues to arouse intense discussion among theological scholars. The next section introduces Colin Gunton as a leading figure in this resurgence and considers his unique contributions to this discourse.

ii) Colin Gunton and Trinitarian Theology

At the time of his sudden death in 2003 at the age of sixty-two, Gunton was a leading Protestant, British theologian within the larger scholarly community making connections between trinitarian theology and its practical implications for life. To fully comprehend Gunton's gradual embrace of the doctrine of the Trinity, we must consider the various contexts and influencing figures in his life and throughout his career. This section examines Gunton's historical embrace of trinitarian theology and considers his lasting legacy in contemporary theological discussions.

1) Gunton's Gradual Acceptance of the Doctrine of the Trinity

Colin Gunton was born on January 19, 1941, in Colchester, Essex. He was the eldest of three sons born to Herbert Ewart Gunton and his wife, Mabel Priscilla [Bradley].⁴² After attending Nottingham High School, he won a scholarship to Hertford College in 1960.⁴³ On

41 James B. Torrance, "The Doctrine of the Trinity in Our Contemporary Situation," in *The Forgotten Trinity: 3 A Selection of Papers Presented to the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine*, ed. Alasdair I.C. Heron (London: Inter-Church House, 1991), 3, 6, 13–17.

42 Michael Stringer, "The Lord and Giver of Life: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Theology of Colin E. Gunton" (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame Australia, 2008), 18.

43 Gunton studied Classics (Bachelor of Arts—*Literae Humaniores*) and graduated in 1964. Stringer, "The Lord and Giver of Life: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Theology of Colin E. Gunton," 20.

August 8, 1964, he married Jenny Osgathorpe, a Nottingham school teacher who had attended the same Reformed church.⁴⁴ Gunton went on to Mansfield College, a constituent school of the University of Oxford, where he earned two degrees (Bachelor of Arts—Theology in 1966 and Master of Arts—Theology in 1967).⁴⁵

Starting in 1967, Gunton began a six year project to complete a Ph.D. degree in theology at Mansfield. There, as a graduate student, he came under the tutelage of Robert Jenson, an American Lutheran and Barthian scholar who, though serving as Gunton's supervisor and as Mansfield's Dean of Lutheran Studies for only three years, significantly informed Gunton's theological development.⁴⁶ Under Jenson, Gunton's doctoral thesis employed Barth's incarnational theology and the process theology of Charles Hartshorne. Both scholars' theologies were used as theological critiques against Thomistic, classical concepts of God.⁴⁷ In a telling disclosure about Gunton's choice of subject for his dissertation, Jenson wrote,

I do not remember exactly how Gunton came to me in the first place—the *reason*, anyway, was that he wanted to write on a systematic subject, with reference to modern theologians, and that devotees of either were not then numerous in the Oxford theological faculty. After a bit, I suggested he might compare the differently revisionist doctrines of God represented by Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth. I knew little about Hartshorne, and like many a dissertation advisor thought Gunton could usefully read him for me,

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- 44 They would later have two daughters, Sarah and Carolyn and two sons, Christopher and Jonathan. Gunton valued his family immensely. Though very busy as a professional academic throughout his career, Gunton rarely missed opportunities to enjoy valuable time with those closest to him by participating in various family-oriented activities.
- 45 It is presumed that during these formational, academic years, Gunton sharpened his tendencies as a non-conformist—one who was often persuaded to work against the norms of prominent thought in British theology. Robert Jenson described Gunton's scholarly lifework as giving "serious attention to figures of English theological history often regarded as marginal or even eccentric, such as Edward Irving or John Owen." Robert W. Jenson, "Gunton, Colin E. 1941-2003," *Theology Today* 61, no. 1 (April 1, 2004): 85.
- 46 Jenson, himself had emerged a decade before as a young, non-conforming theologian at Luther Theological Seminary. Jenson returned to the United States midway through Gunton's doctoral studies. John Marsh and John Macquarrie supervised the last part of Gunton's dissertation. Christoph Schwöbel, "The Shape of Colin Gunton's Theology: On the Way towards a Fully Trinitarian Theology," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 183.
- 47 According to Jenson, "It was always hard to get a good word for Aquinas out of Gunton. It would be some time before Gunton's theology would shift his critique, at times scathing, toward Augustine. For now, it was scholasticism that Gunton took primary aim." Robert W. Jenson, "A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton's Thinking," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 9.

instead of me having to do it. I thought I could use my knowledge of Barth as a control on his scholarly accuracy. So Gunton went to work, with his usual obsessive diligence. [italics in original]⁴⁸

Gunton's ambitious academic project critically raised arguments against classical theistic notions of God as supernaturalistic (as opposed to a God with material parts), as timeless (as opposed to a God rooted in time), and as construing a hierarchy of being (as opposed to a non-hierarchical God).⁴⁹ Drawing on notions of knowability and freedom within the Godhead, Gunton used a predominantly Barthian framework as a trinitarian instrument to assess what he perceived to be the problematic theism of his day.⁵⁰ Naturally, this work also projected Gunton into the academic discussions occurring in the broader theological landscape of the 1960s and 1970s addressed in the previous section.⁵¹

In light of his eventual emergence as a preeminent twentieth century British trinitarian scholar in Britain, it is surprising to note that Gunton's earliest work did not place primary emphasis on the doctrine of the Trinity. While it is true that his doctoral work did acknowledge aspects of Barth's trinitarian impulses, even titling the second section of his published dissertation, "Barth's Trinitarian Theology," it should be noted that the doctrine of the Trinity

48 Jenson, "A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton's Thinking," 8.

49 Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 1978, 1–7.

50 In Gunton's revision of his published thesis, however, Gunton was increasingly insistent that Barth's trinitarianism did not go far enough. In particular, he grew concerned with Barth's reluctance to use the concept of "person" for the three *hypostases* as creeping, even unintentionally, toward modalism. Likewise, the lack of focused attention on pneumatology in Barth's doctrine of God became an increasing concern for Gunton. See Gunton's epilogue in the second edition of *Becoming and Being* published in 2001. Colin E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2d ed. (London: SCM Press, 2001), 225–245; See also: Colin E. Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 106.

51 For a thorough evaluation of Barth's influence on Gunton, see: J.B. Webster, "Gunton and Barth," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 17–31; Gunton's dissertation was eventually published in 1978 and entitled, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 1978; It was later extensively revised and republished in 2001 under the same title. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001.

was rather sparingly used and then only to serve hermeneutical purposes.⁵² Stephen Holmes was astute, however, to acknowledge that, perhaps owing mostly to the Barthian influence of Jenson, there emerged early on in Gunton's theology, "an awareness that the Trinity matters to Christian doctrine, unusual enough in 1970s English-language theology."⁵³

While writing his dissertation in the 1970s, Gunton acquainted himself with two institutions that would increasingly occupy his focused attention in both his personal and professional life. It was during this time Gunton established himself as a visiting lecturer at King's College, a constituent of the University of London, in the discipline of philosophy and religious studies.⁵⁴ This connection with King's College came to represent a life-long commitment to an educational institution from which Gunton never departed.

During this chapter of his life, Gunton was also ordained and appointed as an associate minister at Brentwood United Reformed Church in Essex in 1975. He maintained this position for the twenty-eight remaining years of his life, characterizing his ministry with energy and passion for people.⁵⁵ For Gunton, his theological pursuits were always intended to be applied practically.⁵⁶ In this respect, Gunton's adult life evidenced a strong commitment to the practical

52 Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 1978, 114.

53 Stephen R. Holmes, "Towards the *Analogia Personae et Relationis*: Developments in Gunton's Trinitarian Thinking," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 34.

54 Gunton's first postdoctorate book, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, reflected his commitment to philosophy. In fact, in the preface to this book, Gunton wrote, "The great philosophers of the Western tradition provide in many ways more illuminating conversation partners for the systematic theologian than do those more narrowly concerned with what has come to be called the philosophy of religion." Colin E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, Contemporary Christian Studies (Grand Rapids; Basingstoke: Eerdmans; Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1985), viii. One can see a gradual shift, however, in Gunton's work away from philosophy and increasingly toward theology in the 1980s.

55 Particularly relevant to the nature of this project, it is also worth noting that Gunton served as the convener of the doctrine and worship committee of this denomination during this time. David F. Ford, "Gunton, Colin Ewart (1941-2003)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, January 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/templates/article.jsp?articleid=89978&back=#> (accessed March 15, 2012).

56 Gunton wrote, "A theologian who only theologizes is no true theologian, for the richness of both the creation and more particularly of human life as it is lived out under the gospel and on earth requires far more than that, and we need constant reminders of it if we are to remain truly human." Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, xii.

ministry of the local church.⁵⁷

If an underdeveloped trinitarian theology percolated in Gunton's academic and ecclesial work in the 1970s, pivotal interactions throughout the 1980s reinforced these notions in Gunton's theological convictions. Firstly, in 1983, Gunton was appointed as a member of the British Council of Churches' (BCC) "Study Commission on the Doctrine of the Trinity Today." The emergence of the doctrine of the Trinity as a central theme in Gunton's systematic theology work, though not easily reducible to one particular event, correlated with Gunton's involvement with this study commission.⁵⁸ This work, motivated in large part by the 1981 World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission entitled "Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ,"⁵⁹ was established to make the doctrine of the Trinity a prominent topic in theological discussion.⁶⁰ The increasing priority Gunton gave to the doctrine of the Trinity in his sermons, writings, and lectures through the latter part of the 1980s was intimately connected to the events and publications associated with this commission.⁶¹

Secondly, John Zizioulas, particularly after his 1981 publication of *Being as Communion*, served as an increasingly prominent figure in Gunton's life.⁶² Beginning in 1986, Gunton

57 One expression of Gunton's appreciation for the local church is represented in his 2001 published work, *Theology Through Preaching: Sermons for Brentwood*, in which he exclaimed, "It is one of the great blessings of my life to have been able to preach to the same congregation for a quarter of a century, in the latter part of the period approximately once a month." Colin E. Gunton, *Theology through Preaching* (Edinburgh; London: T & T Clark; Continuum, 2001), viii. David F. Ford wrote, "For Gunton, the church was no merely academic object of study; it was primarily the place for the living out of his Christian conviction and commitment." Ford, "Gunton, Colin Ewart (1941-2003)." See also: Sarah J. Gunton and John E. Colwell, eds., *The Theologian as Preacher: Further Sermons from Colin E. Gunton* (London: T & T Clark/Continuum, 2007).

58 Holmes, "Towards the *Analogia Personae et Relationis*: Developments in Gunton's Trinitarian Thinking," 42.

59 See: Lukas Vischer, *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, Faith and Order Paper (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981).

60 See: Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/268> (accessed June 9, 2012).

61 The BCC ecumenical council held ten meetings between November 1983 and May 1988. Three significant works were published as a result of these meetings. Alasdair I.C. Heron, *The Forgotten Trinity, Volume 1: The Report of the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today; Volume 2: Study Guide; Volume 3: A Selection of Papers Presented to the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today* (London: BCC/CCBI, 1991).

62 Holmes, "Towards the *Analogia Personae et Relationis*: Developments in Gunton's Trinitarian Thinking," 39.

welcomed Zizioulas as a visiting professor at King's College's summer teaching seminars. Zizioulas' imprint on Gunton's work from this point onward was undeniable. In particular, Zizioulas' stern critique of Augustine and his thorough exposition of triune relationality and communion served to solidify Gunton's trinitarian theology. Thus, predictably and increasingly, Gunton's work followed the Eastern tradition of the Cappadocian Fathers and, more particularly, the writings of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons.

Thirdly, having been appointed as chair in Christian Doctrine at King's College and with the assistance of his colleague, Christoph Schwöbel, Gunton established the Research Institute in Systematic Theology (RIST) in 1989. This became an academic program especially close to Gunton's heart and one that he held in great esteem for the remainder of his life.⁶³ Several distinguished scholars and promising students were drawn to this renowned intellectual centre.⁶⁴ Undeniably, this afforded Gunton an important colloquial and academic context to develop a robust defense for his trinitarian theology.⁶⁵

By the 1990s, Gunton had emerged as a formidable voice in British theology. He fully embraced trinitarian theology as a functional precept for all other Christian doctrines and

63 For evidence of this, see: Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, xviii; Gunton's participation in the September 1990 RIST contemporary conference "Trinitarian Theology Today" was particularly important for the development of his trinitarian theology (and was subsequently published in an edited text by Christoph Schwöbel). Schwöbel, *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act*, 12.

64 Aside from his pioneering works associated with this research centre, Gunton was also involved in the advancement of several international journals later in his life. In 1996, Gunton was invited to join the editorial board of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie*, (Stringer, 2008, 31) and in 1999 Gunton co-founded *The International Journal of Systematic Theology* with his colleagues John Webster and Ralph Del Colle. Paul Louis Metzger, *Trinitarian Soundings in Systematic Theology* (London: T & T Clark International, 2006), 1–3.

65 A doctoral student of Gunton's, Graham McFarlane, has described the value of these organized research centre lectures as follows: "Prior to Gunton's professorship, postgraduate studies was an isolated affair. At King's, however, Gunton established a context within which postgraduate studies could flourish. He did this by setting up weekly research seminars where faculty and postgraduate students would meet, listen to an academic paper and discuss for 2-3 hours. As an academic, this is the ideal working environment.... Needless to say, this academic model is now essential to any serious postgraduate community." Graham McFarlane, "Profile: Colin Gunton," *Catalyst* 27, no. 2 (2001).

disciplines. While Gunton wrote prolifically throughout the 1980s, the 1990s, and the early 2000s, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (1991) and *The One, the Three and the Many* (1993) are viewed as his most popular literary achievements. In *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, Gunton advanced the idea that a personal God engages creation.⁶⁶ He wrote, “The doctrine of the Trinity, as it comes to us from the Cappadocian theologians, teaches us that the first thing to be said about the being of God is that it consists in personal communion.”⁶⁷ In this text, Gunton also took direct and perhaps overstated aim, as I will discuss below, at the Augustinian tradition for advancing what he perceived to be a modalistic, divine unipersonality that fails to appreciate divine personhood and communion. In contrast, unmistakably drawing inspiration from Zizioulas, Gunton said, “God is being in communion. The substance of God, ‘God,’ has no ontological content, no true being, apart from communion.”⁶⁸

The text, *The One, the Three and the Many*, emerged from the 1992 Bampton Lectures,⁶⁹ which Gunton delivered at Oxford University in 1992. In this book, Gunton contrasted the relationality of the doctrine of the Trinity with the problematic fragmentation and individualism he observed in modern and postmodern culture. As will be discussed in the next chapter, these difficulties in Western modernity, Gunton concluded, perpetuated an unrelatedness and competitiveness within contemporary society. In an effort to offer a constructive solution to these

66 Gunton wrote, “the doctrine of the Trinity replaces a *logical* conception of the relation between God and the world with a *personal* one.... [The] point of trinitarian theology is that it enables us to develop an ontology of the personal, or, better, an understanding of God as the personal creator and redeemer of the world.” [italics in original] Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, repr. (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), 71–72, 195.

67 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 71.

68 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 9; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 17.

69 Gunton’s early development of these ideas, however, was in his 1985 inaugural lecture by the same title at King’s College as the chair of Christian Doctrine. Holmes, “Towards the *Analogia Personae et Relationis*: Developments in Gunton’s Trinitarian Thinking,” 38; Among his accomplishments, Gunton also presented the 1990 Didsbury Lectures (Nazarene Theological College), the 1993 Warfield Lectures (Princeton Theological Seminary), the 1997 Ryan Lectures (Asbury Theological Seminary), the 1999 Drew Lecture (Drew University), and the 2001 G. Campbell Wadsworth Memorial Lecture (McGill University). Stringer, “The Lord and Giver of Life: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Theology of Colin E. Gunton,” 33–34.

problems, Gunton explored three universal and trinitarian markers he termed “open transcendentals,”⁷⁰ including *perichoresis* as mutual constitutiveness (in opposition to abstract universality), substantiality as residing in concrete particulars (in opposition to abstract individuality), and relationality (in opposition to pervasive modern fragmentation).⁷¹ I will expand upon these trinitarian notions in greater detail in the following chapter.

Gunton’s final two publications were *Act and Being* (2002) and *Father, Son and Holy Spirit* (2003). In *Act and Being* (2002), he considered how the doctrine of the divine attributes could be understood from an overarching trinitarian perspective.⁷² In *Father, Son and Holy Spirit* (2003), published posthumously, Gunton drew correlations between a developed trinitarian theology and the doctrines of creation, redemption, atonement, and baptism.⁷³ Having been granted an educational leave to study at Princeton University in 2002 and 2003, Gunton was in the preliminary stages of writing a more thorough multivolume expression of his systematic trinitarian theology when he died suddenly of a gastrointestinal hemorrhage on May 6, 2003. His untimely death came as a significant shock to those in many theological communities around the world.

2) Gunton’s Lasting Trinitarian Legacy

Since Gunton’s death, scholars have weighed the lasting impact of his work. To date, the most significant effort in this respect was represented by Lincoln Harvey’s 2009 edited text, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*.⁷⁴ This collection of articles was critically written by a group of Gunton’s colleagues, acquaintances, and former students.⁷⁵ In recent years, others have

70 Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, Bampton Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 141–154.

71 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 155–229.

72 Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (London: SCM Press, 2002).

73 Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*.

74 Lincoln Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010).

75 Contributors included: Douglas Farrow, Robert Jenson, John Webster, Stephen Holmes, Alan Spence, Paul

published dissertations and books that considered the impact of Gunton's trinitarian and creation theology and its varied practical implications.⁷⁶ Likewise, there are those who have continued to publish blogs and articles extolling the virtues and limitations of Gunton's work.⁷⁷

Unfortunately, while Gunton's writings remain an extensive corpus, it is considered that Gunton's most thorough literary work was never completed. Had Gunton finished the systematic work he was involved in at the time of his death, perhaps some lingering questions surrounding his trinitarian theology would have been answered.⁷⁸ Regretfully, those compelled to continue to engage his work are left to speculate and project.⁷⁹

Cumin, John Colwell, Paraskeve Tibbs, Justyn Terry, Terry Wright, Bradley Green, and Christoph Schwöbel.

- 76 See: Randal Curtis Lyle, "Social Trinitarianism as an Option for 21st Century Theology: A Systematic Analysis of Colin Gunton's Trinitarian Paradigm" (Ph.D., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003); Bradley Glen Green, "Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine: An Exposition and Analysis of the Theology of Colin Gunton in Light of Augustine's *De Trinitate*" (Ph.D., Baylor University, 2000); Godfrey Chukwudi Ndubuisi, "Assessing Indicators of Spirituality: Comparisons and Critique Grounded in Gunton, Volf, Lewin, and Biblical Theology" (Ph.D., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2002); Eve M. Tibbs, "East Meets West: Trinity, Truth and Communion in John Zizioulas and Colin Gunton" (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Theology, 2006); Stringer, "The Lord and Giver of Life: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Theology of Colin E. Gunton"; William Baltmanis Whitney, "Problem and Promise in Colin E. Gunton's Doctrine of Creation" (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Theology, 2011); David A. Höhne, *Spirit and Sonship: Colin Gunton's Theology of Particularity and the Holy Spirit* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2010); Hans Schaeffer, *Createdness and Ethics: The Doctrine of Creation and Theological Ethics in the Theology of Colin E. Gunton and Oswald Bayer*, Theologische Bibliothek Töpelmann (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2006).
- 77 For examples, see: Roland Chia, "Trinity and Ontology: Colin Gunton's Ecclesiology," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 4 (October 1, 2007): 452–68; Bernhard Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 62, no. 4 (January 1, 2009): 403–20; Bradley Glen Green, "The Protomodern Augustine? Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 328–41; Najeeb G. Awad, "Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 1–22; Johnson, *Rethinking the Trinity and Religious Pluralism: An Augustinian Assessment*, 220–258; Andres S. Tang, "Colin E. Gunton's Understanding of Metaphorical Theological Language," *Jian Dao*, no. 32 (July 1, 2009): 1–28; Andy S. Chiu, "A Comparison between Xun-Zi's Social Ontology and Colin E. Gunton's Ecclesiological Ontology," *Hill Road* 7, no. 2 (December 1, 2004): 99–126; David A. Höhne, "The Spirit and Sonship: Developing Colin Gunton's Theology of Particularity," *Tyndale Bulletin* 60, no. 2 (January 1, 2009): 293–94; Uche Anizor, "A Spirited Humanity: The Trinitarian Ecclesiology of Colin Gunton," *Theomelios* 36, no. 1 (May 2011): 26–41.
- 78 At present, Christoph Schwöbel is the literary executor of Gunton's unpublished work. There is no clear indication *when or if* this partially completed work will ever be published. Notably, Gunton's "Barth Lectures" was published posthumously under the edited supervision of Paul Brazier. Colin E. Gunton and Paul Brazier, *The Barth Lectures* (London; New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2007).
- 79 Jason Sexton has wondered, for example, if Gunton's unfinished work has led some scholars to distance themselves from Gunton's trinitarian theology. Having been involved in Stanley Grenz's drafting of *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (2004), Sexton disclosed that, though

That said, Gunton's legacy cannot be reduced solely to his published work alone.

Gunton's genuine enthusiasm and his ability to inspire others remains a lasting influence upon those who knew him.⁸⁰ This is evidenced in the testimony of Douglas Farrow who has described his academic training under Gunton in the following way: "Doing theology with Colin Gunton is a matter of embracing his enthusiasm for a gospel capable of liberating modern man, and of perfecting the discipline necessary to see where and how it may do so."⁸¹ Likewise, Bruce McCormack has described Gunton's academic charisma as follows:

One always knew when Colin Gunton was in the room. His presence was palpable. In the question-and-answer sessions that inevitably followed the presentation of academic papers at conferences, he seemed always poised to come off his seat, to lend support to one speaker, to reject vehemently the position of another, or simply to add a pertinent observation. He was full of nervous energy because, for him, wherever theology was being done, there was a great deal at stake.⁸²

A telling indicator of his lasting impact at King's College was expressed in the following way shortly after his passing: "An irrepressible conversationalist, curious about ideas, books and people, his contribution to the life of King's was immeasurable, and he was much sought after for advice, encouragement and support by both budding scholars and senior colleagues."⁸³ Thus, there is some indication that, aside from his many publications, perhaps the best way to gauge Gunton's legacy is to follow the expanding academic careers of his former students and colleagues around the world in whom he invested so heavily.⁸⁴

references to Gunton figured prominently in early drafts of Grenz's text, they were reduced to only a few footnotes in the final text that was published *after* Gunton's untimely death. Jason S. Sexton, *The Trinitarian Theology of Stanley J. Grenz* (London: T & T Clark, 2013), 100–102.

80 Conceivably, the continued work associated with King's College's Research Institute in Systematic Theology represents one of the most tangible expressions of Gunton's long-term impact.

81 Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*, xii; A similar testimony was expressed by David Ford, "Gunton was a man of profound faith who embodied a real zest for life and a constant sense of cheerfulness. An inspirational and impassioned teacher and preacher, his joy and interest in the theology were infectious and deeply appreciated by students, colleagues, and parishioners alike. Ford, "Gunton, Colin Ewart (1941-2003)."

82 Bruce McCormack as quoted in: Stringer, "The Lord and Giver of Life: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Theology of Colin E. Gunton," 20.

83 "The Rev. Professor Colin Gunton," *The Daily Telegraph*, May 20, 2003.

84 Holmes wrote, "[Gunton] gave himself generously to his students, respecting them as conversation partners and

Time will tell whether people continue to study and expand upon this intriguing, dialogical, and tenacious scholar who offered much to theological discourse, particularly in British trinitarian theology, yet, admittedly, left some questions unanswered prior to his death. Presently, there is sustained energy among theologians to consider how, or if, the doctrine of the Trinity can be applied to theological discussions related to views about God, self, and world. Had Gunton lived longer, it is conceivable that he would have remained thoroughly involved in this lively dialogue. As will be addressed more thoroughly in the next chapter, this thesis represents a modest attempt to build upon and extend, though not uncritically, Gunton's trinitarian work.

B) Pentecostal Studies

The purpose of this second section is to locate Pentecostalism in the twentieth and twenty-first century theological dialogue concerning the doctrine of the Trinity. In particular, I will examine Canadian Pentecostals affiliated with the PAOC as a relevant case study that advances this purpose. I will also identify and profile leading historical personalities, key terms, and important scholars in Pentecostal studies. This section is divided chronologically into historical periods that indicate how the doctrine of the Trinity has been perceived within the context of Pentecostalism through the twentieth and twenty-first century. I have chosen to identify these periods as follows: 1) Defining Moments: The Pentecostal Trinitarian Controversy (1900 to 1919), 2) Fundamentalist Identity: The Influence of Pragmatism and Biblicism (1920 to 1959), 3) Nascent Dialogue: Trinitarian Conversations with Others (1960 to 1989), and 4) Distinctly Pentecostal Trinitarianism: Unique Contributions (1990 to present).⁸⁵

often as friends.... [U]niversities, seminaries and churches in many countries have teachers and ministers who owe their careers to Gunton's mentoring." Stephen R. Holmes, "The Rev. Prof. Colin Gunton: Classical Theologian Who Sought to Expose the Intellectual Incoherence and Ethical Confusion of Modern Society," *The Guardian*, June 3, 2003.

⁸⁵ These time periods generally follow those similarly identified by other scholars of Pentecostalism such as Lyle Dabney and Thomas William. See: Miller D. Lyle Dabney, "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today," *Pneuma* 23, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 120–121; Thomas William Miller, *Canadian*

i) Defining Moments: The Pentecostal Trinitarian Controversy (1900 to 1919)

The modern Pentecostal movement generally traces its origins to the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California in April 1906.⁸⁶ At the Azusa Street Mission under the leadership of Kansas evangelist, Charles Fox Parham,⁸⁷ thousands of people assembled to “receive the Holy Ghost,” an occurrence marked by the manifestation of speaking in “tongues” (*glossolalia*).⁸⁸ Many of the early converts to Pentecostalism were those with theological roots in the Wesleyan-Holiness movement that swept through Canada and the United States in the late nineteenth century.⁸⁹ Within the Holiness movement, sanctification represented a distinctive

Pentecostals: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (Mississauga, ON: Full Gospel Publishing House, 1994).

- 86 Some scholars of Pentecostalism, particularly outside the United States, however, contest this. In Canada, for example, key events occurring at a similar time at the East End Mission (Hebden Mission) in Toronto, Ontario are frequently considered as the impetus of early Pentecostalism in Canada (and distinguished from the Azusa Revival). Adam Stewart, “Hebden Mission,” in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 103–108; Adam Stewart, “A Canadian Azusa? The Implications of the Hebden Mission for Pentecostal Historiography,” in *Winds from the North*, ed. Michael Wilkinson and Peter Althouse (Boston: Brill, 2010), 17–37; Thomas William Miller, “The Canadian ‘Azusa’: The Hebden Mission in Toronto,” *Pneuma* 8, no. 1 (March 1, 1986): 5–29; Michael Wilkinson, “Canadian Pentecostal Diversity: Incorporating the Many Voices,” *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* 2 (2011): 52–53; Ronald Kydd, “Canadian Pentecostalism and the Evangelical Impulse,” in *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 289; Michael Di Giacomo, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in Canada: Its Origins, Development, and Distinct Culture,” in *Canadian Pentecostalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), 15–38.
- 87 Parham’s Pentecostal influence and legacy, however, was greatly reduced by alleged scandals and racist behaviour. See: Allan H. Anderson, “Charles Fox Parham,” in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Stewart, Adam (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 166–170; James R. Goff, *Fields White unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1988).
- 88 Leaders and attendees of the Azusa Street Revival drew their inspiration from biblical narratives in the book of Acts. On the Day of Pentecost, Christ’s followers spoke in tongues, inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak in languages unknown to them. In the book of Acts, tongues are mentioned as accompanying the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6). Many modern Pentecostals identify speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of Spirit baptism, replicating the experience of the disciples in the Upper Room in Acts 2. For further reading on the Azusa Street Mission, see: Allan H. Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007); Adam Stewart, “Azusa Street Mission and Revival,” in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 43–48; Joe Creech, “Visions of Glory: The Place of the Azusa Street Revival in Pentecostal History,” *Church History* 65, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 405–424; Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 57–85; Cecil M. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006); Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street: The Roots of Modern Day Pentecost* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing, 1980).
- 89 Donald Dayton wrote, “For a decade or so all of Pentecostalism was sharply Wesleyan/Holiness until this theme

second act of grace—a post-conversion crisis experience believed to impart to Christians the supernatural power to eradicate sin. Azusa Street Pentecostals hailed the gift of tongues as a third blessing that demonstrated the baptism of the Holy Spirit following the crisis experiences of justification and sanctification.

In 1910, however, a charismatic preacher named William H. Durham began to challenge the idea of a Wesleyan-Holiness multicrisis faith experience. Durham became increasingly convinced that sanctification occurred at salvation and continued as a progressive work of grace *throughout* the life of a Christian believer.⁹⁰ Durham began endorsing an axiom that became known as the “Finished Work of Calvary.” It challenged the Holiness dogma of multiple acts of grace and favoured an exclusive emphasis on Christ’s redemptive work on the cross.⁹¹ More particularly, this doctrine raised some contention among the fledgling Pentecostal movement and prompted some doubts about the unique personhood and actions of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Influenced by Durham, a growing number of early Pentecostals came to understand Christ as the corporal manifestation of the Father and the Holy Spirit as the one, eternal Spirit of God. In effect, this theological move represented a shift in the early Pentecostal movement toward

was suppressed by some under the influence of W.H. Durham.” Donald W. Dayton, “Transforming Power,” in *Transforming Power: Dimensions of the Gospel*, ed. Yung Chul Han (Pathway Press, 2001), 13; For more on the influence of the Holiness Movement on Pentecostalism, see: Donald W. Dayton, “Methodism and Pentecostalism,” in *Oxford Handbook of Methodist Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 171–87; Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the 20th Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997).

90 For more on William H. Durham, see: D. William Faupel, “William H. Durham and the Finished Work of Calvary,” in *From Aldersgate to Azusa Street* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 85–95; Edith Blumhofer, “William H. Durham: Years of Creativity, Years of Dissent,” in *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, ed. James R. Goff and Grant Wacker (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), 123–142; Allen L. Clayton, “The Significance of William H. Durham for Pentecostal Historiography,” *Pneuma* 1, no. 2 (September 1, 1979): 27–42; David A. Reed, “Oneness Seed on Canadian Soil: Early Developments of Oneness Pentecostalism,” in *Winds from the North* (Boston: Brill, 2010), 200; Frank D. Macchia, “Pentecost as the Power of the Cross: The Witness of Seymour and Durham,” *Pneuma* 30, no. 1 (January 1, 2008): 1–3.

91 David A. Reed, “In Jesus’ Name:” *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series (Dorset: Deo Publishing, 2008), 193.

oneness christocentricism.⁹²

As Durham's message spread, a Canadian preacher from Ottawa, Ontario named R.E. McAlister was influenced by the Finished Work teaching. In April 1913, at a Worldwide Pentecostal Camp Meeting in Arroyo Seco, California, McAlister preached a sermon on baptism indicating the potential harmonization of the baptismal approach in Mt 28:19 (i.e. "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit") with the "Lord, Jesus Christ" formula (i.e. "in the name of Jesus Christ") enacted by the apostles in Acts 2:38.⁹³ McAlister's sermon sparked subsequent debate in Canada and the United States between those who were partial to a oneness baptism formula and those maintaining Wesleyan-Holiness trinitarian baptismal rites.⁹⁴

Motivated largely by an effort to coordinate evangelism and the regulation of mission work, the Assemblies of God formed as an American organization in 1914. Shortly after this formation, however, arguments arose between oneness and trinitarian leaders over the two baptismal formulas. On this issue, Wolfgang Vondey has raised a worthy point: "The consequences of this debate did not immediately emerge as trinitarian questions but unfolded on

92 Reed, *"In Jesus' Name: The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 193.

93 According to eyewitness accounts at the meeting, McAlister's sermon immediately raised tension in the assembly, leading a missionary to interrupt the sermon, take McAlister aside, and suggest to him that the Lord, Jesus Christ baptism was unorthodox. Apparently, McAlister re-assumed his position at the pulpit and clarified that he was endorsing a baptism formula, trinitarian in form, and reflecting a trinitarian doctrine. Reed, *"In Jesus' Name: The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 194–195.

94 The three Canadian Pentecostal leaders who were most influenced by the oneness doctrine were A.H. Argue and Franklin Small (in Western Canada) and R.E. McAlister (in Central Canada). For more on oneness Pentecostalism, see: Reed, *"In Jesus' Name: The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*; Reed, "Oneness Seed on Canadian Soil: Early Developments of Oneness Pentecostalism"; Gregory A. Boyd, *Oneness Pentecostals and the Trinity: A World-Wide Movement Assisted by a Former Oneness Pentecostal* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 1992); Miller, *Canadian Pentecostals: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada*, 111; Thomas A. Fudge, *Christianity without the Cross: A History of Salvation in Oneness Pentecostalism* (Parkland, FL: Universal Publishers, 2003); Talmadge L. French, *Our God Is One: The Story of the Oneness Pentecostals* (Indianapolis: Voice and Vision Publishing, 1999); David S. Norris, *I AM: A Oneness Pentecostal Theology* (Hazelwood, MO: Word Aflame Press, 2009); Amos Yong, "Oneness and the Trinity: The Theological and Ecumenical Implications of Creation *Ex Nihilo* for an Intra-Pentecostal Dispute," *Pneuma* 19, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 81–107; Amos Yong, "The Word and the Spirit or the Spirit and the Word: Exploring the Boundaries of Evangelicalism in Relationship to Modern Pentecostalism," *Trinity Journal* 23, no. 2 (September 1, 2002): 243–245; Ralph Del Colle, "Oneness and Trinity: A Preliminary Proposal for Dialogue with Oneness Pentecostalism," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, no. 10 (April 1, 1997): 85–110.

the basis of a distinction in liturgical praxis between the single name of Jesus and the three titles, ‘Father,’ ‘Son,’ and ‘Holy Spirit.’ In this context, the triadic structure of the creed emerged as a dividing line between adherents of the oneness and trinitarian Pentecostal positions.”⁹⁵ Among the Assemblies of God founding members, oneness leaders were well represented. Several, including McAlister, Howard Goss, Franklin Small, Daniel Opperman, and Lemuel Hall, were sympathetic to the oneness doctrine and the Jesus only baptism formula.⁹⁶ However, any hope of an agreeable compromise between oneness and trinitarian Pentecostals was dashed in 1916 at the Assemblies of God’s Fourth General Council Meeting when the group adopted “the Statement of Fundamental Truths.” This declaration contained an explicit resolution for water baptism and a lengthy section affirming the historical acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity. The resolution read: “Since the words of Matthew 28:19 and the words in Acts 2:38 were both inspired by God, we hereby disapprove of contending for the one to the exclusion of or as against the other, because confusion and a party spirit are sure to follow such unscriptural conduct. This council therefore recommends that all our preachers include in their formula used in connection with the act of baptism the words used by Jesus in Matthew 28:19.”⁹⁷ This declaration, in essence, reinforced a rigid dividing line between trinitarian and oneness Pentecostals. Immediately, 156 Pentecostal ministers were expelled from the Assemblies of God by virtue of the vote to adopt an explicitly trinitarian statement.⁹⁸ As a result, they left and advanced oneness teaching in other

95 Wolfgang Vondey, “Oneness and Trinitarian Pentecostalism: Critical Dialogue on the Ecumenical Creeds,” *One in Christ* 44, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 91.

96 Reed, “*In Jesus’ Name:*” *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 196.

97 General Council Minutes, *A Statement of Fundamental Truths Approved by the General Council of the Assemblies of God: Resolution on Baptismal Formula* (St. Louis, MO, 1916), 8.

98 Vondey wrote, “Oneness Pentecostal doctrine replaces the idea of three “persons” with the single “name” of God manifested in the person of Jesus Christ. In other words, from a oneness Pentecostal perspective, the person of Jesus *is* the name of God.” [italics in original] Vondey, “Oneness and Trinitarian Pentecostalism: Critical Dialogue on the Ecumenical Creeds,” 96; cf. Reed, “*In Jesus’ Name:*” *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 227–306; French, *Our God Is One: The Story of the Oneness Pentecostals*, 211.

assemblies and denominations throughout the United States and Canada.⁹⁹

Whereas the 1916 rupture in the Assemblies of God movement was particularly schismatic, related issues in Canadian Pentecostalism followed a more irenic, though no less complicated, course. As an influential Canadian figure, McAlister also figured prominently in the Canadian Pentecostal narrative. Though McAlister was, himself, re-baptized in 1915 “in the name of Jesus alone,” he and other Canadian Pentecostal leaders, unlike those in the Assemblies of God in the United States, were far more open to the oneness doctrine of God.¹⁰⁰ Having seen and experienced first-hand the painful estrangement that occurred within the Assemblies of God to the south, Pentecostal leaders met regularly in the late 1910’s, determined not to cause the same results in Canada. Their goal, instead, was to bring stability to this emerging Canadian religious group.¹⁰¹

Several leaders who drafted the 1919 PAOC charter were Pentecostals who either supported or were sympathetic to the oneness doctrine.¹⁰² In fact, during the PAOC exploratory meetings from 1917 to 1919, appointed Pentecostal leaders seriously considered adopting oneness theology into their statement of beliefs and affiliating with developing Canadian oneness Pentecostal groups.¹⁰³ However, the founders, including McAlister, eventually settled on trinitarian orthodoxy, affirmed “the threefold relationship of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,” and left the baptismal formula to the discretion of individuals, pastors, and churches.¹⁰⁴ In a move that entrenched their orthodox acceptance of trinitarian theology, the PAOC officially

99 Examples of oneness groups that formed from this schism included: General Assembly of Apostolic Assemblies (1917), Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (1919), Church of our Lord Jesus Christ (1919), Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ (1924), The Pentecostal Church, Incorporated (1932), and United Pentecostal Church (1945).

100 Reed, “*In Jesus’ Name:*” *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 206.

101 Reed, “*In Jesus’ Name:*” *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 207.

102 Reed, “*In Jesus’ Name:*” *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 207.

103 Miller, *Canadian Pentecostals: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada*, 114–115.

104 Miller, *Canadian Pentecostals: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada*, 117; This decision was consistent with the early Canadian Pentecostal unease with a tightly controlled and formal organization.

affiliated with the Assemblies of God in 1920.¹⁰⁵

Despite this official position, however, there are indications that the denomination's official trinitarian statement of faith may have been loosely held and that oneness activity continued in PAOC churches through the 1920s and 1930s. In the August 30, 1940 "Minutes of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada/Eastern Ontario and Quebec Meeting," for example, it was conceded, "it is commonly accepted that there is a certain amount of New Issue or 'Jesus Only' activity in this district."¹⁰⁶ As such, Canadian oneness Pentecostal leaders such as Howard Goss were granted considerable latitude within the early PAOC movement. Through the years, dissatisfied oneness ministers either quietly left the PAOC or gradually reincorporated trinitarian formulas back into their theological teaching. Perhaps more than anyone else, McAlister illustrated this subtle acquiescence. McAlister's leadership within the PAOC reflected a sympathetic view toward those holding to the oneness doctrine, yet he remained reluctant to advance its teaching officially.¹⁰⁷ As Reed succinctly has written, "[McAlister] befriended the new movement, but finally did not render his allegiance."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Two years later in 1922, the PAOC amicably broke official ties from the Assemblies of God for pragmatic reasons (e.g. missionary giving protocols), though this transnational relationship has remained strong throughout the past century and even to the present day.

¹⁰⁶ Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *Eastern Ontario and Quebec Minutes* (Cobourg, ON, August 15, 1940), 3; For a monograph detailing the Canadian oneness history written by oneness sympathizers, see: Ralph Vincent Reynolds and Joyce Macbeth Morehouse, *From the Rising of the Sun: A History of the Apostolic Truth Across Canada and the Reflections of a Pioneer Preacher* (Houston: Connexions, 1998); For recent texts advancing oneness convictions, see also: A.A. Walker, *Baptized into God: Theologizing Baptism in the Name of Jesus Christ and the Oneness of God* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2014); Will Daniels, *Understanding the Oneness of God and the Conspiracy against Jesus Christ and the Christian Church* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2014).

¹⁰⁷ The official distancing of the PAOC from oneness teaching is evidenced by the following resolution: "WHEREAS ARTICLE 2 on pages 7, 8, 9 and article 14 on page 12 of the 1939 Year Book of the P.A.O.C. states the official view of the P.A.O.C. on the Godhead; and also Article 24 of the application for Affiliation ... BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that his [sic] District Conference go on record disapproving of such New Issue activities (especially as related to employing evangelists in local assemblies and camp meetings) and that we make it clear that we stand unshaken in regard to our official statement of doctrine and if there are workers in our Fellowship who cannot conscientiously subscribe to our statement of doctrine, and manifest loyalty in their ministry to our statement of doctrine, they should be advised to withdraw." Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *Eastern Ontario and Quebec Minutes*, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Reed, "In Jesus' Name:" *The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals*, 199.

ii) Fundamentalist Identity: The Influence of Pragmatism and Biblicism (1920 to 1959)

Any attempt to assess how trinitarian theology developed within the Pentecostal movement from 1920 to 1959 requires a careful assessment of experiential and socio-economical phenomena occurring at that particular time, including Christian Fundamentalism. Scholars of Pentecostalism such as Grant Wacker and Michael Wilkinson have argued that Pentecostals are, in many respects, a product of their sociological and philosophical times.¹⁰⁹ In this respect and writing about Pentecostals in this era, Lyle Dabney has stated, “Pentecostals defined themselves both culturally and theologically in terms of the Fundamentalism that was conservative Protestantism's reaction against its ouster from a position of social power at the hands of Protestant Liberalism—a self-definition, one might add, that was not welcomed by conservative Protestantism itself.”¹¹⁰ In line with a Fundamental influence, Pentecostalism was characterized during this period as a pragmatic, experience-based movement with an unmistakable emphasis on biblicism.¹¹¹ It follows, then, that North American Pentecostal comprehension of trinitarian theology from 1920 to 1959 would emerge attuned to these Fundamentalist characteristics.

109 Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Michael Wilkinson, “Pentecostals in Canada: Rethinking Mission in the Context of Global Change,” General Conference Theological Symposium (Glad Tidings, BC, June 12, 2002).

110 Dabney, “Saul’s Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today,” 120–121; There are others, however, such as Vinson Synan who has argued that a break occurred in Pentecostalism from Fundamentalism during this time. Synan wrote, “the breaks with fundamentalism in 1928 and 1943 turned out to be a blessing that freed the rising pentecostals from the dead cultural and theological baggage of a discredited movement and opened up the way for unparalleled influence and growth in the last half of the twentieth century.” Vinson Synan, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Ed M. Van der Maas, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 658.

111 For example, in a description of Canadian Pentecostal theological education in the 1950s, Brian Ross has remarked, “It was biblicist, finding in ‘the book’ its inspiration, content and authority, together with innumerable proof-texts and topical organization of the biblical texts. It was evangelical, emphasizing the absolute necessity of the sinner’s individual experience of salvation. It was fundamentalist, stressing the lightness of its own thinking against the folly of modernism. It was premillennial, finding scores of signs indicating the imminent return of Christ. It was practical, demanding that its participants encounter the personal experience of prayer and preaching and evangelism.” Brian R. Ross, “James Eustace Purdie: The Story of Pentecostal Theological Education,” *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 17, no. 4 (December 1, 1975): 101.

1) North American Pentecostal Experiential Pragmatism

Pentecostalism has, historically, been depicted as a dynamic religious movement with an openness to affection, emotion, miraculous signs, visions, and healings.¹¹² In this respect, it has thrived under conditions that intrinsically support an oral and narrative-based culture, not one with a natural inclination toward abstractly-perceived doctrinal articulation.¹¹³ Walter Hollenweger has described the early decades of Pentecostalism as influenced by a “black oral root” characterized by African spirituality, oral liturgy, narrative theology, corporate/reconciliatory participation, dreams, visions, healing, and dance.¹¹⁴ As such, North American Pentecostals from 1920 to 1959 were, first and foremost, pragmatists.¹¹⁵ With few exceptions, theological identification among these Pentecostals was not initiated by trained

¹¹² Pentecostal scholar, Steven J. Land has particularly championed Pentecostal spirituality as intrinsically practical and experiential. See: Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement (Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); See also: Stephen Hunt, “Dispensationalism,” in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Stewart, Adam (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 195–201; Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 10–14; Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 18–27; Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9–15, 60; Harvey G. Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the 21st Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1994), 81–83; Mark J. Cartledge, *Encountering the Spirit: The Charismatic Tradition*, Traditions of Christian Spirituality Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 19–32.

¹¹³ On Pentecostalism’s oral-based orientation, see: Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture, and Community* (New York: Continuum, 2004); Kenneth J. Archer, “A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 301–314; Gary B. McGee writes, “Along with the experiential nature of Pentecostal spirituality, these seeds have inadvertently yielded a lingering anti-intellectualism and occasional fears of the academic study of the denomination’s history and theology.” Gary B. McGee, “‘More than Evangelical:’ The Challenge of the Evolving Theological Identity of the Assemblies of God,” *Pneuma* 25, no. 2 (September 1, 2003): 299.

¹¹⁴ Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson Publications, 1997), 18–141; Walter J. Hollenweger, “The Pentecostal Elites and the Pentecostal Poor: A Missed Dialogue?,” in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 200–214; See also: Kenneth J. Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 7–11, 13–17; Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 49–57.

¹¹⁵ In some respects, this inclination continues today as evidenced by the following quote from Canadian Pentecostal Robert Osborne, “We are pragmatists. What motivates us Pentecostals are the results, the evidences, and the signs of the Spirit’s work among us. As Pentecostals, we want to see, hear and feel; our worship is focused on the body more than the mind.” Robert Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection* (Glad Tidings, BC: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Symposium, General Conference, April 29, 2002), 2; Similarly, Peter Neumann has said, “Pentecostals, then, tend to be results-oriented; they look for ‘cash value’ in any spiritual endeavor and seek perceptible confirmation of the Spirit’s work.” Hunt, “Dispensationalism.”

systematicians, but rather by ardent practitioners and apprentice ministers.¹¹⁶

It is understandable, then, why developments in Pentecostal trinitarian theology from 1920 to 1959 bowed to affective experiences in personal and corporate worship settings. In fact, it can be argued that in the years following the tumultuous oneness-trinitarian debates mentioned above, Pentecostals attempting to engage in sustained discourse related to the doctrine of the Trinity faced formidable disincentive. It is intriguing to note, for example, that in the decades after PAOC incorporation in the 1920s, the *Pentecostal Testimony*, a key source of dissemination and doctrinal content, remained virtually silent on the subject of the Trinity.¹¹⁷ If any doubt remained as to how an articulation of the doctrine of the Trinity was prioritized in the developing years of Canadian Pentecostalism, the tone was set at the general church meeting of the PAOC on May 26, 1919, when leaders formally affirmed the following: “whereas much contention and confusion has been caused over the issue of one God and trinitarian views, also the Baptismal Formula, be it resolved, that we as a body go on record as disapproving not only the above issues, but of all other issues, that divide and confuse God’s people to no profit, and that aggressive evangelism be our motto.”¹¹⁸ Thus, while it cannot be said that the doctrine of the Trinity was denied among the PAOC from 1920 to 1959, neither can it be said that doctrinal or creedal statements pertaining to trinitarian theology were frequently engaged. Instead, the worship experience and pragmatically evangelistic pursuits represented the top priorities for Canadian Pentecostals within the PAOC.

116 See: Christopher A. Stephenson, “Systematic Theology as ‘Bible Doctrines:’ Myer Pearlman, E.S. Williams, and French L. Arrington,” in *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); See also: Douglas Jacobsen, “Knowing the Doctrines of Pentecostals: The Scholastic Theology of the Assemblies of God, 1930-55,” in *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 90–107.

117 This observation was validated by a close examination of *Testimony* copies attained in 2012 during several PAOC archive visits in Mississauga, Ontario.

118 The General Church Minutes, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada,” May 26, 1919 as cited in: Ronald Kydd, “The Contribution of Denominationally Trained Clergymen to the Emerging Pentecostal Movement in Canada,” *Pneuma* 5, no. 1 (March 1, 1983): 25.

2) North American Pentecostal Biblicism

Along with an experiential pragmatism, North American Pentecostals from 1920 to 1959 were committed to the applied Christian scriptures, most notably the book of Acts.¹¹⁹ They focused especially on a restoration of the signs and wonders evidenced in the apostolic age of the New Testament.¹²⁰ For the most part, however, Pentecostals followed Evangelical Fundamentalists in regard to scriptural hermeneutics and a staunch defense of the veracity of the biblical text.¹²¹ Describing this biblicist approach among Pentecostals, Stanley Burgess wrote,

[Pentecostals] made their initial move toward biblical theology, not in the traditional sense of critically determining the unique themes of biblical authors or texts, but as “Bible doctrines” understood simply as a thematic organization of Scriptures. Though systematic, these were not systematic theologies in the commonly understood sense of creating a cogent vision of the Christian faith by systematically reflecting on the various *loci* in the context of the scriptural witness, the history of the Christian tradition, and a particular contemporary ecclesiastical and/or cultural context. [italics in original]¹²²

Instead, the hermeneutical approach of Pentecostals more typically involved compiling a comprehensive set of proof-texts related to theological topics believed to be most relevant.¹²³ Mark Noll, as is well documented, has taken particular exception to this form of biblical hermeneutic. In his view, this form of biblical literalism reduces “space for academic debate,

119 Cecil M. Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Ed M. Van der Maas, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1121–1122; Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 18–19.

120 Hunt, “Dispensationalism,” 198; Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*, 40–42.

121 A high view of this biblical integrity is evidenced in the General Church Minutes of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada meeting, May 26, 1919, which stated, “Be it further resolved that we disapprove of making doctrinal statement a basis of fellowship and cooperation but that we accept the Word of God in its entirety, conducting ourselves in harmony with its divine principles and Apostolic example, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace until ‘we all come in the unity of the faith.’” Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *General Church Minutes of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada*, May 26, 1919.

122 Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 1123.

123 Amos Yong has written, “Especially in its older versions ... Pentecostal theological manuals have neglected dogmatic arguments in favor of biblical proof-texting. This appeal to Scripture reflects the classical Pentecostal—both trinitarian and Oneness—distrust in philosophical and historical argumentation and human reason.” Yong, “Oneness and the Trinity: The Theological and Ecumenical Implications of Creation *Ex Nihilo* for an Intra-Pentecostal Dispute,” 83; Christopher A. Stephenson, “Pentecostal Theology: Retrospect and Prospect,” *Religion Compass* 5, no. 9 (September 1, 2011): 491; See also: Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 1121–1123.

intellectual experimentation, and nuanced discrimination between shades of opinion.”¹²⁴

In this respect, Pentecostals drew heavily on the theological work of Evangelicals such as Henry C. Thiessen, J. Oliver Buswell, and Charles E. Ratz.¹²⁵ When Pentecostal topics of significance such as the identification of charismatic spiritual gifts or issues in relation to pneumatology or the doctrine of the Trinity were mentioned, however, they were often only addressed or inserted as appendages to other theological matters.¹²⁶ Examples of this approach among Assemblies of God scholars of this era can be found in Myer Pearlman’s *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* (1937), P.C. Nelson’s *Bible Doctrines* (1947), and E.S. Williams’ *Systematic Theology* (1953).¹²⁷ In each of these theological texts, it is undeniable that the doctrine of the Trinity was addressed as an article of Pentecostal faith. However, it is also evident that trinitarian discourse was inserted in the form of a series of thoroughly crafted trinitarian proof-texts wedged among other theological doctrines—not in an exhaustive engagement of trinitarian theology in the broadest sense.¹²⁸ This, effectively, epitomizes the biblicism that governed trinitarian understanding from 1920 to 1959.¹²⁹

124 Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 124.

125 See: Henry C. Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1940); J. Oliver Buswell, *Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, vol.1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963); J. Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962); Charles Ratz, *Outlined Studies in the Holy Spirit* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 1963).

126 Terry L. Cross, “A Proposal to Break the Ice: What Can Pentecostal Theology Offer Evangelical Theology?,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 2002): 48.

127 Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1937); P.C. Nelson, *Bible Doctrines*, 75th Anniversary Edition (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1995); E.S. Williams, *Systematic Theology* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953).

128 Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*, 188; Andrew K. Gabriel has stated, “Consider, for example, Myer Pearlman’s classic text *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* (1937). In his section on the attributes of God, the Trinity is only mentioned in his discussion of God as one (which is not generally considered an attribute of God) and Christ is mentioned once as an example of God’s righteousness; as one filled with the Spirit, he is one who judges with righteousness (Isa 11:3). The Holy Spirit receives no mention.” Andrew K. Gabriel, *The Lord Is the Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Divine Attributes* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 72.

129 Terry Cross described this approach in classic Pentecostal theology texts as work that “is really a biblical theology, not a systematic theology.... A biblical agenda is important as a foundation, but a systematic theology from a Pentecostal-charismatic perspective must do more.” Terry L. Cross, “Toward a Theology of the Word

3) Canadian Pentecostal Trinitarianism and James Eustace Purdie

While a similar form of Fundamentalist biblicism may have been pervasive in Canada among the PAOC during this time, there is, nevertheless, some modest evidence to the contrary. In the period from 1920 to 1959, the responsibility of articulating a biblical theology within the PAOC was tasked, ironically, to an educated Anglican clergyman from Wycliffe College (Toronto, Ontario) named James Eustace Purdie.¹³⁰ Purdie, though maintaining his Anglican allegiances, had a strong affinity for the Pentecostal faith and its theological expressions. As Canadian Pentecostal leaders increasingly recognized a need to train ministers, they appointed Purdie in 1925 to serve as the president of the first Canadian Pentecostal religious training school in Winnipeg, Manitoba—Western Pentecostal Bible College.¹³¹ Holding this position until 1950, Purdie served as a primary influence upon impressionable Pentecostal ministers for two and a half decades. In addition, he was also entrusted by the PAOC during that time to articulate important catechetical and doctrinal documents outlining the movement's basic beliefs.¹³² These included a catechism entitled "Concerning the Faith" and a broadly distributed pamphlet entitled

and the Spirit: A Review of J. Rodman Williams's Renewal Theology," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993): 118, 122, cf. 127.

130 Many among the PAOC still avow Purdie as the primary articulator of their own systematic theology. For work on Purdie's contribution to Pentecostal theology, see: Kydd, "The Contribution of Denominationally Trained Clergymen to the Emerging Pentecostal Movement in Canada"; James Craig, "'Out and Out for the Lord' James Eustace Purdie an Early Anglican Pentecostal" (Wycliffe College, 1995); Brian R. Ross, "The Emergence of Theological Education within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada" (University of Toronto, 1971); Bruce L. Guenther, "Pentecostal Theological Education: A Case Study of Western Bible College, 1925-50," in *Canadian Pentecostalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 99–122; Peter Althouse, "The Influence of Dr. J.E. Purdie's Reformed Anglican Theology on the Formation and Development of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada," *Pneuma* 19, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 3–28.

131 Purdie represents an intriguing case study that, in some ways, contradicts the otherwise Fundamentalist and anti-intellectual trends of American and Canadian Pentecostalism during that era. Randall Holm, "I'm Still There! Ronald A.N. Kydd's Influence on Canadian Pentecostalism," *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* 1, no. 1 (2010): 71.

132 Ronald Kydd writes, "Dr. Purdie has to be acknowledged as the primary figure in mediating theology to several generations of the Pentecostals. He and the others opened the windows of the PAOC to the winds of theology." Kydd, "The Contribution of Denominationally Trained Clergymen to the Emerging Pentecostal Movement in Canada," 27.

“What We Believe.”¹³³ In this respect, it is widely held that Purdie infused a measure of intellectual credibility into PAOC theology, modeled, in large part, after his academic experiences at Wycliffe College.¹³⁴ In a 1962 tribute to Purdie’s longstanding investment to Canadian Pentecostalism, PAOC general superintendent, Tom Johnstone, proclaimed, “There isn’t a man in all of Canada who has contributed more of a lasting nature to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada than J. Eustace Purdie. He has laid for us a foundation of Biblical doctrine that has paid dividends, and will continue to pay dividends so long as the Lord owns and acknowledges us as a branch of His church serving Him in this great dominion.”¹³⁵

Nevertheless, some scholars contend that Purdie typified the narrow hermeneutics of his era, extolling a rigid biblicism that organized biblical texts by topic and then merely categorized this content under different titles. Peter Althouse, for example, has argued that Purdie adopted a conservative aversion to higher criticism from his Wycliffe mentors, James P. Sheraton and Dyson Hague. Althouse contends that Purdie’s approach to biblical scripture was “extreme biblicism which verged on an idolization of Scripture.”¹³⁶ Along similar lines, Brian Ross described Purdie’s theological education at Western Pentecostal Bible College in the following way: “Theological education of this sectarian strain was built upon ‘the book;’ the opinions and quarrellings of men were always to be regarded as of secondary importance.... Theological education took place in a Bible school, and the Bible never relinquished its position of

133 Althouse, “The Influence of Dr. J.E. Purdie’s Reformed Anglican Theology on the Formation and Development of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada,” 4.

134 Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed., 1013.

135 Tom Johnstone (PAOC general superintendent elect) to J.E. Purdie on December 26, 1962 as quoted in: Craig, “‘Out and Out for the Lord’ James Eustace Purdie an Early Anglican Pentecostal,” 28.

136 Althouse, “The Influence of Dr. J.E. Purdie’s Reformed Anglican Theology on the Formation and Development of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada”; Amos Yong has leveled a similar critique of the Assemblies of God systematician, Ernest Swing Yong, “Oneness and the Trinity: The Theological and Ecumenical Implications of Creation *Ex Nihilo* for an Intra-Pentecostal Dispute,” 83; See: Williams, *Systematic Theology*, 199ff.

superiority.”¹³⁷

It is undeniable that Purdie inherited a high view of biblical scripture from his academic trainers. Purdie, himself, reflected on his goals at Western Pentecostal Bible College using the following words:

two things were impressed upon the mind of the Principal. First, that while in the best and most evangelical Theological Colleges or Seminaries of that day, strong emphasis was laid upon the Bible as the infallible Word of God, yet the student was not sufficiently familiarized with the actual content of the Holy Scriptures themselves; secondly, that while in the best Bible Schools on our continent, there were very good courses on the Bible itself, yet there was a lack of instruction in Systematic Theology as taught in the best Seminaries. For these two reasons we drew up a course in which both elements are well balanced.¹³⁸

Furthermore, a high view of the Christian scriptures was certainly evident in Purdie’s 1943 systematic theology course notes under the class heading “The Trinity of God.” As expected, these notes began with a litany of biblical proof-texts from the Old and New Testament defending and illustrating the doctrine of the Trinity.¹³⁹ However, after extolling the biblical authority of the doctrine of the Trinity, it is interesting to note that Purdie went on, presumably in these lectures, to articulate particular errors found within Christian history in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity—“Tri Theism,” “Sabellianism,” and “Arianism.”¹⁴⁰ Against the common trends of his day, attempts were also made to offer balance between threeness and oneness within the Godhead. Purdie wrote, “The Trinity of God is His Tri Personal existence as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”¹⁴¹ In this respect, it may be argued that Purdie, albeit in a rudimentary way, laid an early foundation for trinitarian theology to further develop in the PAOC. At the very least, Purdie’s course notes give some credence to the argument that his systematic work, beyond mere

137 Ross, “James Eustace Purdie: The Story of Pentecostal Theological Education,” 100.

138 James Eustace Purdie, “God’s Faithfulness ... the Experience of Twenty Years: 1925-1945,” *The Portal*, 1945, 3.

139 James Eustace Purdie, “1943 Systematic Theology (2nd Year) Class Notes” (Western Pentecostal Bible College, 1943), 49–56, PAOC Archives, Mississauga, ON.

140 Purdie, “1943 Systematic Theology (2nd Year) Class Notes,” 62–63.

141 Purdie, “1943 Systematic Theology (2nd Year) Class Notes,” 49.

trinitarian proof-texting so prevalent in this period, laid the theological groundwork for some critical thinking and provoking commentary for a future generation of Canadian Pentecostal leaders and scholars.

iii) Nascent Dialogue: Trinitarian Conversations with Others (1960 to 1989)

From 1960 to 1989, a subtle change began to take place within North American Pentecostalism in the form of an increased involvement in broader ecumenical discussions. This development resembled some of the larger-scale changes taking place in the theological climate of the 1960s and 1970s discussed in the previous section. At this time, a small number of Pentecostals began pursuing postsecondary degrees and entered into the academic milieu in North America.¹⁴² These individuals faced the daunting task of locating themselves in relatively distinct worlds—an ecclesial Pentecostal world that favoured pragmatism over theological abstraction and a scholastic world with a tendency to favour dogma over religious experience.

While it must be said that many Pentecostals in North America in this period reinforced a position that opposed the intellectualism associated with a historical-critical hermeneutic, a small number of Pentecostal scholars, nevertheless, found themselves in vigorous theological discussions—trinitarian theology included.¹⁴³ Among the first generation of Pentecostal scholars (and non-Pentecostal scholars of Pentecostalism), the contributions of Gordon Fee, Walter Hollenweger, Vinson Synan, William Menzies, Cecil Robeck, Grant Wacker, Harvey Cox, David Reed, Ronald Kydd, and Donald Dayton are notable.¹⁴⁴ These scholars charted new

¹⁴² It must be said, however, that a majority of “doctoral students” in North American Pentecostalism at this time pursued Doctorate of Ministry (D.Min.) degrees—a professional degree which focused more on pastoral practice than rigorous academic and systematic theological reflection.

¹⁴³ Kenneth J. Archer, “Hermeneutics,” in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (De Kalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 112.

¹⁴⁴ For example, see: Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids; Exeter, England: Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1987); Walter J. Hollenweger and R.A. Wilson, *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972); Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

theological territory, in some cases under the suspicion of those within their Pentecostal ranks.¹⁴⁵

The formidable work of these scholars exemplifies how North American studies of Pentecostalism began to gain a measure of intellectual credibility during this era in greater academic dialogue. A further example of a more rigorous scholarly approach within Pentecostalism is the engagement of a group of North American Pentecostal scholars who established the Society of Pentecostal Studies (SPS) in 1970 under the vision of William Menzies, Vinson Synan, and Horace Ward.¹⁴⁶

In addition, a handful of scholars of Pentecostalism from 1960 to 1989 invested in ecumenical conversations that involved various theological discussions at a number of levels. For example, under the moderation of David DuPlessis and Killian McDonnell, the International

Publishing Company, 1971); William W. Menzies, *Anointed to Serve* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1984); Cecil M. Robeck, *Charismatic Experiences in History* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1986); Grant Wacker, *Augustus H. Strong and the Dilemma of Historical Consciousness* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985); Harvey G. Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspectives* (New York: Macmillan, 1965); Harvey G. Cox, *The Seduction of the Spirit: The Use and Misuse of People's Religion* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973); David A. Reed, *Behind the Watchtower Curtain: The Secret Society of Jehovah's Witnesses* (Victoria, BC: Crowne Publications, 1989); Ronald Kydd, *Charismatic Gifts in the Early Church: An Exploration into the Gifts during the First Three Centuries of the Early Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications, 1984); Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987).

145 Rickie E. Moore, John Christopher Thomas, and Steven J. Land, "Editorial," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1 (October 1992): 3; Thomas wrote, "One could perhaps say that these scholars received their theological training despite being Pentecostal. The most one could do in that environment was to undertake research on a topic or issue of some relevance to the tradition. But more times than not, even this luxury was denied with the unspoken suspicion that the individual scholar in question could not be sufficiently objective." John Christopher Thomas, "Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century," *Pneuma* 20, no. 1 (March 1, 1998): 4; Dabney, "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today," 120–121.

146 Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 795–797, 1079–1080, 1123; D. William Faupel and Kate McGinn, "The Society for Pentecostal Studies: A Brief History," in *The Society for Pentecostal Studies, Commemorating Thirty Years of Annual Meetings, 1971-2001*, ed. Mark Roberts (Society for Pentecostal Studies, 2001), 4–6; Archer, "Hermeneutics"; Globally, other Pentecostal societies were emerging around the same time, including: The European Pentecostal Theological Association (EPTA), European Pentecostal Charismatic Research Conference (EPCRA), Asia Charismatic Theological Association (ACTA), Asia Pacific Theological Association (APTA), Comision Evangélica Pentecostal Latinoamericana (CEPLA), and Pentecostals and Charismatics for Peace and Justice (PCPJ). In recent years, Pentecostals have initiated sessions and sought tracks at both the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) and American Academy of Religion (AAR). Martin W. Mittelstadt, "Academic Societies," in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (De Kalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 12.

Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue began in 1970.¹⁴⁷ During this period, scholars of Pentecostalism engaged in Faith and Order commissions and ecumenical dialogue (i.e. Ronald Kydd, Geoffrey Wainwright, Donald Dayton, and Cecil Robeck).¹⁴⁸

Thus, it can be said that, increasingly, Pentecostal scholars from 1960 to 1989 inserted themselves in the emerging dialogue of that time concerned with various theological issues. Through the work of these scholars, a Pentecostal voice was increasingly validated. However, while a measure of credibility was gained by these efforts, recognition of a distinctly Pentecostal contribution to trinitarian theology was still forthcoming.

iv) Distinctly Pentecostal Trinitarianism: Unique Contributions (1990 to present)¹⁴⁹

As a recent byproduct of the modest increases of Pentecostals in ecumenical dialogue, the theological world has grown increasingly captivated by the ways in which Spirit-christology intersects with the doctrine of the Trinity.¹⁵⁰ This has presented an opportunity for contemporary scholars of Pentecostalism, specifically engaged in trinitarian discourse, to offer a unique

147 Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 1121
Catholic-Pentecostal meetings ceased in 2004. For an extensive analysis of the bilateral ecumenical dialogue between Pentecostals and Roman Catholics see: Constance Marie Price, "Pneumatology in the International Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue, 1972-1997" (University of St. Michael's College (Canada), 2008); DuPlessis and Hollenweger each served as Pentecostal observers at the World Council of Churches in 1954 and 1961. Hollenweger was also an observer at the Second Vatican Council beginning in 1962.

148 Holm, "I'm Still There! Ronald A.N. Kydd's Influence on Canadian Pentecostalism," 66, 74-76; This ecumenical emphasis continues today through the work of contemporary scholars of Pentecostalism including: Michael Welker, Paraskeve (Eve) Tibbs and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. See: Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Spiritus Ubi Vult Spirat: Pneumatology in Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue, 1972-1989* (Helsinki: Luther-Agricola Soc, 1998); Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Ad Ultimum Terrae: Evangelization, Proselytism and Common Witness in the Roman Catholic Pentecostal Dialogue, 1990-1997*, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999).

149 For a thorough assessment of both the contemporary advancement and challenges of Pentecostal scholars, see: Jonathan Olson, "The Quest for Legitimacy: American Pentecostal Scholars and the Quandaries of Academic Pursuit," *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 4, no. 1 (2012): 94-115.

150 For example, see Ralph Del Colle's important Roman Catholic contribution to a renewed Spirit-christology: Ralph Del Colle, "Spirit-Christology: Dogmatic Foundations for Pentecostal-Charismatic Spirituality," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, no. 3 (October 1, 1993): 91-112; Kenneth J. Archer has argued that Spirit-christology correctly reflects the Pentecostal story and scriptural testimony. He admitted that Spirit-christology may not be classified as a Pentecostal systematic theology, but it can, nonetheless, represent a fully orb'd Pentecostal theology that fleshes out the dynamic interactions of the Spirit and Word. Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*, 15-17.

contribution to this discussion with a distinctly pneumatological perspective. Rickie Moore has written, “Pentecostalism is witnessing the rise of a third generation of theological scholarship, in which the distinctives of Pentecostal faith are informing critical theological research across the entire range of theological subdisciplines.”¹⁵¹ In this respect, Cheryl Bridges Johns has insightfully stated that there are opportunities “among the Pentecostals, to bring their experience and ways of theologizing to the table of theological discourse as respected partners in dialogue.”¹⁵² In a current theological context that values constructive and practical theology, the Pentecostal proclivity toward narrative experience and oral tradition has made a *distinctly* Pentecostal trinitarian theology particularly compelling.¹⁵³ This is evidenced by the number of respected theologians (e.g. Ralph Del Colle and Jeffrey Gros) from *outside* Pentecostalism, who have increasingly sought to engage Pentecostals on the topic of the Trinity.¹⁵⁴ Other scholars, including Clark Pinnock, Miroslav Volf, Michael Welker, James K.A. Smith, and Mark Cartledge have acknowledged their faith journey as being impacted by a Pentecostal experience that informs their own trinitarian work.¹⁵⁵

Evidence of Pentecostal advancements in the trinitarian discourse can also be found in

151 Moore, Thomas, and Land, “Editorial,” 3–4.

152 Cheryl Bridges Johns, “Meeting God in the Margins: Ministry among Modernity’s Refugees,” October 1997; Bridges Johns as quoted in: Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed: 1121; See also: Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*, 23.

153 Stephenson, “Pentecostal Theology: Retrospect and Prospect,” 494.

154 Ralph Del Colle, “Trinity and Temporality: A Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, no. 8 (April 1, 1996): 99–113; Del Colle, “Oneness and Trinity: A Preliminary Proposal for Dialogue with Oneness Pentecostalism”; Ralph Del Colle, “Theological Dialogue on the ‘Full Gospel’: Trinitarian Contributions from Pope John Paul II and Thomas A. Smail,” *Pneuma* 20, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 141–60; Ralph Del Colle, “The Holy Spirit: Presence, Power, Person,” *Theological Studies* 62, no. 2 (June 1, 2001): 322–40.

155 In particular, Clark Pinnock’s *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* captures the essence of trinitarian theology from the perspective of one sensitive to Pentecostalism and the Pentecostal experience. Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996); Michael Welker, “Spirit Topics: Trinity, Personhood, Mystery and Tongues,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, no. 10 (April 1, 1997): 29–34; James K.A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010); Mark J. Cartledge, “Trinitarian Theology and Spirituality: An Empirical Study of Charismatic Christians,” *Journal of Empirical Theology* 17, no. 1 (January 1, 2004): 76–84.

recent bilateral discussions between oneness and trinitarian Pentecostals. As oneness Pentecostals have gained increasing recognition in the SPS,¹⁵⁶ the climate for formal discussion of this nature between the two groups has increased substantially. Formal bilateral conversations between the two Pentecostal groups began in 2002 and continued for six years, culminating in the publication of the “Oneness-Trinitarian Pentecostal Final Report” in 2008.¹⁵⁷

Consequently, a group of North American Pentecostal scholars has emerged with distinct contributions to offer, not just to Pentecostalism, but also to broader trinitarian theology discussions.¹⁵⁸ Together, these theologians bring a robust intellectualism to their theological work in an effort to articulate a distinctly Pentecostal systematic theology for the twenty-first century.¹⁵⁹ An example of this Pentecostal scholarship can be found in the current *Pentecostal Manifestos* series edited by James K.A. Smith and Amos Yong.¹⁶⁰ The mandate of this book

156 Manuel J. Gaxiola, a oneness Pentecostal, for example, served as president of this academic association in 1990.
 157 “Oneness-Trinitarian Pentecostal Final Report, 2002-2007,” *Pneuma* 30, no. 2 (January 1, 2008): 203–24; Vondey, “Oneness and Trinitarian Pentecostalism: Critical Dialogue on the Ecumenical Creeds”; In particular, it has been the work of Canadian, David Reed, an expert in oneness-trinitarian theology, that has significantly advanced this reconciliatory work.

158 See the following Pentecostal scholars’ work, for example: Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*; Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010); Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*; Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Wolfgang Vondey and Martin W. Mittelstadt, *The Theology of Amos Yong and the New Face of Pentecostal Scholarship: Passion for the Spirit* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013); John Christopher Thomas conceded, “it is difficult to keep up with the many theses and dissertations that either address Pentecostal topics or take a Pentecostal approach to a given topic.” Thomas, “Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century,” 3–4.

159 It is only in recent decades that Pentecostal scholars have engaged in scholarly work that articulates a uniquely Pentecostal theology that is not, by default, Evangelical in character. Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*, 1–6; For differences between Evangelical and Pentecostal theology, see: Yong, “The Word and the Spirit or the Spirit and the Word: Exploring the Boundaries of Evangelicalism in Relationship to Modern Pentecostalism”; Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*, 27; A thorough analysis of contemporary Pentecostal systematic theology can be found in: Christopher A. Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

160 To date, six books have been published in this series including: James K.A. Smith, “Thinking in Tongues,” *First Things*, no. 182 (April 1, 2008): 27–31; Frank D. Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Triune God*, *Pentecostal Manifestos* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010); Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda*; Amos Yong, *The Spirit of Creation: Modern Science and Divine Action in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Imagination*, *Pentecostal Manifestos* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011); Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*:

series indicates a key motivation associated with modern Pentecostal scholarship today. In the editors' words, the texts are written "to bring a Pentecostal perspective to bear on important questions and issues that are concerns not only for Pentecostals and charismatics but also for the whole world ... [and] is engaged in contributing to and even impacting the conversations of the wider theological academy."¹⁶¹

This directive is particularly true for scholars of Pentecostalism offering unique contributions today in the area of trinitarian studies, including Terry Cross, Steven Land, Steven Studebaker, Frank Macchia, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, Peter Althouse, Miroslav Volf, and Andrew Gabriel.¹⁶² Among these scholars, the recent work of Studebaker (associate professor of systematic and historical theology and the Howard and Shirley Bentall Chair in Evangelical Thought at McMaster Divinity School in Hamilton, Ontario) stands out as a uniquely Canadian, Pentecostal and trinitarian contribution.¹⁶³ Studebaker's work is a robust articulation of Pentecostal trinitarian theology that gives specific and focused attention to the Holy Spirit—and

Ethical Methodology in New Spirit (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012); Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*.

161 Notes from the Editors: James K.A. Smith and Amos Yong Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*.

162 Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy*; Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*; Terry L. Cross, "The Holy Spirit," in *Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 93–108; Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*; Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*; Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Triune God*; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism: The Doctrine of the Trinity in Christian Theology of Religions* (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004); Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series (London: T & T Clark, 2003); Gabriel, *The Lord Is the Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Divine Attributes*.

163 Steven M. Studebaker, "The Trinity-Live of God, Hope for Humanity: Towards a Theology of Communion," *Pneuma* 32, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 162–63; "Jonathan Edwards's Social Augustinian Trinitarianism: An Alternative to a Recent Trend," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 56, no. 3 (January 1, 2003): 268–85; "Supreme Harmony or Supreme Disharmony? An Analysis of Amy Plantinga Pauw's 'The Supreme Harmony of All': The Trinitarian Theology of Jonathan Edwards," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 57, no. 4 (January 1, 2004): 479–85; "Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology," *Pneuma* 26, no. 2 (September 1, 2004): 396–98; *From Pentecost to the Triune God*; "Jonathan Edwards's Social Augustinian Trinitarianism: An Alternative to a Recent Trend"; *Jonathan Edwards' Social Augustinian Trinitarianism in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Gorgias Studies in Philosophy and Theology (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2008); "Jonathan Edwards' Trinitarian Theology in the Context of the Early-Enlightenment Deist Controversy," in *Contribution of Jonathan Edwards to American Culture and Society* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 281–301; "Integrating Pneumatology and Christology: A Trinitarian Modification of Clark H. Pinnock's Spirit Christology," *Pneuma* 28, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 5–20.

not merely as a theological add-on. Indeed, Studebaker promotes a trinitarian pneumatology that can stand on its own.¹⁶⁴ Studebaker has contended “the experience of Spirit baptism is a defining feature of the Pentecostal movement and thus should shape the content of Pentecostal theology and, more specifically, of its contribution to trinitarian theology.”¹⁶⁵ He expressed the purpose of his 2012 book, *From Pentecost to the Triune God* as, “allowing the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit to orient an approach to the biblical narratives of the Spirit and from there to the traditions of trinitarian theology.”¹⁶⁶ In this respect, Studebaker represents a new generation of scholars of Canadian Pentecostalism gaining an increased measure of respect and validation in global trinitarian discussions.

This section has provided an historical background for a Pentecostal contribution to discussions pertaining to systematic theology and the doctrine of the Trinity. I have shown how trinitarian theology developed within the Pentecostal movement, including advancements in North America and, more particularly, within the PAOC. Additionally, the current status of Pentecostal trinitarian theology research was described. Currently, scholars of Pentecostalism benefit from a modest surge of scholarly interest in pneumatology. As such, they are well positioned to offer unique contributions to present and future trinitarian theology discussions. In this respect, the selection of the PAOC, a leading Pentecostal Evangelical denomination in Canada, as the focus of my scholarly critique for this project offers a compelling choice that reflects a broader interest in Pentecostal study today.

164 Of course, there are many Pentecostal, systematic texts emphasizing the Holy Spirit and pneumatology within Pentecostalism. For example, see: Keith Warrington and Derek Tidball, *The Message of the Holy Spirit: The Spirit of Encounter*, The Bible Speaks Today: Bible Theme Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010); Keith Warrington, *Discovering the Holy Spirit in the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2005); Robert P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts* (Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*; Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Exeter, UK; Peabody, MA: Paternoster Press; Hendrickson Publications, 1994).

165 Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*, 50.

166 Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God*, 51.

C) Worship Studies

In the third section of this chapter, I will show how the field of worship studies correlates with the overall design of my trinitarian project; specifically in relation to what is commonly termed contemporary Christian music (CCM) and contemporary worship music. In particular, Pentecostalism shares a close relationship both with the emergence and experience of contemporary worship music today. As research in the area of worship studies has evolved, a growing number of scholars have been compelled to analyse CCM and contemporary worship music. Following this trend, I will seek to, firstly, show how certain Christian music genres have emerged from the 1960s to the present day. Secondly, this section considers the historical role that Pentecostalism has served in these musical developments. Finally, this section closes with a brief description of the current status of academic research, specifically worship studies, examining how the doctrine of the Trinity and Pentecostalism intersect with discussion related to popular songs used in contemporary worship settings.

i) Contemporary Christian Music—1960s to present

Since the late 1960s, a form of music has evolved in Protestant Evangelicalism that is commonly called CCM.¹⁶⁷ CCM was a product of the American West Coast and charismatic Jesus Movement that occurred during the late 1960s and early 1970s.¹⁶⁸ Labeled often as “Jesus Freaks,” Christian hippies, who closely reflected the broader counter-cultural changes of the 1960s, employed popular folk and rock music styles to express their message of love and personal engagement with God.¹⁶⁹ They were led by musical pioneers such as Larry Norman

167 Today, the CCM industry is governed by the Gospel Music Association (GMA), established in 1964. The GMA is most popularly known for its annual Dove Awards that honours outstanding achievement and excellence in Gospel Music. See: www.gospelmusic.org (accessed October 13, 2013).

168 For a thorough assessment of the Jesus Movement, see: Larry Eskridge, *God's Forever Family: The Rise of the Jesus People* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013).

169 Pete Ward, *Selling Worship* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2005), 35–47; Describing the culture of young Jesus Freaks, Bob Gersztyn wrote, “much of the music at that time period had a transforming effect on its

(*Upon this Rock*-1969), Mylon LeFevre (*Mylon-We Believe*-1970), Andraé Crouch (*Take the Message Everywhere*-1970), Nancy Henigbaum (*Honeytree: The First Album*-1973), Randy Stonehill (*Welcome to Paradise*-1976), and Keith Green (*Firewind*-1976).¹⁷⁰ “Jesus music,” as it was increasingly called, was characterized by simple melodies, mid-range vocal arrangements, and memorable and repetitive lyrics. It became a popular source of religious expression. Soon, fledgling Christian music companies such as Maranatha! Music (1971), Myrrh Records (1972), Sparrow Records (1976), and Reunion Records (1981) emerged as distributors of Jesus Music to a generation of free-spirited young Christian adults. As a byproduct of this music, Bob Gersztyn has suggested that Jesus became “cool” to the general population.¹⁷¹

The proliferation of Jesus Music was advanced through popular venues such as Christian concerts, coffeehouses, and music festivals. Coffeehouses, such as *The Gathering Place* (Riverside, California), *Adam’s Apple* (Fort Wayne, Indiana) and *Salt Company* (Hollywood, California),¹⁷² and festivals, including *Faith Festival* (Evansville, Indiana-1970), *Ichthus Music Festival* (Wilmore Kentucky-1970), *Explo ‘72* (Dallas, Texas-1972) and *Creation Festival* (Lancaster County, Pennsylvania-1979), afforded budding CCM artists freedom of expression

listeners, and often led them to life-changing decisions. Drugs were often involved in the secular arena; many of the new Christian converts had used psychotropic drugs, and even after discontinuing usage the residual effect of the entheogenic substances often lasted for months, if not years, afterward.” Robert Louis Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, vol. 1 (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012), 58.

170 Though each of these artists had a significant impact on the evolution of CCM, Norman is generally viewed as the “Father of Contemporary Christian Music” based on the prolific release of his albums and the innovation of his music as a reflection of the Jesus Movement. Norman’s reputation and legacy, however, has come under increased scrutiny in recent years due to controversies related to his alleged infidelity, illegitimate children, and narcissistic impulses. For more on Norman, see: Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:42–43, 127–139; Ronald M. Enroth, Edward E. Ericson, and C. Breckenridge Peters, *The Jesus People: Old-Time Religion in the Age of Aquarius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), 80; Ward, *Selling Worship*, 37–38; David Di Sabatino, *Fallen Angel: The Outlaw Larry Norman: A Bible Story* (Jester Media, 2008).

171 Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:33–49; See also: Enroth, Ericson, and Peters, *The Jesus People: Old-Time Religion in the Age of Aquarius*; John M. Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1997), 5–6.

172 Edward E. Plowman, *Jesus Movement* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1972), 98; Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:31, 40–41, 107–108; Ward, *Selling Worship*, 38.

and a captivated, live audience.¹⁷³ By the end of the 1980s, the small cottage industry of CCM had evolved into a multimillion dollar business.¹⁷⁴

As baby-boomer Jesus Freaks settled into family-life and adulthood, they carried their musical preferences with them as a source of religious inspiration. Throughout the 1980s, this resulted in Christian artists such as Amy Grant, Bryan Duncan, Phil Keaggy, Steve Camp, Steven Curtis Chapman, Michael W. Smith, and bands including Petra, Stryper, D.C. Talk, and Newsboys enjoying widespread acceptance by a generation of fans reared within many Evangelical churches. With this enthusiastic following, CCM artists branched out into increasingly diverse music genres common in the broader culture, including R&B, hip hop, rap, country, indie, and alternative, achieving considerable levels of commercialized success.¹⁷⁵ Music sales rose as Christian artists benefited from a surge in Christian television and radio distribution throughout the 1980s. Female musical artists, too, such as Twila Paris and Sandi Patti gained increasing exposure and popularity, placing them on more equal footing with Christian male performers who had previously dominated the early years of the CCM movement.

Today, the CCM industry continues to produce new music. Nevertheless, it has been challenged in recent years to respond to changes that reflect the volatility of the larger secular music market. Audio and video file sharing in digital media has significantly altered the music landscape and requires business leaders, artists, and retailers to adjust to new consumer

173 Organizers of Christian music festivals in the 1970s sought to emulate the success of larger mainstream festivals such as Woodstock (1969).

174 Symbolizing CCM's growing popularity, *CCM Magazine* was launched in 1978. The magazine's primary purpose was to profile Christian music artists in much the same way that *Rolling Stone Magazine* has done since its inception in 1967. Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:94–95; While *CCM Magazine* still functions today as a relevant source of information on CCM, the magazine abandoned printed subscription in 2009 and re-branded itself as an exclusively digital magazine.

175 To a degree, this reappropriation of popular songs in the broader culture continues as a trend today. See, for example: Mark Jennings, "Imagining Jesus Doing a Whole Lotta Shakin': Pentecostal Worship, Popular Music and the Politics of Experience," *Culture and Religion*, 2014.

demands.¹⁷⁶ Still, there are grounds to suggest that support for CCM presently exists throughout the world.¹⁷⁷ Defenders of CCM's viability contend that, even if album sales have declined, no less than twenty-five large-scale North American Christian festivals annually occur, granting popular Christian artists opportunities to perform before large, energetic, and live audiences.¹⁷⁸ A further indicator of CCM's impact is the sheer number of Nashville-based Christian recording companies that continue to serve as industry gatekeepers of CCM branding and sales.

Others, however, are less hopeful about CCM's viability, noting that the three largest mainstream entertainment corporation entities—Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment, and Warner Music Group—now hold the greatest stakes in the CCM industry. These North American parent music companies oversee and manage most of the Christian label subsidiaries including Capitol Christian Music Group (with artists under music labels and partnerships such as Forefront, Sixsteps, and Sparrow), Provident Label Group (with artists under music labels such as Reunion, Essential, and Fairtrade Services), and Word Entertainment

176 There are, in fact, some music artists within the CCM industry (e.g. Charlie Peacock) who anticipate that dwindling CCM revenues will eventually lead to the merging of this genre into the larger music mainstream. See: Charlie Peacock and Molly Nicholas, *At the Crossroads: Inside the Past, Present, and Future of Contemporary Christian Music*, Rev. ed. (Shaw Books, 2004); For other indications of downward trends in CCM, see: Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck, *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999); Dan Lucarini, *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement* (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2002); William D. Romanowski, "Evangelicals and Popular Music: The Contemporary Christian Music Industry," in *Religion and Popular Culture in America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 105–24. For artists moving in this direction, see: Gungor, [Beautiful Things (2010), Ghosts Upon the Earth (2011), and I am Mountain (2013)] who market their music not as "Christian" or "crossover" and challenge the so-called divide between "secular" and "sacred" music. Lindsay Shaw, "Gungor: Finding the Beautiful Things in Liturgical Post-Rock," September 2, 2012, http://www.crossrhythms.co.uk/articles/music/Gungor_Finding_the_Beautiful_Things_in_liturgical_postrock/49255/p1/ (accessed October 25, 2013).

177 Paul D. Jacobs, "Sing unto the Lord a New Song: An Examination of the Theological Orthodoxy and Biblical Content of the Top 20 Contemporary Songs of 2006," *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 1 (September 1, 2007): 98.

178 Examples of these festivals are: Kingdom Bound (Darien Lake, New York), SoulFest (Gilford, New Hampshire), and Rock the Desert (Midland, Texas). These religious festivals closely resemble Lollapalooza festivals that have featured popular music performances and artists since the early 1990s. In the United Kingdom, Greenbelt (Cheltenham, Gloucestershire) is the largest Christian festival of its kind. Parachute Music Festival (Hamilton, New Zealand) is the largest annual Christian festival in the Southern hemisphere. Ward, *Selling Worship*, 53–56.

(with artists under music labels such as Curb, Maranatha! Music, Word, and Fervent).¹⁷⁹

Currently, Christian artists and music groups such as Mandisa, Nicole C. Mullen, Francesca Battistelli, Big Daddy Weave, Jason Crabb, Rhett Walker Band, needtobreathe, For King and Country, and Casting Crowns are among the trendsetters who currently advance the causes of CCM in the twenty-first century. From its humble beginnings as a small market, niche business along the American West Coast, CCM now represents a billion dollar industry with many faithful followers around the world.

ii) Contemporary Worship Music—1970s to present

Closely related to and, in fact, sometimes indistinguishable from CCM is a music genre commonly referred to as “contemporary worship music,” “modern worship music,” “praise and worship music,” or simply as “worship music” or “chorus music.”¹⁸⁰ Admittedly, it is a challenge to distinguish between hit singles, produced by CCM artists or groups (and usually sung in concerts) as a faith expression, and songs primarily recorded as a vehicle for corporate worship (and frequently sung in local church settings).¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, there appears to be those

¹⁷⁹ In the UK: Kingsway Communications is the music industry leader representing most British Christian artists. Kingsway and Integrity Media Group possess a partnership agreement under Capitol Christian Music Group for distribution rights in Canada and the USA. Monique M. Ingalls, “A New Day of Worship: Transnational Connections, Musical Meaning, and the 1990s ‘British Invasion’ of North American Evangelical Worship Music,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and World Christianities* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 7; Ward, *Selling Worship*, 78–80, 92–94, 105–106, 191–192.

¹⁸⁰ The use of this varied terminology is, admittedly, problematic since it incorporates and employs rather vague and subjective terms such as “contemporary” and “worship.” Further, its use may inadvertently imply that “praise” and “worship” only occurs when singing takes place in corporate worship settings. Robb Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 47–48; Mark Evans, for example, avoids the phrase “contemporary worship music.” While I acknowledge his hesitations to use this terminology, it is undeniable that references to “contemporary worship music” are commonly recognized and understood when precisely describing the type of music I wish to critique for this thesis. Therefore acknowledging its limitations, I choose to utilize this terminology. Monique Ingalls, John Frame, and Robb Redman, for example, use the terminology, “contemporary worship music,” more freely in their academic work. See: Mark Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church* (London: Equinox, 2006), 51–53; Ingalls, “A New Day of Worship: Transnational Connections, Musical Meaning, and the 1990s ‘British Invasion’ of North American Evangelical Worship Music,” 1; Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*, 5–9; Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 47.

¹⁸¹ The UK Christian group, Delirious?, represented one such case study. At times, they were considered a

within the Christian music industry whose music has inclined them toward the role of “priest,” while others more naturally have embodied the role of “clarion.”¹⁸²

A priestly example of the former in the early Jesus Movement was a charismatic hippie named Keith Green.¹⁸³ Partnering with his wife, Melody, Green wrote passionate, yet simple lyrics to songs that followed predictable verse-chorus progressions. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, several of these songs were reproduced in corporate worship settings. In this respect, Green was among the first to introduce contemporary worship music *into* the Evangelical church.¹⁸⁴ Examples of Keith and Melody Green songs that became popular in churches were “O, Lord You’re Beautiful” (1980) and “There is a Redeemer” (1982).¹⁸⁵ For a young generation associated with the Jesus Movement, songs of this nature were viewed as a balm for the perceived hypocrisy and “churchianity” within traditional Evangelical church settings.¹⁸⁶ Don Moen, Kurt Kaiser, Bill and Gloria Gaither, and Martin Nystrom are other examples of Christian artists whose songs became popular choruses in many local churches throughout the 1980s.¹⁸⁷

“performance” band, while other times were viewed as a “worship” band. Delirious? is best known for their songs, “I Could Sing of Your Love Forever” (1994), “Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble” (1994), “History Maker” (1996), and “Majesty” (2003) Ward, *Selling Worship*, 114–116.

182 Norman and Stonehill, for example, fit the typology of “clarion” well. Mark Allan Powell has written, “The great majority of CCM artists do not envision their music being used in church; they expect it to be played in homes and automobiles just like regular pop music.” Mark Allan Powell, “Jesus Climbs the Charts: The Business of Contemporary Christian Music,” *Christian Century* 119, no. 26 (December 18, 2002): 20; Along similar lines, Rob Redman and Ingalls draw a distinction between “message songs” that are solo artist renderings of performers and “praise choruses” that are intended for corporate worship. Monique M. Ingalls, “Contemporary Worship Music,” in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, ed. David Horn, vol. VIII, Part III (New York; London: Continuum International Publishing, 2012), 147–148; Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 34–41.

183 Green was a pianist whose style closely resembled the musical expressions of popular musicians of his day such as Elton John and Billy Joel.

184 Ward, *Selling Worship*, 50.

185 Songs of this nature with slower tempos and sustained musical notes were often called “worship songs,” while more upbeat and driving songs were termed “praise songs.” Rich Mullins’ song, “Awesome God” (1988) is a more popular example of what was considered a “praise song.” Ingalls, “Contemporary Worship Music,” 148–149.

186 It was common among followers of the Jesus Movement to be quite critical of the traditional church for its lack of religious passion. Green, himself, used the derogatory term “churchianity” often in his concerts to epitomize problems he perceived within the established Evangelical church.

187 Moen wrote, “Give Thanks” (1978) and “Worthy, You are Worthy” (1986); Kaiser wrote, “Oh How He Loves

Contemporary worship music changed the landscape of many Evangelical churches throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Compared to more traditional hymnody, contemporary choruses granted broader vocal participation and a wider range of musical instrumentality. Amplified drums, bass and electric guitars, and keyboards were integrated into corporate worship settings and used increasingly by church staff and volunteers. Together, these musicians were increasingly referred to as “praise teams” and “worship bands.”¹⁸⁸ As a result, in many Evangelical worship contexts, hymn singing was diminished and marginalized. The tension that ensued over worship styles has commonly been referred to as the “worship wars.”¹⁸⁹ Battle lines were drawn between those who preferred traditional hymns and those who preferred the easy listening melodies of contemporary choruses. Hymn defenders argued for the long historical use of hymns in the Church and lamented how contemporary choruses replaced hymns with a sub-standard form of music containing shallow lyrical content that lacked theological rigour.¹⁹⁰

You and Me,” (1975) and “I Love You Lord,” (1987); Bill and Gloria Gaither wrote, “Because He Lives” (1971) and “It is Finished” (1976); and Nystrom wrote, “As the Deer” (1984). Consequently, in accordance with the Christian Music Publishers Association, Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) emerged in the United States in 1988, not only as a defense agency for churches against copyright infringement, but as an entity that facilitated financial payout for a growing number of artists and songwriters whose songs were increasingly being sung in local churches. For more on CCLI, see the following chapter. Also, see: Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 62.

188 Praise and worship teams and leaders throughout the 1980s commonly replaced the more traditional choir and choir director in many Evangelical church settings. Ingalls, “Contemporary Worship Music,” 148.

189 For more on the worship wars, see: Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 57–65; Anne E. Nekola, “Between This World and the Next: The Musical ‘Worship Wars’ and Evangelical Ideology in the United States, 1960-2005” (The University of Wisconsin, 2009); Barry Wayne Liesch, *The New Worship: Straight Talk on Music and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker House, 1996), 21–32; James Michael Riccitelli, *Sing a New Song: When Music Divides the Church* (Blissfield, MI: H&E Berk, 1997); Dan Dozier, *Come Let Us Adore Him: Dealing with the Struggle over Styles of Worship* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 1996); Terry W. York, *America’s Worship Wars* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003); Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 57–65.

190 For various defenses of the longstanding use of hymns over contemporary worship songs, see: Paul Basden, *The Worship Maze: Finding a Style to Fit Your Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 86; T. David Gordon, *Why Johnny Can’t Sing Hymns: How Pop Culture Rewrote the Hymnal* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing House, 2010); Donald P. Hustad, *Jubilate 2: Church Music in Worship and Renewal* (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing Company, 1993), 285; Dan Lucarini, *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement* (Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2002); Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995); Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*, 9; Gordon Adnams, “‘Here I Am to Worship’: Conflicting Authenticities in Contemporary Christian Congregational Singing,” 2011,

Chorus supporters defended the dynamism that the new songs injected into various church contexts and celebrated how they attracted new worshippers to otherwise shrinking churches.¹⁹¹

By the late 1990s, it was generally conceded that the worship wars had come to an end with contemporary worship music supporters signaling the widespread acceptance and popularity of choruses in most Evangelical churches.¹⁹²

Unlike current trends in the broader CCM industry, there has been a groundswell in the commercial production and distribution of contemporary worship music since the early 2000s.¹⁹³ This expansion has mainly been the result of imported worship music from *outside* North America—mainly Britain and Australia.¹⁹⁴ Marlene Ingalls has referred, for example, to a “British invasion” in modern North American worship music. She has attributed this to the spirit of cooperation and authenticity among British worship leaders (i.e. in the rockier music of artists such as Matt Redman, Paul Oakley, and Tim Hughes). In the late 1990s, the music of these artists became attractive to North American Evangelicals who were becoming increasingly

[http://www.worshipsinging.ca/Here I Am to Worship.pdf](http://www.worshipsinging.ca/Here%20I%20Am%20to%20Worship.pdf) (accessed November 9, 2012); Duane K. Kelderman, *Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1997); Detractors of contemporary worship choruses have been known to derogatorily refer to them as “7-11 songs—7 words, repeated 11 times.” Jacobs, “Sing unto the Lord a New Song: An Examination of the Theological Orthodoxy and Biblical Content of the Top 20 Contemporary Songs of 2006,” 97; Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*, 43–54. Today, organizations such as The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada (www.thehymnsociety.org) based in Richmond, Virginia and different Hymn Fests around the world exist to preserve and promote the continued use of hymns in various worship contexts.

191 Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*, 30–42; Some churches have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to blend hymns and choruses together in corporate worship settings. For more on “blended worship,” see: Robert E. Webber, *Planning Blended Worship: The Creative Mixture of Old and New* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998); Robert E. Webber, *Blended Worship: Achieving Substance and Relevance in Worship* (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson Publications, 1996); Mark C. Hansen, “Blended Worship: A Reflection on Worship—Traditional, Contemporary, or Both?,” *Lutheran Theological Journal* 42, no. 2 (August 1, 2008): 86–91; Constance M. Cherry, “Blended Worship: What It Is, What It Isn’t,” *Reformed Worship*, no. 55 (March 1, 2000): 6–8; Hanan Yaqub, “A Case for Blended Worship,” *Reformed Liturgy & Music* 30, no. 2 (January 1, 1996): 90–90; Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 58–59.

192 Michael S. Hamilton, “The Triumph of the Praise Songs: How Guitars Beat out the Organ in the Worship Wars,” *Christianity Today* 43, no. 8 (July 12, 1999): 28–32.

193 Steve Rabey, “The Profits of Praise: The Praise and Worship Music Industry Has Changed the Way the Church Sings,” *Christianity Today* 43, no. 8 (July 12, 1999): 32–33.

194 For Australian sources, see, for example, Hillsong Church (originally: Hills Christian Life Centre) and C3 Church Global (originally: Christian City Church).

disillusioned by the perceived commercialization and opportunism associated with the soft-rock contemporary worship music industry.¹⁹⁵ This international surge was, undoubtedly, augmented by the increasingly widespread use of the worldwide digital web, as well as Christian radio and television media at the turn of the century.¹⁹⁶

As stated above, new CCM artists may, very well, face uphill challenges to gain a firm footing in an otherwise shrinking Christian music market. At present, however, contemporary worship music artists are benefiting from sustained momentum as contemporary worship music continues to meet the needs of many Christian worshippers around the world. Among these artists, Chris Tomlin, Matt Redman, and Paul Baloche are, unquestionably, industry leaders.¹⁹⁷ All three songwriters have produced many albums and are frequent headliners in large multiartist worship concerts and festivals that are attended by thousands of attendees around the world.¹⁹⁸ The atmosphere of these worship concerts and festivals resembles that of a mainstream rock concert with various electric instruments, a team of supporting vocalists, video projection and imagery, pyrotechnics, and varying usages of digital media within the context of a typically darkened church, auditorium, or stadium.¹⁹⁹ Together, these effects amplify the overall religious

195 Ingalls, "A New Day of Worship: Transnational Connections, Musical Meaning, and the 1990s 'British Invasion' of North American Evangelical Worship Music"; Patricia Bates, "Christian Artists Branch Out as Market Diversifies," *Billboard* 110, no. 24 (June 1998): 73–74; Deborah Evans Price, "Praise and Worship Genre Blessed with Global Growth," *Billboard* 116, no. 17 (2003): 36.

196 According to Deborah Evans Price, worship music yielded the most substantial growth in the Christian music industry in the early 2000s. Unit sales doubled between 1997 and 2002. Price, "Praise and Worship Genre Blessed with Global Growth"; as cited in: Ingalls, "Contemporary Worship Music," 149–150.

197 Tomlin's most popular songs include: "How Great is Our God" (2004) and "Jesus Messiah" (2008). Redman's songs include: "Heart of Worship" (1999), "Blessed Be Your Name" (2002), and "10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)" (2011). Baloche's most well known songs are "Open the Eyes of My Heart" (1997) and "Hosanna" (2005).

198 For example, consider Passion, WorshipTogether, and Acquire the Fire conferences. Several large-scale worship conferences (e.g. The Arts Conference of Willow Creek Community Church and the National Worship Leader Conference) are also held annually to encourage local church worship leaders and songwriters in the development of their skills.

199 Ward, *Selling Worship*, 88–91; In his thesis, Graham Flett has argued that visual technologies in Pentecostal churches in New Zealand has significantly shaped the behaviour of its participants. Graeme Vincent Flett, "Visual Technologies and the (Re)shaping of a Pentecostal Ecclesia" (University of Otago, 2013).

experience and cater to a technologically savvy digital culture raised on contemporary pop and rock music.²⁰⁰ Other leading artists who advance the contemporary worship music industry today are Charlie Hall, David Crowder, Brenton Brown, Joel Houston, Tim Hughes, Israel Houghton, Aaron Keyes, Ben Fielding, and Ben Cantelon.²⁰¹

The flexibility and appeal of the songs written and performed by these Christian artists enable them to be embraced in a variety of settings and media portals all around the world.²⁰² In this respect, their current impact on the local church is quite significant.²⁰³ Sarah Koenig has written,

[Contemporary worship music] has changed not only the music evangelicals sing but also the way that evangelicals view worship. In countless churches on Sunday morning (or Saturday night), evangelicals participate in Praise and Worship services expecting to encounter God through congregational song. It is normative for these churches to perform Sunday services that do not include communion, but extremely unusual for them to hold services that do not include Praise and Worship. Music, in many ways, has become the defining medium of evangelical liturgical activity.²⁰⁴

As was discussed in the introduction of this thesis, many songwriters have recently acknowledged the profound impact of their songs on the church worship environment. This has

200 Jacobs, "Sing unto the Lord a New Song: An Examination of the Theological Orthodoxy and Biblical Content of the Top 20 Contemporary Songs of 2006," 98; The rapid adaptation of electronic instrumentation and technology and media within the local church throughout the 2000s has also recently been validated by studies performed by North American sociologists, David A. Roozen and Sam Reimer. Roozen's FACT2000 investigation assessed 10,000 American congregations from 2000-2010 and discovered a 50% increase of churches that "often or always use electric guitar or drums" and "visual projection equipment." David A. Roozen, *A Decade of Change In American Congregations, 2000-2010*, The Faith Communities Today Project (Harford, CT: Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2010); Similarly, Reimer's study of 500 Canadian Evangelical congregations in 2009 revealed that 71% "usually or always incorporated drums and guitars" while 85% "usually or always used visual projection equipment" as part of their worship services. Samuel H. Reimer, "Canadian Evangelical Churches Study Data," June 4, 2013.

201 Each of these artists is signed under contract with Christian music label subsidiaries representing the three large media corporations mentioned above (i.e. Universal Music, Sony Music, and Warner Music) most of whom are signed under Universal's Integrity Music/David C. Cook music label. See: Frame, *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense*, 67-71.

202 Gesa F. Hartje, "Keeping in Tune with the Times: Praise & Worship Music as Today's Evangelical Hymnody in North America," *Dialog* 48, no. 4 (December 1, 2009): 369; Sarah Koenig, "This Is My Daily Bread: Toward a Sacramental Theology of Evangelical Praise and Worship," *Worship* 82, no. 2 (March 1, 2008): 155.

203 Hartje, "Keeping in Tune with the Times: Praise & Worship Music as Today's Evangelical Hymnody in North America," 367.

204 Koenig, "This Is My Daily Bread: Toward a Sacramental Theology of Evangelical Praise and Worship," 142.

led some Christian musical artists to commit themselves to writing songs that are not only musically appealing, but also theologically sound and robust. Artists, for example, such as Keith and Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend represent a branch of the worship music industry that is committed to writing modern hymns such as “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” (1995), “In Christ Alone” (2001), and “The Power of the Cross” (2005). The current trends in the contemporary worship music industry give credence to this musical genre’s viability and sustainability for the immediate future.

iii) Pentecostalism, Contemporary Christian Music, and Contemporary Worship Music

The rise of CCM and Christian worship music in recent years is intimately connected to historical developments in the global Pentecostal narrative.²⁰⁵ Describing how Pentecostals responded to the music associated with the early Jesus Movement, Bob Gersztyn has stated, “the Christian denominations that were most receptive to the new musical styles were the Pentecostal ones, such as Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ, the Foursquare Church and some smaller or independent Charismatic Full Gospel churches.”²⁰⁶ In fact, it can be argued that three significant Pentecostal (or neo-Pentecostal) churches, in particular, have served pivotal roles in shaping CCM and contemporary worship music over the past four decades.²⁰⁷

Firstly, in the early 1970s, when the Jesus Movement was gaining momentum, Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California served as an epicenter for the Jesus Music on the American

205 Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 48; Ward, *Selling Worship*, 35, 39; Mark Jennings, “Won’t You Break Free? An Ethnography of Music and the Divine-Human Encounter at an Australian Pentecostal Church,” *Culture and Religion* 9, no. 2 (2008): 161–74; Jennings, “Imagining Jesus Doing a Whole Lotta Shakin’: Pentecostal Worship, Popular Music and the Politics of Experience.”

206 Robert Louis Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, vol. 2 (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2012), 94; See also: Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 87–109.

207 This, however, does suggest that changes of this nature were not occurring in other churches in North America or, for that matter, around the world. For example, the ministry of Michael Harper at The Fountain Trust offers clear evidence of charismatic music renewal occurring in British Anglican communities in the 1960s. Ward, *Selling Worship*, 57–58.

West Coast.²⁰⁸ Calvary Chapel was a small, financially struggling Pentecostal church established by the International Church of Foursquare Gospel before Chuck Smith assumed a role there as an associate pastor in 1965.²⁰⁹ Seizing the opportunity to minister to young people connected with the Jesus Movement, Smith focused his attention on hippie converts and societal dropouts who, otherwise, had no connection with the traditional Evangelical church.²¹⁰ Smith's unconventional approach proved to be both attractive and effective among this demographic. By the mid-1970s, Calvary Chapel had transformed from a small, unassuming parish church to a large, vibrant congregation of over 10,000 hippies and former drug-addicts.²¹¹

Part of Smith's genius was recognizing the powerful impact that music had on the counterculture movements of the 1960s and 1970s. More than any church of its time, Calvary Chapel became the dynamic launching ground for innovative Jesus Music that complemented a characteristically Pentecostal emphasis on emotional expression and the imminent return of Jesus Christ. To meet popular demand, Smith regularly hosted energetic Saturday night Christian music concerts and included aspects of Jesus Music into Calvary Chapel services throughout the

208 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 38–39; For an extensive analysis of the impact of Calvary Chapel on the CCM movement, see: Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:49–92.

209 The International Church of Foursquare Gospel (ICFG) denomination was founded by Aimee Semple McPherson in 1923. The religious group derives its name from the fourfold Pentecostal emphasis on Jesus as “Saviour, Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King.” Jack Hayford’s *The Church on the Way* in Van Nuys, California is, perhaps, the best-known ICFG congregation in the world. Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 793–794; For more on ICFG, see: Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:87; Both in practice and doctrine, the ICFG is closely aligned with the Assemblies of God and the PAOC. Van Johnson, *Defining Pentecostal Identity*, PAOC Commission on Identity (Mississauga, ON: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2010), 6.

210 Lonnie Frisbee, an iconic and charismatic personality in the Jesus Movement, was discipled under Smith’s mentoring at Calvary Chapel. Frisbee became a prominent leader at Calvary Chapel, and later in the Vineyard Fellowship. For an extensive analysis of Frisbee’s life, see: David Di Sabatino, *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippie Preacher* (Jester Media, 2006); “Interview with the Director of Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippie Preacher,” *Christian Nightmares*, 2013, <http://christiannightmares.tumblr.com/post/64657227995/an-exclusive-interview-with-the-director-of> (accessed November 24, 2014).

211 Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 453; Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 52–55.

1970s.²¹² As interest in dozens of young artists and music groups at Calvary Chapel intensified, Smith launched Maranatha! Music in 1971, the first Christian music label of its kind supporting the unique musical aspirations of Jesus People on the American West Coast.²¹³ Popular Christian artists and groups associated with Maranatha! Music were Chuck Girard, Debbie Kerner, Ernie Rettino, Karen Lafferty, Children of the Day, Daniel Amos, Love Song, Blessed Hope, Agape, and 2nd Chapter of Acts. In this respect, Calvary Chapel and Maranatha! Music are commonly associated with the birthplace of the CCM movement.²¹⁴

A second church illustrating the prominent impact of Pentecostalism (or neo-Pentecostalism) upon the Christian music scene is the ministry of Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim under the leadership of pastor and former rock musician, John Wimber.²¹⁵ For a period of time in the 1970s, Wimber and Smith were associates through their affiliation as Calvary Chapel pastors.²¹⁶ However, due to differences of opinions on Pentecostal evidence of the Holy Spirit and evangelism, Wimber distanced himself from Calvary Chapel. Like Smith, Wimber possessed charismatic and entrepreneurial giftedness.²¹⁷ In 1977, Wimber established Anaheim Vineyard Fellowship with a trademark emphasis on charismatic renewal, the “authentic”²¹⁸ worshipper, and kingdom theology.²¹⁹ With his background as a musician, Wimber also embraced the vision and spirit of CCM and contemporary worship music. As a

212 Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:52.

213 Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:75, 77–92; Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 39.

214 Today, Calvary Chapel boasts over 1500 churches around the world. Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012, 1:74.

215 Ward, *Selling Worship*, 107–108; Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 56.

216 Wimber was pastor of Calvary Chapel in Yorba Linda, California, while Smith pastored in Costa Mesa, California.

217 For more on Wimber’s impact on Vineyard in the United Kingdom, see: Ward, *Selling Worship*, 98–101.

218 The notion of “authenticity” in corporate worship expression was particularly important to Wimber. For him, this connoted an unpretentious, “come as you are” approach to corporate worship. Ward, *Selling Worship*, 135.

219 Today there are over 1500 Vineyard churches around the world, though both its unique music distribution and overall impact has waned somewhat since the unexpected death of Wimber in 1997.

result, his ministry also attracted many seeking young adult converts.²²⁰ Like Smith, Wimber created his own church-supported music and distribution label—Mercy Records (later it became Vineyard Music Group in 1985).²²¹

Churches in the late 1970s and 1980s moved increasingly away from denominationally-endorsed music (i.e. drawn from denominational hymnals) to more widely distributed forms of contemporary worship music. Wimber and his Vineyard Music artists capitalized on this development in the growing North American market by offering Vineyard music to a broad consumer base with only modest copyright restrictions.²²² Thus, Vineyard music gained far-reaching acceptance throughout the 1980s and into the mid-1990s not only in Pentecostal and neo-charismatic churches, but also in many settings where churches were seeking to incorporate contemporary worship music into their corporate worship experience. Vineyard songs such as “More Love, More Power” (1978), “Spirit Song” (1979), “Isn’t He” (1980), “Change My Heart Oh God” (1982), “Take My Life” (1985), and “Refiner’s Fire” (1990) became popular songs used in many North American churches.²²³ Key artists and musicians who are often associated with the Vineyard tradition and its compilations include Kathryn Scott, Nigel Briggs, Nigel Hemming, Brenton Brown, Brian Doerksen, Andy Park, and Jeremy Riddle. In this respect, Wimber and the Vineyard Fellowship have also represented an important source of contemporary worship music to Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal churches.

Thirdly, over the past two decades, Hillsong Church, an affiliated Pentecostal

220 Musician, Bob Dylan, claimed a Christian conversion through the ministry of the Vineyard Fellowship in the late 1970s and recorded several songs and albums (e.g. *Soul Train Coming*-1979) describing this “born-again” experience. Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, 2012.

221 Ward, *Selling Worship*, 108–109; Vineyard Music is presently incorporated through the Association of Vineyard Churches.

222 Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church*, 49.

223 Vineyard Music was also among the first Christian labels to begin recording “live worship” tracks and music albums. Popular contemporary worship choruses through the latter part of the 1990s include: “In the Secret (I want to Know You)” (1995), “Breathe” (1995), “Come Now is the Time to Worship” (1998), “Lord Reign in Me” (1998), and “Hungry (Falling on My Knees)” (1999).

congregation of the Assemblies of God in Sydney, Australia, illustrates not only the impact of modern Pentecostalism on contemporary praise and worship music, but also the trend mentioned earlier regarding the current influence of Christian artists *outside* North America.²²⁴ Hillsong Church began in 1983 as a fledgling Pentecostal church under the leadership of Brian and Bobbi Houston. Through the 1980s and 1990s, the congregation grew from a small church to a congregation boasting approximately 20,000 attendees and, more broadly, a global flagship in the area of contemporary worship music.²²⁵ Like Calvary Chapel and Vineyard Christian Fellowship, this was achieved through a strategic marketing strategy focused upon ministry to a younger generation and a convincing message that Hillsong Church was divinely anointed as a global music standard for other churches to emulate.²²⁶

The role of the worship leader at Hillsong Church has, historically, represented a high profile international position. In its early years, Geoff Bullock served as the worship pastor of

224 For more on the history of the Hillsong Church, see: Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 94–109; Darlene Zschech, “The Role of the Holy Spirit in Worship: An Introduction to the Hillsong Church, Sydney, Australia,” in *Spirit in Worship-Worship in the Spirit* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 285–92; Matthew Wade and Maria Hynes, “Worshipping Bodies: Affective Labour in the Hillsong Church,” *Geographical Research* 51, no. 2 (May 2013): 173–79; Tanya Riches and Tom Wagner, “The Evolution of Hillsong Music: From Australian Pentecostal Congregation into Global Brand,” *Australian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 1 (2012): 17–36; This is not to suggest that Hillsong has been, nor remains, the only Australian Pentecostal influence on contemporary praise and worship music. There are other impacting Pentecostal churches in Australia that have augmented and advanced contemporary worship music around the world, for example, Planetshakers City Church in Melbourne, Australia and C3 Church Global in Sydney, Australia. For more on Australian Pentecostal music, see: Tanya Riches, “Ethical and Theological Reflections: Liturgical and Ritual Studies Method in Australian Pentecostal Contemporary Congregational Worship,” *Webjournals.ac.edu.au*, 2014, <http://webjournals.ac.edu.au/journals/aps/issue-16/4-ethical-and-theological-reflections-liturgical-a/> (accessed December 15, 2014).

225 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 96; Since its inception, Hillsong Church has planted sixty new churches around the world. Brett Knowles, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Ed M. Van der Maas, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 774.

226 Today, Hillsong Church continues to emphasize the need to adjust their models of music to reflect the musical trends within the broader culture. As evidence of this, the church launched “Hillsong: Young and Free” in 2014 as a new branch of the Hillsong ministry intended to attract a new generation of youth worshippers born in and around the 2000s. As a ministry to postmillennial youth, the corporate worship experience of Hillsong: Young and Free is defined by the popular genres of this culture including synthesizer-generated, dub-step, and electronic music.

this Pentecostal congregation.²²⁷ The ministry of Hillsong's second music pastor, Darlene Zschech, propelled Hillsong's music onto the global scene and led to comprehensive distribution of this worship music around the world.²²⁸ Since 2008, Hillsong's impact has continued to grow through the music leadership of their third worship pastor, Reuben Morgan. Morgan's leadership is complemented by a team of gifted Hillsong worship leaders including Marty Sampson, Brooke Ligertwood, Joel Houston (son of Brian and Bobbi Houston),²²⁹ Tyler Douglass, Aodhán King, and Laura Toggs (daughter of Brian and Bobbi Houston).²³⁰

At present, Hillsong Church boasts wide global influence.²³¹ Many Evangelical churches beyond the Pentecostal tradition have not just included Hillsong's music into their corporate worship experiences, they have also accepted many of Hillsong's Pentecostal worship expressions, including raised hands, vocal utterance, expressive body movement, and dance.²³² Even if Pentecostal doctrine is not endorsed within these churches, many Evangelical churches today have incorporated this music as their own.²³³ Mark Evans has stated,

The growth in contemporary forms of congregational song can be directly linked to the proliferation and increased influence of Pentecostal churches worldwide. Pentecostal churches are by far the dominant producers of contemporary congregational music, and often have the larger congregation sizes and matrixes of ideologically aligned networks to support flourishing production centres. Because of this, the religio-cultural forces brought to bear on congregational song are quite specific. Many trends, styles, and corporate

227 Bullock left this position in 1995 under duress. His most well known song is: "The Power of Your Love" (1992). Since his departure from Hillsong, Bullock has indicated that he was ill suited for the intensity and scrutiny of this position. Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 106–107; <http://www.geoffbullock.com/Articles/goldenboy.html> (accessed January 12, 2013).

228 See: Zschech, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Worship: An Introduction to the Hillsong Church, Sydney, Australia," 285–292.

229 Sampson and Houston have become prominent faces of "Hillsong United," a second generation Hillsong Band.

230 Douglass and King are the current musical leaders of "Hillsong: Young and Free."

231 "Shout to the Lord" (1993), "Worthy is the Lamb" (2000), "Mighty to Save" (2006), and "Hosanna" (2006) were among the most frequently sung contemporary worship songs in North American churches throughout the 2000s. Ingalls, "Contemporary Worship Music," 149.

232 As evidence of this phenomenon consider and observe the Pentecostal worship styles of the fastest growing, nondenominational churches in North America such as: Passion City Church (under the leadership of Louie Giglio and Chris Tomlin in Atlanta, Georgia) and Gateway Church (under Robert Morris and Kari Jobe in Dallas, Texas).

233 Ingalls, "Contemporary Worship Music," 148–149.

worship practices have the stamp of some form of Pentecostal beginning.²³⁴

In this respect, the “Pentecostalisation” of non-Pentecostal, Evangelical churches is undeniable around the world today.²³⁵

iv) Academic Studies in Contemporary Worship Music

1) General Studies in Contemporary Worship Music

As changes within the contemporary worship music industry have occurred, scholars have shown a heightened interest to investigate music that is currently popular in various worship settings. The first of these studies was a lyrical analysis initiated in the early 1990s by Bert Polman. Polman assessed ten of the most commonly used choruses in the United States from 1989 to 1990 by evaluating both their music quality and theological integrity.²³⁶ Since then, several studies have been initiated that assess commonly used contemporary worship songs through the 1990s and 2000s. In general, these studies have focused on one of three main areas of research—musicology, ethnography, and lyrical analysis.²³⁷ The most comprehensive research projects that have considered contemporary worship music in these multifaceted forms are by Mark Evans, Monique Ingalls, and Robert Woods and Brian Walrath. Evans’ 2006 text, *Open Up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, offered a thorough study of 150 “contemporary congregational songs” (predominantly sung in Australia) and provided empirical data and helpful

234 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 87.

235 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 93.

236 Polman’s general critique of the popular choruses was as follows: “First, useful as these choruses may be, they need to be integrated into a larger body of classic Christian hymns and psalms (through medleys with older hymns and as hymn ‘frames’) and not become the dominant or exclusive style of Christian worship; second, the character of most P&W songs makes them an eminently suitable corrective to the ‘sterile’ patterns of worship that still haunt some Christian communities; and third, due to the simple nature of these choruses, abuse through overuse must be avoided, and more creative ways (rather than sheer repetition) must be found to incorporate them into the larger fabric of Spirit filled Christian worship.” Bert Polman, “The Praise and Worship Hit Parade: A Brief Analysis of Some of the Most-Sung Choruses of 1990,” *Reformed Worship*, no. 20 (June 1, 1991): 33–35.

237 For a thorough analysis of the current state of contemporary worship music analysis across several disciplines, see: Mark Porter, “The Developing Field of Christian Congregational Music Studies,” *Ecclesial Practices* 1, no. 1 (2014): 149–66.

categories for future studies.²³⁸ Monique Ingalls' 2008 Ph.D. dissertation entitled, "Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship," issued a provocative ethnographic and musicological study of the relationship between contemporary worship music through the early 2000s and various worship locales, including the concert, the conference, and the local church.²³⁹ Woods and Walrath's edited 2007 text, *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*, represented an extensive lyrical and musical investigation of seventy-seven of the most frequently sung worship songs in North America from 1989 to 2005 analysed by thirteen authors in various academic disciplines.²⁴⁰ Besides these robust studies, independent projects in recent years by the following scholars have critically examined popular contemporary worship music from diverse perspectives: Robin Knowles Wallace, Gesa Hartje, Andreas Marti, Paul Jacobs, Jonathan Dueck, Gordon Adnams, Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, Edward Lee Steele, Andrew Goodliff, and Nick Page.²⁴¹

238 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*.

239 Monique M. Ingalls, "Awesome in This Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship" (University of Pennsylvania, 2008); See also: Monique M. Ingalls, Carolyn Landau, and Thomas Wagner, eds., *Christian Congregational Music: Performance, Identity, and Experience* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2013).

240 Robert H. Woods and Brian D. Walrath, *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007).

241 Robin Knowles Wallace, "Praise and Worship Music: Looking at Language," *Hymn* 55, no. 3 (July 1, 2004): 24–28; Hartje, "Keeping in Tune with the Times: Praise & Worship Music as Today's Evangelical Hymnody in North America"; Andreas Marti, "'Just You and Me': Beobachtungen an Liedern einer Charismatischen Gruppe," *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* 48 (January 1, 2009): 209–217; Jacobs, "Sing unto the Lord a New Song: An Examination of the Theological Orthodoxy and Biblical Content of the Top 20 Contemporary Songs of 2006," 97–106; Edward Steele, "Theological Themes in Contemporary Hymnody," November 2010; Andrew Goodliff, "'It's All about Jesus': A Critical Analysis of the Ways in Which the Songs of Four Contemporary Worship Songwriters Can Lead to an Impoverished Christology," *Evangelical Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (July 1, 2009): 254–68; Jonathan Dueck, "An Ethnographic Study of the Musical Practices of Three Edmonton Mennonite Churches" (University of Alberta, 2003); Nick Page, *And Now Let's Move Into a Time of Nonsense: Why Worship Songs Are Failing the Church* (Franklin, TN: Authentic Publishers, 2005); Gordon Adnams, "The Experience of Congregational Singing: An Ethno-Phenomenological Approach" (University of Alberta, 2008); Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity? An Examination of the Use of Theological Words in Christian Music," *Journal of Media and Religion* 3, no. 2 (2004): 119–129. With the exception of Andreas Marti's independent study, each of these studies analysed worship choruses that were exclusively written in English prose. An exception, Marti's project was a particularly compelling one

The above-mentioned research notwithstanding, the rise of North American worship institutes in the past two decades has also advanced the study of contemporary worship music. Scholars associated with the Calvin Institute of Worship in Grand Rapids, Michigan and the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies in Orange Park, Florida represent important agents for the promulgation of this work.²⁴² The Calvin Institute of Worship's official mandate is "to promote scholarly study of theology, history and practice of Christian worship and the renewal of worship in worshipping communities across North America and beyond."²⁴³ As interest in contemporary worship music among scholars continues to grow, the number of institutes of this nature, too, is likely to increase.

Within the academic study of Pentecostalism, there are some scholars who have looked at the phenomenon of contemporary worship music from a uniquely Pentecostal and charismatic perspective. For example, James Steven, a British Anglican priest and Director of Liturgy and Worship at Sarum College, UK has utilized empirical measures to consider the impact of Pentecostalism upon contemporary worship music in the Church of England.²⁴⁴ Likewise, Pete Ward, Professor of Theology and Ministry at King's College London, in his book, *Selling Worship: How What We Sing has Changed the Church*, has offered a thorough investigation of how popular songs in contemporary charismatic worship in Britain have an impacting role in the

because it examined contemporary German choruses published in a 2005 songbook used predominantly by young adults associated with International Christian Fellowship in Zurich, Switzerland.

242 The Brehm Centre for Worship, Theology, and the Arts (at Fuller Theological Seminary), the Hartford Institute for Religious Research (at Hartford Seminary), and the Pure Worship Institute (at North Central University) represent the growing number of religious worship institutes in North America.

243 See: <http://worship.calvin.edu/about/mission.html> (accessed October 15, 2013). Similarly, the mission statement of the Robert E. Webber Institute of Worship Studies is, "to form servant leaders in Christian worship renewal and education through graduate academic praxis, grounded in biblical, historical, theological, cultural and missiological reflection in community;" see: <http://iws.edu/about/mission> (accessed January 3, 2015).

244 James H.S. Steven, "The Spirit in Contemporary Charismatic Worship," in *Spirit in Worship-Worship in the Spirit* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 245–59; James H.S. Steven, "Charismatic Hymnody in the Light of Early Methodist Hymnody," *Studia Liturgica* 27, no. 2 (January 1, 1997): 217–34.

creation and development of the culture and practices of the Church.²⁴⁵ Steven and Ward are among an increasing number of scholars who have emerged over the past decade as significant contributors to a distinctly Pentecostal theology of musical worship. Other scholars in this group are Simon Chan, James K.A. Smith, Kenneth Archer, Don Saliers, Daniel Albrecht, Johnathan Alvarado, and Steven Dove.²⁴⁶ It is expected that research will continue to be undertaken as scholars, within and beyond Pentecostalism, become increasingly focused on various phenomena associated with contemporary worship music.

2) Specific Studies in Contemporary Worship Music and Trinitarian Expression

Of particular relevance to the purpose of this study is a growing number of scholars who have considered the relationship between trinitarian theology and contemporary worship music. Researchers have begun to examine the role that contemporary congregational music plays in forming and reinforcing views about God. Naturally, trinitarian studies of this nature tend to focus primarily on lyrical and theological content, rather than ethnographic and musicological

245 Ward, *Selling Worship*; See also: Pete Ward, "The Production and Consumption of Contemporary Charismatic Worship in Britain as Investment and Affective Alliance," *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 5 (September 1, 2003); Pete Ward, "Spiritual Songs as Text: Genre and Interpretation," *Journal of Youth and Theology* 1, no. 1 (April 1, 2002): 49–64.

246 Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006); Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplemental Series (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); Simon Chan, "The Liturgy as the Work of the Spirit: A Theological Perspective," in *Spirit in Worship-Worship in the Spirit* (Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press, 2009), 41–57; James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Cultural Liturgies Series (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009); Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy*; James K.A. Smith, "Teaching a Calvinist to Dance: In Pentecostal Worship, My Reformed Theology Finds Its Groove," *Christianity Today* 52, no. 5 (May 1, 2008): 42–45; Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*; Don E. Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994); E. Byron Anderson, Bruce T. Morrill, and Rebecca S. Chopp, *Liturgy and the Moral Self: Humanity at Full Stretch before God: Essays in Honor of Don E. Saliers* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998); Daniel E. Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999); Daniel E. Albrecht, "Worshiping and the Spirit: Transmuting Liturgy Pentecostally," in *Spirit in Worship-Worship in the Spirit* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 223–44; Johnathan E. Alvarado, "Worship in the Spirit: Pentecostal Perspectives on Liturgical Theology and Praxis," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 21, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 135–51; Stephen Dove, "Hymnody and Liturgy in the Azusa Street Revival, 1906-1908," *Pneuma* 31, no. 2 (January 1, 2009): 242–63.

questions.²⁴⁷ Liturgists, theologians, and practitioners such as J.B. Torrance, Jeremy Begbie, Cornelius Plantinga, Timothy George, Leanne Van Dyk, Constance Cherry, David Cunningham, Robert Webber, Ruth Duck, Philip Butin, David Cohen, Donald Yeago, Graham Buxton, Dennis Ngien, and Marva Dawn have each raised concerns about an underdeveloped trinitarian theology and its inevitable corollaries for musical worship practices.²⁴⁸

The suggestion that contemporary worship music may advance an underdeveloped trinitarianism has also been tested by recent empirical research. David Tripp pioneered such a project in the late 1980s when he indexed five of the most popular British hymnals. He concluded that only a small minority of the texts contained “substantially trinitarian content.”²⁴⁹

247 However, in a recent musicological study, Chiara Bertoglio has contended that the divine love associated with God’s triunity is intimately correlated with the three main forms of congregational singing—monody, polyphony and harmony). Chiara Bertoglio, “A Perfect Chord: Trinity in Music, Music in Trinity,” *Religions* 4 (2013): 485–501.

248 See: Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace*; Jeremy Begbie, Steven R. Guthrie, and John D. Witvliet, *Resonant Witness: Conversations between Music and Theology*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Liturgical Studies (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011); Jeremy Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time*, Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Cornelius Plantinga and Sue A. Rozeboom, *Discerning the Spirits: A Guide to Thinking about Christian Worship Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003); Constance M. Cherry, *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010); Timothy George, *God the Holy Trinity: Reflections on Christian Faith and Practice*, Beeson Divinity Studies (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006); Leanne Van Dyk, “The Church in Evangelical Theology and Practice,” in *Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 125–41; Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology*; Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982); Ruth C. Duck and Patricia Wilson-Kastner, *Praising God: The Trinity in Christian Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999); Philip Walker Butin, *The Trinity*, Foundations of Christian Faith (Louisville; London: Geneva, 2001); David J. Cohen, Michael Parsons, and David Coffey, *In Praise of Worship: An Exploration of Text and Practice* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010); James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago, *Knowing the Triune God: The Work of the Spirit in the Practices of the Church* (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001); Graham Buxton, *The Trinity, Creation and Pastoral Ministry: Imaging the Perichoretic God* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007); Dennis Ngien, *Gifted Response: The Triune God as the Causative Agency of Our Responsive Worship* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Press, 2008); Brian McLaren, “An Open Letter to Worship Songwriters (Updated),” 2010, <http://brianmclaren.net/archives/blog/open-letter-to-worship-songwrite.html> (accessed July 5, 2012); Dawn, *Reaching out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture*.

249 Tripp counted as “trinitarian” any hymns that mentioned all of the three divine persons in association. Among the five hymnals he assessed, the trinitarian proportions ranged from 3% to 32% (including songs with trinitarian doxologies). Of note, Tripp observed that song collections that were put together by denominational bodies had a noticeably higher percentage of “substantially trinitarian” songs. Collections put together by interdenominational or charismatic groups tended to have fewer trinitarian songs. David H. Tripp, “Hymnody and Liturgical Theology: Hymns as an Index of the Trinitarian Character of Worship in Some Western Christian Traditions,” in *The Forgotten Trinity: 3 A Selection of Papers Presented to the BCC Study Commission on*

The first published study to empirically evaluate the trinitarian impulses in contemporary worship choruses was issued in Robin Parry's 2004 book, *Worshipping Trinity*. Parry's text shone a critical spotlight on commonly used Vineyard songs in the United Kingdom. In particular, Parry conducted an inquiry of the lyrical content of songs from Vineyard worship albums between 1999 and 2004. Like Tripp's investigation, his research confirmed a deficiency of trinitarian language in these popular songs.²⁵⁰ His findings also revealed an almost complete disregard for God the Holy Spirit, and a christocentricism that, ironically, tended to ignore Christ's earthly ministry.²⁵¹

Though his work has yet to be broadly published and fully recognized, Lester Ruth's findings, both in breadth and depth, represent the most formidable research in the area of contemporary worship music and trinitarian lyrical analysis.²⁵² Ruth currently serves as the Research Professor of Christian Worship at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina. To date, Ruth's work has thoroughly analysed the trinitarian impulses in the lyrics of approximately one hundred contemporary choruses used in predominantly American churches over the past three decades. Unlike other trinitarian studies of its kind, Ruth's research has gone

Trinitarian Doctrine (London: Inter-Church House, 1991), 63–88; For other references to Tripp's study, see: Robin Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship* (UK; Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2005), 130–131.

250 See: Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*.

251 Furthermore, Parry's research reported a surplus of Vineyard songs that, by comparison, placed less emphasis on the acts of God and more on the personal activities of the worshippers referenced in the songs. Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 75–128.

252 Lester Ruth, "A Rose by Any Other Name: Attempts at Classifying North American Protestant Worship," in *Conviction of Things Not Seen* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2002), 33–51; Lester Ruth, "Don't Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters," *The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies Blog*, February 1, 2006, <http://iws.edu/2006/02/lester-ruth-dont-lose-the-trinity> (accessed Jan 18, 2013); Lester Ruth, "Lex Amandi, Lex Orandi: The Trinity in the Most-Used Contemporary Christian Worship Songs," in *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer* (Pueblo Books, 2008: Liturgical Press, 2008), 342–59; Lester Ruth, "Worship True to God," March 2005, <http://iws.edu/2005/03/lester-ruth-worship-true-to-god> (accessed May 25, 2012); Keith Drury, "'I'm Desperate for You'-The Message in the Music," in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*, ed. Robert H. Woods and Brian D. Walrath (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007); Lester Ruth, "Public Presentations," Duke University, <http://sites.duke.edu/lruth/public-presentations/> (accessed February 28, 2015).

beyond divine naming analysis (e.g. merely tabulating and referencing “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit” in the analysed songs) to consider other related facets in song lyrics, such as divine and human action in the songs.

Another scholar who has gained prominence for his analysis of trinitarian expression in contemporary worship songs is John Witvliet. As an American Reformed scholar and director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Witvliet has written extensively on the doctrine of the Trinity and Christian worship.²⁵³ His 1997 dissertation at the University of Notre Dame, entitled, “The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Theology and Practice of Christian Worship in the Reformed Tradition,” provided a practical and theological framework that engaged a wide body of contemporary trinitarian scholarship in order to discern its implications for theology and the practice of public worship.²⁵⁴ Witvliet has been convinced “that trinitarian theology has considerable implications for Christian worship—an observation that is often made, but less often developed.”²⁵⁵ I wish to build on Witvliet’s conviction that Christian doctrine and liturgy are inextricably intertwined. Like Witvliet, I seek to clarify the links between the doctrine of the Trinity and the theology and practice of worship, and thereby to explore the basic “grammar” or

253 John D. Witvliet, *Worship Seeking Understanding: Windows into Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003); “Trinity: The Opening of Worship,” in *A More Profound Alleluia: Theology and Worship in Harmony*, ed. Leanne Van Dyk (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 3–30; “The Blessing and Bane of the North American Megachurch: Implications for Twenty-First Century Congregational Song,” *Hymn* 50 (January 1, 1999): 6–14; “Soul Food for the People of God: Ritual Song, Spiritual Nourishment, and the Communal Worship of God,” *Liturgical Ministry* 10 (March 1, 2001): 101–10; “Evaluating Recent Changes in the Practices of Christian Worship,” *Crux* 38, no. 3 (September 2002): 17–25; “Beyond Style: Rethinking the Role of Music in Worship,” in *Worship at the next Level* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 163–79; “The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature,” “Discipleship and the Future of Contemporary Worship Music,” in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007); “Prism of Glory: Trinitarian Worship and Liturgical Piety in the Reformed Tradition,” in *Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), 268–99; “What to Do with Our Renewed Trinitarian Enthusiasm: Forming Trinitarian Piety and Imagination through Worship and Catechesis,” in *Trinitarian Theology for the Church* (Nottingham, England: Apollos, 2009), 237–53.

254 See: John D. Witvliet, “The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Theology and Practice of Christian Worship in the Reformed Tradition” (University of Notre Dame, 1997).

255 Witvliet, “The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature.”

“DNA” of trinitarian worship.²⁵⁶

Thus, the number of scholars looking at trinitarian expression in contemporary worship music is growing. To date, however, there has not been a theological or empirical study that has assessed these trinitarian dynamics in the music of an exclusively Canadian religious denomination. This thesis seeks to fill a gap in the literature by examining trinitarian expression within the lyrical content of current and popular songs used by the PAOC, the largest Evangelical denomination in Canada. With this ultimate purpose in mind, the third section of this chapter has sought to show research, popular and academic, continues to evolve in this relatively new area of study. Interestingly, some of this research has begun to consider how the topic of the Trinity intersects with this discussion in respect to the most popular songs used in various contemporary worship settings.

In this chapter, I have attempted to review the resources upon which this project will draw—trinitarian theology, Pentecostal studies, and worship studies. Within the comprehensive and contemporary study of the doctrine of the Trinity, the trinitarian theology of Colin Gunton represents an interlocutor that will advance the purposes of this study. In particular, this project is framed by study related to the historical interchange between trinitarian theology and twentieth and twenty-first century Pentecostalism. Specifically, the PAOC is historically located as a Canadian religious denomination that represents a compelling selection for this case study based on its fascinating history in the oneness-trinitarian debates of the early twentieth century. By choosing to evaluate the corporate music practices of this Canadian Pentecostal denomination, I will draw upon research in the emerging field of Christian worship studies, more particularly in relation to the ever-evolving contemporary worship music industry used in many Evangelical corporate worship settings today. By examining the intersection of these three disciplines—

256 Witvliet, “The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature.”

trinitarian theology, Pentecostal studies, and worship studies—this chapter has provided the rationale for conducting a lyrical content analysis of trinitarian impulses of commonly used PAOC congregational songs. In the next chapter, I will examine Gunton's trinitarian theology with particular attention to what he identified as challenges facing contemporary Western Christianity.

CHAPTER 2: A THEOLOGICAL ARTICULATION OF COLIN GUNTON'S TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the theological contours of Colin Gunton's trinitarian theology. The first section reviews Gunton's assessment of Western trinitarian theology, particularly as it relates to the conceptualization of the Godhead, theological anthropology, and the created order. In the second section, these three disciplines of study (the theology of God, anthropology, and cosmology) provide a framework for an overview of Gunton's proposal for the recovery of the doctrine of the Trinity. The third section offers an assessment of Gunton's trinitarian theology. By closely examining Gunton's theological work, this chapter will demonstrate the pertinence of his scholarship as a theoretical framework for the analysis of trinitarian actuation in the music worship practices utilized by Canadian Pentecostals within the PAOC.

A) Gunton's Assessment of Western Trinitarian Theology

Colin Gunton contributed a rigorous critique of the way in which the doctrine of the Trinity is formulated and functions within contemporary Western Christianity. In particular, Gunton argued that an incipient neoplatonism, stressing divine unity or oneness, undermines divine particularity and brings into question the importance of diversity and relationality or threeness. This, Gunton believed, has prompted negative effects in relation to conceptualizations of i) the theology of God, ii) human personhood, and iii) the created order. Indeed, these three areas afford an ideal framework for a discussion of Gunton's negative assessment of much of contemporary trinitarian theology.

i) Western Trinitarianism and the Understanding of the Godhead (the Theology of God)

Gunton became increasingly convinced that deficiencies identified within Western

trinitarian theology have destructive and limiting effects on how the triune God is perceived. Specifically, Gunton set out to show how an overemphasis on unity within the Godhead has led to a prevailing Western theology with modalistic inclinations, a narrow christology, an attenuated understanding of salvation history, and an underdeveloped pneumatology. Gunton's account has identified four principal shortcomings.

1) A Modalistic Neoplatonic Deity

Gunton sought to trace the accommodation of a modalistic neoplatonic perception of God to its historical starting point. While Gunton joined many theologians who were critical of what they saw as the displacement of God in modernity and late modernity,¹ he was nevertheless unwilling to suggest that this historical development rested entirely upon the shoulders of modern antagonists of Christianity.² Instead, Gunton sought to track the failures of modernity back to a skewed treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity in early Christian thought. In this respect, he considered the Gnostic influence of neoplatonism as a dark shadow that served to shape the ancient development of the doctrine of God. Gunton argued that "Christian theology, although it had every opportunity to develop a theology ... in which the rights of the particular were given due place, made the major mistake of entering into the wrong kind of compromise with Platonism."³ The result was a Hellenistic "sub-Christian doctrine of God"⁴ that, in Gunton's view, adopted an overemphasized notion of a transcendent and unitary deity and,

1 Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, Bampton Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 28–34.

2 Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, repr. (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), 30–31; Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003), 5–6; Colin E. Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43, no. 1 (January 1, 1990): 33.

3 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 51; In that same work, Gunton also wrote, "The modern protest against the idea of God is in part a protest against a kind of notion of divine substance, and particularly of God as a changeless, unitarily conceived will or authority." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 194.

4 Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (London: SCM Press, 2002), 5.

correspondingly, a low view of the material realm and the economy of God.⁵

In *The One, the Three and the Many*, Gunton used a juxtaposition between two ancient philosophers, Heraclitus, a “philosopher of plurality and motion” and Parmenides, “a philosopher of the One *par excellence*,” [italics in original] to illustrate what he believed to be a corresponding theological tension that informed developments in the early Christian doctrine of the Trinity.⁶ While he joined the classical theological tradition in refuting the Arian heresy and endorsing the formation of the early Christian creeds, Gunton claimed, nevertheless, that a devious “anti-incarnational” neoplatonism entrenched itself within the Church in the third and fourth century. Gunton saw this as manifesting itself in a conceptual discontinuity between the threeness and oneness of the triune God.⁷ Perceived by Gunton as an unfortunate move with far-reaching consequences, an ancient preference was granted to *ousia* (i.e. emphasizing a single, divine mode of being) as an ontological expression of God’s character to the detriment of *hypostasis* (i.e. emphasizing divine particularity).⁸ Gunton argued that this overemphasis on the unity of God, at the expense of divine particularity, bore negative consequences in Western theology, including the eventual relegation of the doctrine of the Trinity to subordinate status.

As stated in the previous chapter, Gunton aligned with other theologians⁹ in incriminating Augustinian theology as the source of this Gnostic and modalistic overemphasis on divine

5 Colin E. Gunton, “One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation, Mediation and Life in Community,” *Pro Ecclesia* 11, no. 2 (March 1, 2002): 147.

6 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 17–18.

7 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 37.

8 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 30–55; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 42; Gunton wrote, “God is indeed one in being: there is only one God. But this very oneness is not a mathematical oneness, as Arius and Greek theology had taught, but a oneness consisting in the inseparable relation of Father, Son and Spirit, the three *hypostases*.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 10.

9 See, for example, the Augustinian critique of Karl Rahner, Wolfhart Pannenberg, John Zizioulas, and Robert Jenson.

oneness.¹⁰ In Gunton's view, these abstractions, which preferenced the oneness of the Trinity, served to undermine God's triunity and led Augustine to eschew the divine relationality and particularity between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to "flatten out" the distinctions between the unique divine persons.¹¹ Gunton wrote, "Augustine either did not understand the trinitarian theology of his predecessors, both East and West, or looked at their work with spectacles so strongly tinted with neo-platonic assumptions that they have distorted his work. The tragedy is that Augustine's work is so brilliant that it blinded generations of theologians to its damaging weaknesses. Our problem is, where to begin?"¹²

Though Gunton was well aware and appreciative of the magnitude of Augustine's contribution to a trinitarian theological enterprise, most notably *De Trinitate*, he, nevertheless, recognized in Augustine's work underlying neoplatonic presuppositions that, in Gunton's view, merited harsh critique.¹³ He joined scholars such as Robert Jenson in arguing that, even if Augustine did not intend to guide Western Christianity down a course leading to a theological rupture between the oneness and threeness of God, the historical trajectory of Augustinian

10 Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 33–58; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 10; For Zizioulas' general claims against Augustine, see: Will Cohen, "Augustine and John Zizioulas," in *The T & T Clark Companion to Augustine and Modern Theology* (London; New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 223–39.

11 Colin E. Gunton, "And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made," in *Nicene Christianity*, ed. Christopher R. Seitz (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001), 36; Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 38.

12 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 39; See also: Colin E. Gunton, "Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom," in *Theology Beyond Christendom: Essays on the Centenary of the Birth of Karl Barth*, ed. John Thompson (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1986), 285–286.

13 Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 35–36; Colin E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 89; Elsewhere, Gunton drew upon Karl Barth who wrote, "As regards theology ... we cannot be in the Church without taking as much responsibility for the theology of the past as for the theology of our present. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Schleiermacher and all the rest are not dead, but living. They still speak and demand a hearing as living voices." Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History*, trans. B. Cozens and J Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1972), 17; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 171, n.20.

theology, as a whole, has advanced this development.¹⁴ He conceded that, “On the face of it, to accuse of undermining the doctrine of the Trinity one whose treatment of the topic is among the glories of Western theology may appear to be perverse; to accuse of undermining the knowledge of God one for whom the knowledge of God was a prominent concern may appear odd at the very least. Yet much hangs on what or who is supposed to be known, and how.”¹⁵ To this end, Gunton relentlessly argued that Augustine’s hesitation to expand upon the threeness of the divine persons inclined him and his Western successors toward impersonal, impassible, and modalistic perceptions of God.¹⁶

Even when Augustine *did* make efforts to articulate divine threeness in relation to the Trinity, Gunton was still critical on the grounds of an alleged mistaken preference for neoplatonic categories associated with the human psyche.¹⁷ It was Augustine, Gunton reminded his readers, who ultimately popularized the triadic analogy of the mind’s memory, understanding, and will—a timeless repository of being—as an appropriate way to conceive of the triune Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.¹⁸ Gunton wrote, “*The crucial analogy for Augustine is between the inner structure of the human mind and the inner being of God, because it is in the*

14 See: Robert W. Jenson, “A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton’s Thinking,” in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 8–16.

15 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 31; Jenson, “A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton’s Thinking,” 10–12; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 54–55, 120–121.

16 Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 37; A further indictment against Augustine, Gunton wrote, “Augustine theology has always tended in a modalistic direction, conceiving the real God as the pure being underlying the distinctions of the persons who, when examined critically, behave like a Cheshire cat.” Colin E. Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41, no. 3 (January 1, 1988): 374; Elsewhere, Gunton also disparagingly attributed to Augustine an overemphasis on heavenly mediation (i.e. angels) over the incarnate Word, a shying away of God’s involvement in the material world, a seeming preference for interiority, and an alleged suspicion of exteriority. See: Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom,” 285–289.

17 Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 67–69; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 45–51.

18 Augustine, *De Trinitate: Works of Saint Augustine*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill, 2nd ed. (Hyde Park, NJ: New City Press, 2012), Book XV: 12–50 and Book XIV; Augustine as quoted in: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 45–47; See also: Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology,” 374; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 102–103; Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 134–135.

former that the latter is made known, this side of eternity at any rate, more really than in the 'outer' economy of grace." [italics in original]¹⁹ Statements of this nature reveal Gunton's conviction that Augustine's orientation tended toward a perception of God favouring homogeneity, eternity, and, if even unintentionally, sanctioning Gnostic intellectualism into Western theology proper.²⁰ In Augustine's successors, Gunton identified the same tendency toward discontinuity between the unity and particularity of God. This, he held, is the underlying reason why the doctrine of the Trinity has been historically reduced to "theological irrelevance"²¹ and to a "math conundrum."²² Regarding this outcome, Gunton was greatly concerned. It led him to argue against "the lunacy of so much as taking seriously the rationalist dogma that philosophical abstractions are more intellectually appropriate than personal categories when speaking of God."²³ Because Augustine's efforts to articulate divine threeness failed to demonstrate a balance between the particularity and relationality of the divine persons, they were considered as theologically deficient and damaging by Gunton. Accordingly, Gunton argued that it is possible to trace these ancient theological misunderstandings concerning the disassociation of divine oneness and threeness to Western trinitarian theological discourse. The unfortunate result produced modalistic and neoplatonic conceptualizations of God in theology in general, and in the doctrine of the Trinity in particular.

19 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 45.

20 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 42–48; Gunton viewed this Augustinian development as having devastating and longstanding effects. He wrote, "By being used as a kind of transcendental in the past the doctrine of the Trinity has been misused, so that ingenious minds have been led on a quest for *vestigia trinitatis*, traces of the Trinity in the created being. These have usually taken the form of patterns of threeness in the world which have been supposed to reflect the Trinity, but which have, by reason of their essentially impersonal nature and by calling attention to the mathematics of the Trinity, had the effect of obscuring the real possibilities for a relational ontology inherent in the doctrine." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 144, n.23.

21 Colin E. Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*," in *Persons, Divine and Human* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 49.

22 Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 34.

23 Colin E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2d ed. (London: SCM Press, 2001), 222.

2) A Dualistic Christology

A second concern for Gunton was the pervasive dualism he observed in relation to christology. Gunton lamented that distorted views about the doctrine of the Trinity led to a problematic theological rupture between a christology from above and a christology from below.²⁴ On the one hand, Gunton observed a lingering trend toward a christology from above in various aspects of modern Western theology. This inclination juxtaposes the transcendent nature of Christ over against the incarnation. In Gunton's view, a conceptual understanding of christology from above, reliant upon neoplatonic impulses, serves to undermine the direct involvement of God in the created order and tends to regard the person and work of Jesus Christ too narrowly, restricting it to passive and docetic categories.²⁵ Moreover, he held that it was Augustine and his successors who served as the major culprits proliferating this view. He argued, "it must be said that the doctrine of the divinity of Christ is more important for Augustine than that of the humanity."²⁶ Accordingly, Gunton contended that Christ is often seen in "abstractions," not in personal or particular categories in relation to God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit.²⁷ Gunton considered this theological propensity to favour Christ's divine and exalted nature as undermining the full humanity and incarnational suffering of Christ. He wrote that a "'christology from above' tends to produce a docetic conception of the person of Christ, or at least one in which the humanity of Jesus receives so little emphasis that it becomes little better than a cipher."²⁸

24 For Gunton's most thorough analysis of this discontinuity, see: Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*; See also: Gunton, "Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology"; Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 136.

25 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 33; Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 36; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 104; Colin E. Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 88–89.

26 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 34.

27 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 44.

28 Gunton, "Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology," 359.

On the other hand, while Gunton frequently argued that some within Western Christendom exhibit the residual effects of an ancient christology from above, he contended that modernity's preference of post-Kantian rationality has influenced other modern theologians in the opposite direction. That is to say, he considered some scholars, such as Karl Rahner and Wolfhart Pannenberg, to merely displace one christological extreme for another—mainly an overemphasis on a christology from below.²⁹ Over against this view, Gunton said that “Christology from below aims to ground what it has to say primarily in the anthropological or, more generally, in that which has to do with time rather than eternity.”³⁰ From Gunton's perspective, the fundamental error that this perpetuates is a general reluctance to speak of Christ's divinity. As such, Gunton cautioned that an exclusionary christology from below places too much weight on the finite, human, and historical dimensions of Christ to the detriment of Christ's divine nature.³¹ In this way, Gunton challenged certain modern theologians to avoid the twin temptation of projection or idealization upon an interpretation of the Christ event.³²

As a result, Gunton was critical of the inherent dualism invoked by the tendency to overemphasize either a christology from above or a christology from below and, thus, argued that the existence of these theological extremes only served to exacerbate a “christological schizophrenia of the West” sourced, in his view, by an underdeveloped doctrine of the Trinity.³³

In this respect, Gunton perceived contemporary christology as regularly falling victim to an

29 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 10–11, 11–32.

30 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 10–11.

31 Gunton, therefore, was not an advocate of those whose primary quest for the historical Jesus tended to undermine the divinity of Christ and the Holy Spirit. See: Gunton, “One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation, Mediation and Life in Community,” 158; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 36; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 159; Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology,” 360–361; Gunton wrote, “If the New Testament is to be understood, it must be accepted that we are not presented in it with a naked or purely immanent temporality. Treat it simply as a source for historical information, and it will not make sense.... The historical man Jesus is never construed apart from his meaning as the presence of the eternal God in time.” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 207.

32 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 31.

33 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 95.

insidious Nestorianism in which harsh discontinuities are established between Christ's divine and human nature and will.³⁴ Writing about the negative effects of this split in conceptualizations of Christ, Gunton stated, "This has sometimes led to the appearance of a kind of hybrid being, two contrary realities stitched together, like a centaur, suggesting two persons rather than one person in two natures."³⁵ In response, Gunton sought to overcome this lingering christological dualism in contemporary Western theology with a reappropriation of the doctrine of the Trinity that takes seriously the diversity of the divine persons in communion with one another.

3) An Attenuated Salvation History

A third theological issue identified by Gunton and associated with deficient trinitarianism is an attenuated view of the triune God's perceived actions in salvation history.³⁶ Gunton became increasingly convinced that the unnecessary breach between triune oneness and threeness produces confusion in the perception of the economy of God's actions.³⁷ Here, again, Gunton perceived a coalescence of Greek philosophy with Hebrew religion in Western Christendom.³⁸ He wrote, "*The root of the modern disarray is accordingly to be located in the divorce of the willing of creation from the historical economy of salvation.*" [italics in original]³⁹

As discussed above, Gunton argued that ancient Christendom favoured the abstract and mysterious unknowability of God over God's redemptive historical actions, resulting in an inclination to perceive God as beyond the bounds of time and space—not rooted in a concrete

34 Gunton, "Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology," 360; Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 29; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 78–79.

35 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 79.

36 For Gunton's thorough analysis of this weakness, see: Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001.

37 Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 92–93.

38 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 55.

39 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 55.

world and history.⁴⁰ The point is made clear in his own words: “To conceive God primarily in terms of intellect, with priority given to contemplation rather than action, renders the conception antithetical to a concept of God whose being is known primarily through his historical and particular action.... At the heart of the Bible’s account of God is an orientation to action, not contemplation.”⁴¹

For this reason, Gunton joined other theologians in their critique of Thomistic natural theology and its perceived advancement of a classical deistic view of God as a clockmaker—an unchanging “god above gods”—who creates a world, yet remains virtually unengaged with it so that it essentially progresses and develops on its own.⁴² Gunton argued that Thomistic scholasticism represented an historical turn that served to advance an ancient, dualistic neoplatonism.⁴³ Gunton concluded, “Thomas’ God performs very much the same function as Plato’s forms perform in maintaining the reality of those beings over whose continued existence they preside.”⁴⁴

Gunton drew correlations between modern theological perceptions of a deistic God and a failure to adequately recognize the correlations of the economy of God’s actions in creation, redemption, and eschatology. In contemporary theology and to their detriment, each of these major Christian doctrines, Gunton thought, tends to be seen in relative discontinuity and isolation

40 Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 65; Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 67.

41 Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 40–41.

42 Gunton cited Aquinas’ “Five Arguments” in *Summa Theologiae* 1a.2.3. as a primary example of problematic Thomistic inclinations. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, 1–5; See also: Colin E. Gunton, “Transcendence, Metaphor, and the Knowability of God,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 31, no. 2 (October 1, 1980): 502–504; Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 49–54; Colin E. Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” in *Trinitarian Theology Today* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 98, n.6.

43 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 100–102.

44 Gunton, “Transcendence, Metaphor, and the Knowability of God,” 504.

from one another.⁴⁵ Gunton believed that vestiges of this discontinuity are evident in a longstanding Christian neglect of the Old Testament, a hesitation toward the sometimes tumultuous relationality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and, more generally, in any expression that advances hazy conceptions of an unknown God that “float off into abstraction from the concrete history of salvation.”⁴⁶ Elsewhere, he wrote, “In our tradition the particularity of the persons tends everywhere to be so subordinated to a relentless stress on the unity of God that theology is often unable to follow Scripture in ascribing particular actions to particular persons of the Trinity, the result being that all is attributed to ‘God’ in such an undifferentiated way that his actions cease to be trinitarianly construed. The same can be said of the actions of the persons *ad intra*.”⁴⁷ Thus, Gunton concluded that the uncritical acceptance and pervasive influence of neoplatonic dualism has led Western theology to undermine the importance of God’s economy—the biblical account of God’s action in the world—and endorse an attenuated view of salvation history.⁴⁸

4) An Underdeveloped pneumatology

Yet another cause for concern identified by Gunton in the methodological and theological priority afforded to divine oneness over divine threeness in Western trinitarian theology is the way in which this tendency, he argued, inevitably undermines pneumatology to the point that the unique personhood of the Holy Spirit as the primary Giver of life is severely downplayed and misunderstood.⁴⁹ Gunton grew increasingly concerned with what he considered the “major

45 Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 35.

46 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 34; See also: Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 4–5.

47 Colin E. Gunton, “Persons and Particularity,” in *Theology of John Zizioulas* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 103.

48 Gunton, “Persons and Particularity,” 98.

49 See: Colin E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, Didsbury Lectures (Grand Rapids; Carlisle, England: Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992); Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 48–54; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 51; Gunton, “One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation,

deficiency in the development of pneumatology in the West.”⁵⁰ His point, of course, is the correlation between this perceived weakness and an inadequate expression of the eschatological dimension of Christian theology.⁵¹ His primary concern here, is that, in Western theology, God the Holy Spirit is afforded a limited substantive and relational role in salvation history. Increasingly, Gunton challenged the ways in which God the Holy Spirit is frequently perceived as an unnecessary add-on or mysterious silent member of the Trinity in aspects of Western Christianity.⁵²

In Gunton’s view, it was Augustine and his successors, for example, who undervalued the eschatological dimension of the Holy Spirit’s work and role in creating community.⁵³ Moreover, he argued that a christology which is not informed by pneumatology is incapable of adequately addressing contemporary, earthly concerns.⁵⁴ He held that the reverse is also true: pneumatology which is not grounded in, and informed by, christology remains incapable of pointing Christians to Jesus Christ.⁵⁵ For Gunton, underestimation of the life-giving particularities of the Holy Spirit and of the relationality between the divine persons remains a glaring theological and trinitarian problem.

Gunton perceived the four theological deficiencies described above as deriving from an Augustinian preferencing of divine oneness over divine threeness. He believed that notions of a modalistic deity, a dualistic christology, an attenuated salvation history, and an undermined

Mediation and Life in Community,” 157–158; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 191 n.12.

50 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 63.

51 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 163.

52 Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 40; Gunton argued that Augustine’s contention that the Holy Spirit is exclusively love did not hold up to biblical scrutiny and seemed like a superficial argument. Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 52.

53 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 50–51.

54 Gunton stated, “I want to suggest that the area where we should look is our understanding of the place of pneumatology in christology.” Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology,” 361.

55 Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, 50; See also: Michael Stringer, “The Lord and Giver of Life: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Theology of Colin E. Gunton” (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame Australia, 2008), 179.

pneumatology were rooted in ancient Christian beliefs that were deficient, resulting in a failure to develop an adequate understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. In this respect, Gunton called the Enlightenment the “rebellious but true child” of flawed theological constructs in ancient Western Christianity.⁵⁶ Gunton proposed that at the time of the Enlightenment, modernists, somewhat justifiably, displaced an otherwise deficient view of the doctrine of the Trinity, primarily rooted in Augustinian and Thomistic Christianity, with human reason and an emphasis on the human will.⁵⁷ In effect, Gunton saw modernists as merely “sweeping the room clean” and replacing old problems with a whole new set of non-biblical ontologies.⁵⁸ Gunton wrote, “The pathos of the modern condition is that, after rejecting what it rightly sees to be the oppressive forms of unity deriving from the past, it has itself succumbed to various false universals that replicate or even exacerbate the bondage from which it had hoped to free itself.”⁵⁹ It is precisely here that the uniqueness of Gunton’s important contribution becomes apparent: he perceived that Western Christianity bears significant responsibility for championing longstanding and problematic views about God, which, in turn, gave rise to equally deficient views of the doctrine of the Trinity.⁶⁰

ii) Western Trinitarianism and the Understanding of Human Personhood (Anthropology)

Gunton surmised that, if views about God have laboured under neoplatonic impulses for

56 Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition. Toward a Theology After Christendom,” 289; Elsewhere, Gunton wrote, “The ‘closed’ God of antiquity is answered by the closed world of so much modern thinking.” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 207.

57 Lincoln Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 167; Gunton declared, “The late medieval nominalists were not the wicked destroyers they are sometimes made out to be but thinkers who exploited the dualism already inherent in the axiom.” Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom,” 288; Gunton stated, “Much of the responsibility for [modernity’s displacement of God] is to be attributed to unsatisfactory Christian theology, and particularly the theology of creation, so that modern theological scepticism can in part be understood as a call to Christianity to be true to its own light.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 84.

58 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 38.

59 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 34.

60 Gunton wrote, “In the matter of meaning and truth, Christian theology thus sowed the seeds to its own downfall.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 121.

over two millennia, then it follows that Christian views about the human being, created in the image of God, have historically suffered a similar fate.⁶¹ Evidence supportive of this conclusion, according to Gunton, may be observed in the history of Christian thought where a tendency to accept Hellenistic dualism (and later a Cartesian mind/body axiom) has exercised significant influence over conceptions of the human person.⁶² Such views, he argued, draw irreconcilable differences between the material and the non-material realm.⁶³ Gunton articulated this contradiction as “the platonizing tendency to distinguish sharply between the world of sense and the world of intellect.”⁶⁴ Specifically, Gunton argued that an Augustinian overemphasis, favouring transcendence and rooted in divine unity and simplicity, leads to an understanding of the *imago Dei* that emphasizes the individual soul and a view of the human person as unaffected and non-responsible. These issues constitute the foundational elements of Gunton’s arguments about the relationship between an underdeveloped trinitarianism and deficient views of human personhood.

1) An *Imago Dei* Emphasizing the Individual Soul

According to Gunton, if God is conceived in terms of neoplatonic categories that give rise to harsh distinctions between the transcendence and the economy of God, then similar tendencies may be expected in Western Christianity’s articulation of the image of God in humanity. More precisely, Gunton detected a neoplatonic predilection toward the non-material

61 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 93.

62 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 84, 100–101.

63 Gunton wrote, “Dualism does not refer to a metaphysic in which two different kinds of reality are supposed, but one which conceives two realities as either opposites or contradictions of each other.” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 86; See also: Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 47.

64 Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom,” 285; For other references by Gunton on this pervasive dualism, see: Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 50–53; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 84, 100–101; Colin E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, Contemporary Christian Studies (Grand Rapids; Basingstoke: Eerdmans; Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1985), 17–25, 83; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 34–36.

realm whereby the human body is viewed as a repressed tomb needing liberation from the mortal realm.⁶⁵ This idea, Gunton argued, derives from ancient philosophers: “For them, human beings were bits of soul-stuff imprisoned in a gross material body, which was so unimportant that it did not really matter what they did with it.”⁶⁶ Deliverance and liberation for humanity, then, represented an ascent into the higher world of the non-material and non-temporal spirit.

Gunton pointed to Augustine and his descendants as the initial advocates who bequeathed the impetus for the incorporation of this view into Western Christendom. Augustine’s incorporation of neoplatonic, rational analogies for the doctrine of God—the quest for God *within* the soul—encouraged the development of an analogous understanding of the *imago Dei*, drawn not from material humanness, but, rather, in the form of the individual soul. Gunton wrote, “For [Augustine] the human likeness to God must be in the mind or soul, so that other possibilities are excluded from the outset. One implication is that our embodiedness cannot be the place where the image, and hence our true humanity, is found.”⁶⁷ Following this reasoning, then, a Christian view of salvation, becomes a predominantly introspective search as each human soul turns inward in a quest for true meaning in the transcendental realm of eternity.

Gunton saw that this overemphasis on the inward was bound to produce adverse effects on the attempt to develop a thoroughly, biblically consistent, theological anthropology. The principle problem identified here was “the belief that we are more minds than we are bodies,

65 To advance this idea, Gunton referred to the image of “a mind pushing around a mechanical body” and Gilbert Ryle’s “ghost in the machine.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 100.

66 Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (London; New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2003), 13.

67 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 49; See also: Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology (Edinburgh; Grand Rapids: Edinburgh University Press; Eerdmans, 1998), 214–215; Gunton wrote, “that the Platonic view is with us still in deep-seated assumptions of our culture is shown, for example, by the widespread belief that if a computer could be made to think, it would be a kind of person, as if relationality and especially love were not also essentials of our being.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 60.

with all the consequences that that has: for example, in creating a non-relational ontology, so that we are cut off from each other and from the world by a tendency to see ourselves as imprisoned in matter.”⁶⁸ Specifically, this breach between the material and non-material realm was considered by Gunton to be the source of the deep confusion evident in contemporary definitions of human personhood.⁶⁹ His critique at this point is incisive: modern arguments suggest that:

to be a person is to be a mind: thought is what makes us human. It is an assumption that is almost universally made in our world. But are we not hearts as well as heads, bodies as well as minds? Could even a thinking machine be said to love? Can we truly relate to other human beings without a body—without eyes, vocal chords, hands and arms? Our civilization continues to be deeply confused about the nature of life, especially human life, because we are confused about what personal being truly is.⁷⁰

In this way, Gunton demonstrated deep concern about the way that inadequate views of human personhood are perpetuated by deficiencies in trinitarian thinking.

2) The Unaffected Person and a Non-Responsible Human Freedom

Related to the inadequacy of some modern conceptions of human personhood, Gunton also perceived that the Christian embrace of a neoplatonic impulse to interiorize serves as the precursor to the peculiarly Western infatuation with notions of individualism and human freedom.⁷¹ According to Gunton, the departure from a Cappadocian understanding of the person

68 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 101.

69 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 48.

70 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 13; Elsewhere, Gunton stated, “In our day, we meet additional forms of gnosticism, particularly in those science-related ethics which either suggest that we may do with the material universe—and that includes our bodies—what we like, because we are not really continuous with the material world; or that it is in effect the deity, so that human action is irrelevant to the way things really are because our genes (or whatever) call the tune. If therefore we think that our bodies are in a deep sense not really ourselves, either because we have absolute control of them or because they have absolute control of us, we shall be indifferent to the implications of sexual behaviour and the status of the foetus in the womb. Gnosticism is not only an ancient heresy but remains the alternative to the Christian doctrine of creation in all eras.” Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 227.

71 Gunton was particularly critical of a platonic dualism he observed in Western Christendom that viewed embodiment and human desires exclusively as a form of fallenness and, conversely, the human soul exclusively as transcendent. Gunton wrote, “Many are the laments to be heard about modern individualism, and they are justified.... There is a case for saying that a far greater danger in modern mass societies is what that expression implies: the loss of the many-sidedness of our humanity in the undifferentiated unity of the whole.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 86.

(i.e. as particularity in relation) gave rise to the modern conception of the person (as predominantly, an isolated individual).⁷² For Gunton, these oversights in Christian thought led Enlightenment thinkers to displace God. He wrote, “one of the roots of modern developments was the belief that human liberation was to be found in disengagement from any external grounding of life, whether in God or some metaphysical philosophy such as Platonism.”⁷³ Consequentially, he held that this perpetuated deficient views about human personhood.⁷⁴ That is to say, in Gunton’s view, the modern quest for human autonomy is misguided inasmuch as it has resulted in fragmentation and alienation in contemporary society that leaves people, ultimately, with a troubling sense of isolation in a world that unintentionally breeds homogeneity and collectivism.⁷⁵

This inward turn, Gunton thought, also predisposes people to relinquish their responsibility as affected persons rooted in the world. In contrast, it allows for an interpretation of the person as a free, unaffected, and existential character, floating in time and space.⁷⁶

72 Here, again, Augustine’s psychological analogies of the human soul in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity were interpreted by Gunton as inadvertently skewing theological anthropology in a predominantly individualistic direction. Along with Augustine, Gunton also indicted early sixth century philosopher, Boethius, as a source for later expressions of individualism. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 122; Similarly, Kärkkäinen has written, “After the patristic period, intellectual and individualistic tones began to emerge and take over in the yet-undefined understanding of the Latin term *persona*, as the definition of Boethius illustrates: ‘an individual substance of relational nature.’” Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “The Trajectories of the Contemporary ‘Trinitarian Renaissance’ in Different Contexts,” *Journal of Reformed Theology* 3 (2009): 12; Boethius, “Against Eutyches and Nestorius,” 3.

73 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 34.

74 In broad reference to these problems, Gunton spoke of the adoption of an “individualistic idea of the person as naked, choosing will: the rootless I of existentialism and consumerism.” Colin E. Gunton, “The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework,” in *Faithfulness and Fortitude* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 211.

75 Gunton also argued that, ironically, a modern preoccupation with individualism unintentionally perpetuates a herd mentality that dehumanizes the person and advances a conforming and apprehensive society. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 13, 30–34; Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 15; Quoting Robert B. Pippin, Gunton stated, “modernity promised us a culture of unintimidated, curious, rational, self-reliant individuals, and it produced ... a herd society, a race of anxious, timid, conformist ‘sheep’, and a culture of utter banality.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 13; For a similar critique of modernity, see also: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 86.

76 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 13–14, 103, 106; In

Accordingly, the human person is not primarily a living being in relation *to* others, but, rather, one that tends to be preoccupied with living in individualistic isolation *from* others.⁷⁷ Gunton saw this individual-centred paradigm as skewing people's responsibility toward God and their neighbours with whom they are created to be in relation.⁷⁸ Gunton argued, "individualism is a non-relational creed, because it teaches that I do not need my neighbour in order to be myself."⁷⁹ Understanding contemporary notions of individualism, then, as more liable to move people toward separation—person *from* person—rather than endorsing togetherness and communion, Gunton considered the modern embrace of individualism from a predominantly negative view.⁸⁰

He also argued that modern accounts of human freedom follow a similar ideological trajectory. He was critical of contemporary views of human freedom "as individual autonomy, an indelible character of the person, unaffected or relatively unaffected by relation to others."⁸¹ On the other hand, he considered that the significance of God's gifting, community practice and responsibility, and notions of human obedience were widely unrecognized.⁸² This was an indictment of the contemporary culture, Gunton bluntly concluded, because human freedom is conceived in a manner that "is essentially and irremediably non-relational."⁸³

this regard, Gunton joined contemporary philosophers such as Alasdair MacIntyre (see his view of contemporary emotivism in *After Virtue*), Charles Taylor (observing culture's social disengagement in *Sources of the Self*), Stanley Hauerwas (arguing for the incapacity to envision human relationality in *A Community of Character*), and Carver Vu (arguing for a problematic dualism in *Being and Individualism*). Gunton stated, "In our liberal culture we tend to think of acts as the undetermined effects of individual acts of will, forgetting that there is no act of will which does not arise out of a history—including a history of habitual behaviour." Gunton, "The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework," 218.

77 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 84–87.

78 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 119–136.

79 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 32.

80 There are those, however, such as Bernard Nausner, who have wondered if Gunton, in his assessment of contemporary human personhood, may have overlooked some positive theological elements that can be associated with discussion concerning individualism. See: Bernhard Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 62, no. 4 (January 1, 2009), 419.

81 Gunton, "The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework," 213.

82 Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, 97–98; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 61–66.

83 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 64.

In Gunton's view, therefore, the negative implications of modern perceptions of individualism and personal freedom for Western Christianity are widespread. This is made plain in the observation that, "God's relatedness is construed in terms of self-relatedness, with the result that it is as an individual that the human being is in the image of God, and therefore truly human. The outcome is another, theologically legitimated, version of the tendency to individualism."⁸⁴ Gunton also identified an overemphasis on the introspective inward turn, as undermining the trinitarian perspective of communion found in relation *to* God the Father, *through* Jesus Christ, and *with* the Holy Spirit.⁸⁵ Further, Gunton lamented how deficient views about individuality and human freedom advance the supposition that people, in some sense, are intrinsically able to draw from within themselves to achieve their own salvation.⁸⁶ Finally, Gunton noted the contemporary tendency to recognize human freedom as that which is sourced exclusively *within* individuals, rather than as a divine gift from God.⁸⁷ As I will discuss below, Gunton's remedy to these issues was a reappropriated contemporary trinitarian theology that incorporates notions of human particularity, individuality, and freedom, without abandoning relationality and human responsibility.

iii) Western Trinitarianism and the Understanding of the Created Order (Cosmology)

Gunton contended that a deficient trinitarian theology not only impacts Christian views concerning theology proper and human personhood, it also corresponds negatively to Christian perspectives about cosmology. Gunton considered a pervasive Hellenistic dualism that influenced theological notions of time and materiality as harmful to a thorough Western

84 Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*," 49.

85 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 122.

86 Gunton, "And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made," 36; Colin E. Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 150.

87 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 118; Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, 90–107.

Christian understanding of the created order.⁸⁸ These two themes, temporality and materiality, provide a framework for reflection in Gunton's analysis of dualistic contemporary views as it relates to cosmology.

1) Dualistic Cosmological Views about Time and Timelessness

Gunton remarked on a longstanding dualism that evokes disassociations, both ancient and contemporary, between views of time and timelessness. Gunton observed that "the mainstream philosophical tradition tries to present us with a choice: either time or eternity. This is a phenomenon known as dualism."⁸⁹ Such a dichotomy between a perfect, timeless eternity and an inferior time-bound earth, according to Gunton, was derived from dualism and produced a conclusive turn in favour of eternity.⁹⁰ The source and nature of the problem, in Gunton's view, is clear: "Because of the way in which Plato and his successors formulated the problem and essayed its solution, they gave birth to a world which was inevitably more confident in dealing with eternity than with time. Added to this must be the fact that when they spoke of eternity they tended to conceive it in terms of timelessness."⁹¹ The conception of time is inherently unreliable and disorderly⁹² and, therefore, in Gunton's view, is something from which Christian theology must be liberated.⁹³

Gunton believed this propensity toward eternity and the corresponding suspicion of the

88 Gunton was disposed to use the term "spatiality" and "temporality" synonymously with "materiality."

89 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 207.

90 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 80; Gunton, "Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom," 286–287.

91 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 104.

92 Gunton wrote, "Plato, as is well known, described time as the 'moving image of eternity'. What lies behind this definition? At the least, it might seem, there is an element of discomfort with the temporal and this-worldly." Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 103.

93 Gunton proclaimed, "[i]t is noticeable that once the philosophers begin their work, the full reality of time and that which has its being in time is frequently called into question.... From that time on, despite exceptions, the drive of the ancient intellect is to find reality beyond the temporal, in the timeless forms which either underlie or overlie the unreliable world of change and decay.... Put theologically, the truth seems to be that for the representative Greek mind time was not the realm in which to find redemption." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 79–80.

reliability of time-bound space,⁹⁴ was accepted within ancient Western Christianity and advanced, in particular, by two important theological interlocutors—Origen and Augustine.⁹⁵ According to Gunton, Origen was seemingly incapable of reconciling the material and eternal order. He, therefore, described the early Church Fathers' view of the temporal realm as "a rather unfortunate pedagogical necessity—rather than as in some way itself also redeemable."⁹⁶ It is widely acknowledged that Gunton was critical of the legacy bequeathed by Augustine to Western Christianity,⁹⁷ and this is evident in his harsh critique of Augustine on the matter of time.⁹⁸ Gunton wrote: "To be in time is, for Augustine, despite his confidence in the good divine creation, to be in a sphere of existence *finally lacking in reality*. Here lies the ambiguity, the two-headedness that was to fly apart so disastrously for Augustine's own Christian thought world some thousand years later." [italics in original]⁹⁹ Gunton lamented that such conceptions of time

94 Gunton stated, "Christian theology ... has for much of its history been somewhat ambivalent about the reality and value of time." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 80; Elsewhere, Gunton said: "It is concreteness that is lost in most quests for a concept of substance, which has almost always been for that which *underlies*: either a timeless substance or a timeless and usually homogeneous plurality of underlying atoms." [italics in original] Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 197.

95 Gunton, "Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom," 287; Gunton was also particularly disturbed with the way a discontinuity between the eternal, metaphysical world and the spatio-temporal realm of phenomena played out ontologically in the substance-oriented, classic theism of the medieval Christian period. Colin E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 2–3.

96 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 81; Gunton also chastised Origen's work for perpetuating the axiom of christology from above at the expense of an understanding of divine economy. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 35–43.

97 See, for example: Bradley Glen Green, "Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine: An Exposition and Analysis of the Theology of Colin Gunton in Light of Augustine's 'De Trinitate'" (Ph.D., Baylor University, 2000).

98 Gunton was especially critical of Augustine's notion of the disappearing present. He wrote, "As is well known, Augustine's analysis of his experience of time appears to deny reality to the present as the disappearing margin between past and future. The decisive step is the move inwards and away from drawing out the implications of his own teaching that time is created along with the world." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 82.

99 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 109–110; Elsewhere, Gunton announced, "Because for Augustine God is by definition timeless, it becomes difficult to conceive of any involvement of God in time.... Augustine tends to conclude that because creation is the act of the timeless God, then all God's acts must be conceived to be timeless." Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 83; See also: Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 120–122; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 82–83; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A*

are inherently unreliable and disorderly leading eschatologically, to a severely attenuated and exclusively-future orientation of a timeless eternity *beyond* the realm of life on earth.¹⁰⁰

While Gunton argued that a preference for the world of eternity existed in Western Christendom prior to the Enlightenment, he perceived a responsive dualistic preoccupation in the opposite direction in both modernity's displacement of God and its obsession with time-boundedness. In this way, the "modern world has affirmed in a unique and far-reaching way the priority for both being and life of time over eternity, space over infinity. We live in a this-worldly culture. Our time and space and not some distant heaven is the important reality."¹⁰¹ Modernity's apparent failure to balance the tension between time and timelessness, its displacement of God, and its exclusive focus on the time-bound here and now were points of concern for Gunton who identified a series of consequences which include, for example, a general unease with leisurely time¹⁰² and an obsessive, yet unsuccessful, quest to bring the future into the present.¹⁰³ The telling conclusion of such thought, he remarked, was that "modern culture is marked by a pathological inability to live in the present, while at the same time, as in the consumer culture, it is unable to live anywhere but in the present."¹⁰⁴

Study of Continuities in Christology, 110.

100 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 84, 90; Gunton, "Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom," 287.

101 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 74–75, 78–79; Gunton stated, "modern culture's tendency to make time absolute, in the sense of believing that only the temporal is real and can be known, is a direct outcome of ancient philosophical culture's pessimistic understanding of time and of its dualism of eternity and time." Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 110.

102 Gunton wrote, "The paradox is that there is to be found more genuine leisure in 'undeveloped' societies than in those dedicated to the creation of leisure.... [T]he creation of leisure has produced the precise opposite." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 76–77.

103 Gunton declared, "The anxiety to bring the future about is the cause of the frantic rush that is one mark of the modern failure to live serenely in time. Projects and lives are not allowed to mature in their own time, but must be catapulted into the future with ever increasing desperation because, as is well known, the future never comes." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 90.

104 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 99; Elsewhere, Gunton stated, "The paradox of modernity, however, is that however successful the understanding of time and space, the modern is less at home in the actual time and space of daily living than peoples less touched by the changes that have been listed." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 76.

Thus, in light of Christian antiquity's predilection toward eternity and modernity's obsession with time-boundedness, Gunton grew increasingly concerned with a schizophrenic dualism he observed in modern society.¹⁰⁵ Both extremes—an overemphasis on eternity or on time-boundedness—fail according to Gunton because, in the end, both conceive of time negatively and propagate an inability to think thoroughly about either time or eternity.¹⁰⁶ Gunton said,

The great difference between Kantian and Platonic ontology lies, then, in the tendency of the former to make the temporal order absolute and to deny the possibility of a knowledge of eternity. *But it is a difference within a shared set of presuppositions.* Kant's view of time is still dominated by the old Greek pessimism about its fleetingness.... Both programmes have as their background a despair of conceiving an order that belongs intrinsically *within* the phenomena of time. [italics in original]¹⁰⁷

The picture that unfolds is a contemporary Western Christianity influenced by one of two dualistic extremes in regard to notions of time. On the one hand, it is influenced by many centuries of a neoplatonic Christian theology that has preferenced non-material, timeless eternity over the material temporal world. On the other, it is subject to a pervasive modern culture that has rebelled against this view, displaced God, and sought cosmological answers exclusively in the realm of time-boundedness. The problem identified by Gunton, however, is that, in both, time is viewed as “fleeting and unreliable with change and decay.”¹⁰⁸

2) Dualistic Cosmological Views about Materiality and Immateriality

Regarding materiality, Gunton held that the introduction of Gnostic impulses into ancient

¹⁰⁵ Gunton wrote, “Both the negation of time by eternity and the attempt, by reaction, to make it the whole, are attempts to evade the consequences of time's supposed formlessness and irrationality.... To assume either that time is essentially fallen or that it is, through the action of the human mind, constrained to rationality, is to forfeit the capacity to conceive it as the locus of intrinsic meaning and rationality” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 120–121.

¹⁰⁶ Gunton described this as our inability to “hold firmly to the bipolarity of the New Testament's approach: that this life is both fully temporal and yet is the place where the eternal is present.” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 127.

¹⁰⁷ Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 107.

¹⁰⁸ Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 110.

Christendom led to an incompatibility between the material and immaterial world such that, “there are two areas of being, each with fixed laws, neither of which can have any relation to the other.”¹⁰⁹ It is generally held that Greek cosmology endorsed the superior status of the heavens and, likewise, the inferior status of the material world.¹¹⁰ Gunton was concerned that such Gnostic principles led to a Christian acquiescence to the idea that the material world possesses subordinate status to an eternal universe. Gunton traced the endorsement of this worldview to an early Christian theology that utilized the metaphysical categories of philosophy as conventional instruments at the expense of relationally-oriented ontologies.¹¹¹ In particular, it was Gunton’s conviction that inadequate ancient Christian views about materiality were advanced by Origen of Alexandria¹¹² and Augustine,¹¹³ each of whom, following the inclinations of Greek cosmology, were interpreted as prioritizing the concept of a transcendent higher world (observed as eternal) over against the spatiality and materiality of a lower world (observed as menial).¹¹⁴

Gunton considered the contemporary implications of this prioritization as extensive and problematic for Western Christendom. Firstly, he argued that a lingering preference toward transcendence leads to a Christian perception of God, not as the Creator of the world who creates *ex nihilo*, but, rather, as one who creates out of preexisting matter and then, disassociates from the world that has been created.¹¹⁵ This leads, Gunton thought, to a diminished view of the

109 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 90.

110 For Gunton’s interpretation of classic Greek cosmology, see: Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 24–36, 65–96.

111 Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom,” 284–287.

112 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 57–60, 168; Gunton wrote, “Origen was less able than Irenaeus to encompass within his thought the goodness of the material order.... Thus he argues that God creates the material world in order to find a place of correction for the fallen spirits, while the plurality he takes to be characteristic of the material order is a sign of its inferior way of being.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 81.

113 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 73–86, 92–96, 168.

114 Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, 147–150; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 35–43, 89; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 56, n.21.

115 For an extensive articulation of the way in which Gunton interpreted the historical development of the doctrine

intimate mediation between God and the world “because the created order is dependent on God, he can be conceived to interact with it. Dualism [on the other hand,] denies such an interaction, either explicitly or by conceiving the two in such a way that it becomes impossible consistently to relate to them.”¹¹⁶ Secondly, Gunton recognized that an overemphasis upon the non-material realm leads to uncertainty about the location of truth in the contingent realm of material things. Truth, it is commonly held, is found in dimensions *outside* the material world, particularly in the metaphysical principles that underlie those perceived truths.¹¹⁷

Gunton associated this skepticism concerning truth in the material realm with a medieval dualism between the material and immaterial world that was reinforced by the two source theory of knowledge—contrasting reason with faith. Gunton held that modernity’s displacement of God, in effect, only served to broaden the seemingly irreconcilable chasm between science and faith and further exacerbate the problem with truth.¹¹⁸ Gunton acknowledged with regret: “It is still widely believed that science and Christian faith are opposed in various ways, and particularly that science has replaced theology as a guide for life in the West.”¹¹⁹ Further, Gunton also drew broad practical correlations between the historical priority granted to eternity and the human eschewing of ecological responsibility,¹²⁰ the vulgarizing of modern art,¹²¹ and the

of creation and its correlation to the doctrine of the Trinity, see: Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*.

116 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 86.

117 Gunton stated, “Corresponding to the dualistic division of the world into the sensible and the intelligible realms is an epistemological dualism of the contingent and the necessary. Contingent truths are the truths arrived at on the basis of sense experience; necessary truths derive from reason.” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 139.

118 Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom,” 288.

119 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 102–103; Gunton wrote, “The effective exclusion of the doctrine of the Trinity from the structuring of the Christian doctrine of creation is therefore at the root of its Babylonian captivity and of the apparent mutual exclusion of theology and science.” Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 116.

120 Gunton remarked, “[The ecological crisis] is undoubtedly exacerbated by doctrines which teach a dualistic doctrine according to which the created order is ontologically so different from us, for example related as a machine is to its maker, that its treatment becomes a matter of moral indifference.” Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 211.

Christian propensity to view redemption in the eternality of a distant, future heaven (and subsequent abandonment of the material world).¹²² All this, Gunton argued, could be traced well beyond a Newtonian dualism in a post-Kantian Enlightenment to a longstanding rupture in ancient Western Christendom between the eternal and the material world.¹²³

This section has traced correlations that Gunton made between deficient theological views in Western Christianity and contemporary perceptions in three significant areas including the theology of God, human personhood, and cosmology. In particular, it has explored Gunton's argument that the introduction of neoplatonic impulses into Western theology creates myriad problems leading to severely attenuated and dualistic views about God, personhood, and the world. The next section, then, represents Gunton's efforts to overcome these contemporary theological problems by reappropriating realities associated with doctrine of the Trinity.

B) Gunton's View of the Doctrine of the Trinity

Colin Gunton articulated an alternative view intended to correct what he perceived to be pervasive theological deficiencies and rampant dualism in contemporary theologies of God, anthropology, and cosmology. He did so from a thorough understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. If Western Christianity has been negatively influenced by an ontological priority for unity and divine oneness at the expense of particularity and divine threeness, Gunton understood a renewed emphasis on the structure of the doctrine of the Trinity as a way of overcoming these imbalances. Borrowing from the insight of the nineteenth century philosopher, Samuel Taylor

121 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 66–70, 98–99; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 228–234.

122 Describing the misperceived abandonment of the material world by some, Gunton stated, “because the universe is temporally limited, it is pointless. For all the mysterious rationality of its structures, it is fundamentally meaningless because it is destined to disappear.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 98; See also: Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 1–12, 43, 56–61.

123 Gunton wrote, “post-Kantian dualism and the dualistic thinking of the Greeks that provided the background of much ancient Christology—as well as the foreground of ancient heresy—are one and the same intellectual phenomenon.” Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 87.

Coleridge,¹²⁴ Gunton argued that the doctrine of the Trinity represents the “idea of ideas” (*Idearum*)—the penultimate theological truth that generates and gives rise to other universal insights he called open transcendentals.¹²⁵ Gunton perceived the following open transcendentals as most significant: relationality, particularity (or substantiality), and *perichoresis*.¹²⁶

Relationality, he argued, preserves divine oneness, asserts the ontological reality that all things are beings in relation, and emphasizes the social and communal nature of shared, relational beings.¹²⁷ Particularity, on the other hand, upholds the genuine and substantial concreteness of things and prevents the uniqueness of hypostatic being, what Gunton referred to often as the many, from being consumed by the homogenizing strain of the one.¹²⁸ *Perichoresis*, then, was a crucial concept for Gunton since it provides a way of speaking about interrelationality without denigrating particularity or unity through an emphasis on distinction-in-relation.¹²⁹ Gunton argued that, together, these complementary and universal concepts “can be predicated of all being by virtue of the fact that God is creator and the world is creation.”¹³⁰ As such, Gunton perceived relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis* as providing a way to speak about the ontology of God as well as contributing a framework for an adequate understanding of human personhood and the created world.¹³¹ What follows in this section, therefore, is Gunton’s

124 For more on Coleridge, see: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Notes on Waterland’s Vindication of Christ’s Divinity,” in *The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. William Greenough Thayer Shedd, vol. 5 (New York: Harper and Row, 1853), 404–416; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1819–1826*, ed. Kathleen Coburn and Merton Christensen, vol. 4 (London: Routledge, 1990), 5294.

125 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 144, 161–162.

126 Gunton contended these open transcendentals are consistent with the character of a Christian deity who makes Himself known. Gunton wrote, “A world that owes its origin to a God who makes it with direct reference to one who was to become incarnate—part of that world—is a world that is a proper place for human beings to use their senses, minds and imaginations, and to expect that they will not be wholly deceived in doing so.” Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, 49; See also: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 107–109.

127 See: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 210–231.

128 See: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 180–209.

129 See: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 155–179.

130 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 136–137.

131 Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” 110.

argumentation for these open transcendentals—relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis*—as universal trinitarian constants in correspondence with the three main topics addressed in the previous section—the theology of God, human personhood, and cosmology.

i) The Triune God's Ontological Being and Gunton's Open Transcendentals

Against a theological approach that describes God by negation, Gunton advanced the idea that the nature of God, though obviously not exhaustively revealed, can be comprehended, to a limited extent, by the human mind. The point is made clear by analogy.

We know from—for example—a good biography that we can learn a great deal about another human being. A biography is a kind of definition by narrative, yet the narrative is not the whole. In an adequate biography it will constitute also the grounds for an account of character, by which is meant something impressed by the life on the basic material which was given at birth, so that at the end we can make an at least provisional judgment on the kind of person with whom we are dealing. Giving us the freedom to make such a judgment about God is the function of the doctrine of the immanent Trinity.¹³²

In this respect, Gunton gained assurance in drawing trinitarian conclusions about God's ontological being in association with the open transcendentals of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis*.

1) Relationality and the Triune God's Ontological Being

Gunton determined that the first of these trinitarian open transcendentals, relationality, has its source in the fundamental communion found in the very nature of the Godhead, and, subsequently, also advanced in the study of christology and pneumatology.¹³³ Of great importance to Gunton's trinitarian enterprise was the idea of the relationality of the members of the Godhead by which the divine persons of the Trinity experience dynamic being in

¹³² Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 95; Elsewhere, Gunton wrote, "We know *who* God is from what he does ... so that what God does in time is shown to be a function of what he is in eternity. The outcome is that historical revelation and eternal being correspond to one another." [italics in original] Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 97.

¹³³ Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 155–179; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 87–99.

communion.¹³⁴ Gunton wrote,

Father, Son and Spirit are eternally what they are by virtue of what they are from and to one another. Being and relation can be distinguished in thought, but in no way separated ontologically; they are rather part of the ontological dynamic. The general point, to use the words of John Zizioulas, is that the being of God is not a blank unity, but a being in communion. To adapt Gregory of Nazianzus, we may say that to think of divine being is to have one's mind necessarily drawn to the three persons, to think of the three is to be led ineluctably to a concept of shared, relational, being.¹³⁵

In another description of this principle of divine relationality, he declared, “the relation of the Son to the Father in God’s inner being is in some way mediated by the Spirit. The Son is—we might say—enabled to be the Son by virtue of the way the Spirit realizes and perfects the love between him and the Father. Only so are the three truly one God.”¹³⁶ These statements reinforce the significance of the concept of divine relationality for Gunton’s trinitarian understanding of the triune God.¹³⁷

Christologically, Gunton espoused the notion of God’s relational character in his depiction of the economy of Christ as the action of a Saviour who, compelled by love, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, radically and sinlessly *involved* Himself in the created order.¹³⁸ Specifically, it was the incarnational christology of Edward Irving¹³⁹ and John Owen¹⁴⁰ that

134 Here, the influence of John Zizioulas’ trinitarian theology upon Gunton’s work is unmistakable. See also: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 95–96.

135 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 214.

136 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 101.

137 While Gunton drew upon several interlocutors to advance this notion of divine relationality, Richard of Saint Victor and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were most significant. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 107–109.

138 As mentioned above, however, Gunton tried to avoid a dualistic extreme that exclusively favoured a christology from below perspective. In *Yesterday and Today*, he more clearly described his christological approach. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*.

139 Edward Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving*, ed. Gavin Carlyle, vol. 5 (Ann Arbor, MI: Alexander Strahan, 1865), 115–122, 147–160; Irving as quoted in: Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology,” 359–376; Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, 52–53; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 223–224; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 153–154, 190–193; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 67–68.

140 John Owen, “Of Toleration,” in *The Works of John Owen*, ed. W H. Goold, vol. III (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1862), 163–206; Owen as quoted in: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 68–69, 74–76; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 85–88; Colin E. Gunton, “The Church on Earth: The Roots of Community,” in *On Being the Church* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), 48–80; Colin E.

guided Gunton toward these conclusions about the relational functionality of the economy of Christ. In Irving, and against a pervasive theology of christology from above, Gunton embraced a christology that emphasized the full humanity and sociality of Christ, yet also provided space for the reciprocal relationality of the eternal Son to the Father and Holy Spirit.¹⁴¹ Utilizing Irving's arguments, Gunton also affirmed the trinitarian realization of the shared divine acts of God the Father as Sender and, likewise, the divine act of God the Holy Spirit as Enabler in the incarnational life of Christ. Describing this relationality, Gunton wrote, "[He] is the divine Son, eternally one with the Father and yet also become human, being enabled to become so and remain truly so by the action of the Spirit through whom Jesus refers his being and action to their source in God his Father."¹⁴² The trinitarian picture that emerges in Gunton's christological work, is that which portrays Jesus in shared, perfect communion with the divine members of the Godhead reflecting that relationality consistently through the acts of the incarnation, resurrection, and in his anticipated eschatological return.¹⁴³

Gunton, "John Owen and John Zizioulas on the Church," in *Theology Through the Theologians: Selected Essays 1972-1995* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 187-205; Colin E. Gunton, "Creation and Mediation in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson: An Encounter and a Convergence," in *Trinity, Time, and Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 86, n.16; Gunton's embrace of Owen appeared to have been primarily influenced by his supervision of Alan Spence and Graham W.P. McFarlane, both students of Gunton at King's College, who have gone on to become prominent theologians of the christological work of John Owen and Edward Irving. Jenson, "A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton's Thinking," 15; Christoph Schwöbel, "The Shape of Colin Gunton's Theology: On the Way towards a Fully Trinitarian Theology," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 193.

141 Gunton gathered that, "the Word became flesh without ceasing to be Word ... without depriving the historical person of Christ of real humanity." Gunton, "Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology," 361; See also: Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 102; For Gunton, it was important that the study of christology fully accept, "the historical particularity of Jesus and the detailed lineaments of his story." Gunton, "Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology," 361.

141 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 180.

142 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 180; Gunton stated, "[Jesus] is like the Son of a human father solely in being personally and so 'genetically' related to him. The tradition says that he is begotten, not in time as is a human child, but eternally, for both the Father and the Son are what they are eternally and immutably. There is also a measure of reciprocity in the relation. The Son derives his being from the Father, yet in such a way that the Father is only himself as Father of *this* Son. There is no other God than the one we meet in the self-giving and reconciling figure of Jesus of Nazareth." [italics in original] Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 115.

143 Gunton wrote, "God in Christ gives himself to be experienced in such a way that knowledge not simply of a

Trinitarian relationality is also intrinsically related to Gunton's depiction of the divine ontological communion associated with the Holy Spirit, both as the empowerment of Christ and as the "perfecting cause" of the Creator.¹⁴⁴ It is God the Holy Spirit, for example, who, Gunton argued, empowered Christ's obedience.¹⁴⁵ Gunton stated, "The Spirit is the one who makes Jesus of Nazareth to be the particular human being that he is."¹⁴⁶ Similarly, Gunton considered the relationality between the Holy Spirit and the Father as intrinsically tied to the perfecting acts of God, in creation and eschatologically, as creation is brought to its ultimate destiny. Gunton wrote, "the Spirit is the one by whose agency God the Father justifies, sanctifies, and, at the last, raises from the dead through and with his Son. As what we may call the eschatological member of the Trinity, as the one who brings about in advance the perfection of particular created actions and things, the Spirit brings the freedom of God especially to attention."¹⁴⁷

Thus, the relationality of the Godhead—as a being in communion—between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was a fundamental theological building block in Gunton's trinitarian

human figure is granted, but through him knowledge of God as he is in himself." Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 179.

144 By perfecting cause, Gunton had in mind the Spirit's eschatological role of bringing creation to its intended destiny within the context of God's divine project. Gunton said, "[The Holy Spirit] is *God's eschatological otherness* from the world, God freeing the created world for its true destiny—and so, to use Basil's phrase, its perfecting cause." [italics in original] Colin E. Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 199; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 81; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 187; Terry J. Wright has indicated that Gunton's description of the Holy Spirit as perfecting cause is most likely owing to Gunton's reading of Basil of Caesarea, On the Holy Spirit, 15.38. Terry J. Wright, "Colin Gunton on Providence: Critical Commentaries," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 147, n.6.

145 Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 120; Colin E. Gunton, *A Brief Theology of Revelation*, Warfield Lectures (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 120; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 143; Gunton, "Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving's Christology," 167; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 119.

145 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 102.

146 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 102.

147 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 155; Gunton wrote, "The Spirit never works independently of the Son, for it is the latter to whom he is sent to bear witness. 'By the Spirit through the Son' is the necessary specification of all his action. But, as we have seen, the Son's work *is* that of the Father, so that in referring things through the Son the Spirit is, by that very action, referring them to the Father, from whom and to whom are all things." [italics in original] Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 180.

project. A cogent articulation of this divine relationality is to be found in the following statement:

[T]he Fourth Gospel is rightly considered as the completion of a process in which a conception of the divine being-in-relation comes strongly into view. The Father gives the Son, whose being and will is inseparable from his. He and the Father are one, while he is also sent to do the will of the Father on earth. After his glorification, the Son will ask the Father to send the Spirit who will perform towards the church and the world similar and yet distinct functions, again without a suggestion that anything is *individual* action. God appears to be conceived neither as a collectivity nor as an individual, but as a communion, a unity of persons in relation. [italics in original]¹⁴⁸

2) Particularity and the Triune God's Ontological Being

In the process of advancing a notion of divine relationality within the Godhead, however, Gunton sought to avoid undermining the particularity of the divine persons as three unique *hypostases*—persons in relation.¹⁴⁹ According to Gunton, “a theology giving central place to particularity is precisely what the modern age needs.”¹⁵⁰ It was to this end that Gunton emphasized the idea of particularity as another universal open transcendental with importance for a proper understanding of the triune God's ontological being. In this way, Gunton's work may be viewed as a thorough-going trinitarian theology, one in which he promoted the idea of distinct individuation (i.e. space) among the particular divine persons, without losing the recognition that each one intimately relies on the unique impact of the other to secure that particularity.¹⁵¹ In fact, in Gunton's own words, conceiving of God as three persons in communion necessitates “a conception of *personal space*: the space in which three persons are for and from each other in their otherness. They thus confer particularity upon and receive it from one another.... Father,

148 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 215.

149 Gunton often utilized the terms “particularity” and “substantiality” interchangeably. See: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 180–209; Gunton wrote, “what might be called the *substantiality* of God resides not in his abstract being, but in the concrete particulars that we call the divine persons and in the relations by which they mutually constitute one another.” [italics in original] Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 191.

150 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 181.

151 See: Najeeb G. Awad, “Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood,” *Journal of Reformed Theology* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 21.

Son and Spirit through the shape—the *taxis*—of their inseparable relatedness confer particularity and freedom on each other. That is their personal being.” [italics in original]¹⁵² In this respect, the hypostatic particularity of each divine person was not merely the appearance of difference for Gunton, but constituted a very real substantial difference in the form of the concrete particularity of each divine person.¹⁵³ This emphasis on particularity highlights that “God is what he is only as a communion of persons, the particularity of whom remains at the centre of all he is, for each has his own distinctive way of being.”¹⁵⁴

Here, it is important to note that the works of the Cappadocian Fathers and Irenaeus were the most significant source material for Gunton’s formulation on divine particularity. From the Cappadocians, Gunton affirmed the personal particularity of the Father, Son, and Spirit, specifically seizing on the idea of particularity in relationship with respect to an ancient understanding of *hypostasis*.¹⁵⁵ Gunton saw that a Cappadocian understanding of person serves as an important corrective to contemporary interpretations of this term that are primarily individualistic in nature and deny any correlation between the universal constants of particularity and universality (i.e. what Gunton meant by the *one* and the *many*).¹⁵⁶ In Irenaeus, Gunton

152 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 110.

153 Gunton wrote, “It is an important feature of the being of persons that they have the capacity to be themselves and not a function or clone of another. That is the point of the stress placed on particularity.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 190.

154 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 190; Gunton’s idea of divine particularity emphasizing concrete substance, directly opposed abstract notions of God sourced in philosophical speculation and manifested in varying forms of modalism.

155 For a thorough overview of Gunton’s Cappadocian arguments, see: Christoph Schwöbel, *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on Divine Being and Act* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995); Gunton stated, “The notion of there being three persons in God is problematic for us, because we think that person means individual in the modern sense of one whose being is defined *over against*, even in opposition to, other individuals. (Hence, of course, the essentially competitive ideology of much modern social order.) The trinitarian notion of person does incorporate one aspect of the notion of individuality, because it holds that each person is unique and irreplaceable. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, and all three of them are essential to God’s being as God. On the other hand, these three are, while distinct from one another, not in competition, as in modern individualism, but entirely for and from one another. There is accordingly an orientation to the other within the eternal structure of God’s being.” [italics in original] Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 186–187.

156 See: Awad, “Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood,” 18–19.

appreciated the emphasis on the particularity of the Father, Son, and Spirit which avoided any idea of a fourth deity lurking behind this divine economy.¹⁵⁷

Among contemporary theologians, Gunton's perspective on divine particularity shared points in common *with*, but was also distinct *from*, thoughts expressed by John Zizioulas and T.F. Torrance. In Gunton's opinion, Torrance's work tended to overemphasize divine unity and equality to the endangerment of particularity.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, Zizioulas' argument for the particularity of the Father was equally unattractive, in Gunton's judgment, because it led to an overemphasis upon eternal causation and, by inadvertent implication, the subordination of the Son and Spirit.¹⁵⁹ His concerns in this respect were made clear: "While [Zizioulas'] claim preserves the due priority of the Father in the Godhead, I do not believe that it allows for an adequate theology of the mutual constitution of Father, Son and Spirit."¹⁶⁰ Nonetheless, a careful reading of Gunton's later work will find evidence of a subtle shift toward Zizioulas' position.

157 See: Jenson, "A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton's Thinking," 13; Gunton posited, "If the Son and the Spirit *are*, as his two hands, God the Father in action, then they are the *eternal* God present to the world. The reason is that they are not manifestations of a possibly different deity filtered through human experience; they are rather God in his action given, by God himself, to the communally mediated experience, centred on worship, of those who he has called." [italics in original] Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 184.

158 Gunton wrote, "To place the concept of being in the centre ... is to endanger the particularity of the persons." An unpublished manuscript of Gunton as cited in: Paul Cumin, "The Taste of Cake: Relation and Otherness with Colin Gunton and the Strong Second Hand of God," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 77.

159 For Gunton's arguments on qualified subordinationism, see: Gunton, "And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made," 46–47; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 77–78–82–85.

160 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 196–197; See also: Schwöbel, "The Shape of Colin Gunton's Theology: On the Way towards a Fully Trinitarian Theology," 197; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 181–184; Gunton, "Persons and Particularity," 97–107; Gunton said, "The economic or functional subordination suggested by the two hands imagery—the inescapable implication of the biblical story that the Son obeys and the Spirit is sent—does not entail a correspondingly subordinationist theology, because Son and Spirit are, as obedient and sent, truly God. The Father may be, in the traditional language, the fount of the Trinity, but the Son and the Spirit are equally constitutive of the eternal being of the one God." Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 186; Miroslav Volf has expressed similar apprehensions about Zizioulas' hierarchical monarchy in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity. Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Sacra Doctrina: Christian Theology for a Postmodern Age (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 78–80, 87.

This was due, no doubt, to Gunton's increasing insistence on divine particularity,¹⁶¹ a position that he held dear because, in his view, to lose the emphasis on divine particularity was a calamity.¹⁶²

Consistent with his approach to the question of divine relationality, Gunton advocated the importance of divine particularity while avoiding eternal subordinationalism in the Godhead by placing an increased emphasis upon the unique personhood of the Holy Spirit. On that very point, Gunton grew increasingly concerned with any attempt to limit the place, function, and particularity of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶³ Against such views, he remained convinced that it is the Holy Spirit, as perfecting cause of the triune Godhead who mediates relationality among the divine persons without sacrificing particularity.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, the Spirit was viewed by Gunton as the creative and protective force for divine particularity in contradiction to the tendency of Western Christianity to homogenize God's ontological being.¹⁶⁵ The point at stake here is that Gunton grasped the significance of personal mediation (i.e. of the one divine person to the other) as the expression of both relationality and particularity. In this view, relationality is a function of particular persons—firstly between divine persons and, subsequently, as will be discussed below, between human beings. In his own words, “we can understand the Spirit's distinctive mode of action as the one who maintains the particularity, distinctiveness, uniqueness, through the Son, of each within the unity.”¹⁶⁶

161 For this argument, see especially: Cumin, “The Taste of Cake: Relation and Otherness with Colin Gunton and the Strong Second Hand of God,” 75–80.

162 Gunton wrote, “Old Testament writers' insistence on the unity of God was in no way inconsistent with their attribution to him of a wide range of differentiation in his action. God is not a blank unity, but a richly diverse personal agent whose works in the created world are mediated by his word, his wisdom, his glory, his name, his Spirit.” Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 183.

163 Gunton, *A Brief Theology of Revelation*, 119.

164 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 181–186.

165 Awad, “Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood,” 19–20.

166 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 206.

3) *Perichoresis* and the Triune God's Ontological Being

A deliberate emphasis upon relationality and particularity, as two universal open transcendentals, afforded Gunton the opportunity to express a consistently trinitarian theology. Thus, for Gunton, the trinitarian fulcrum that balances the important universal concepts of divine relationality and particularity is the third transcendental of *perichoresis* (i.e. unity in particularity).¹⁶⁷ It was Gunton's view that imbalance in the direction of either relationality (i.e. overemphasis upon divine unity inevitably leading to modalism) or particularity (i.e. overemphasis upon divine threeness inevitably leading to tritheism) can be avoided by employing the concept of *perichoresis* as the means through which relationality and particularity may be, simultaneously, held apart and held together, within a theology of the divine Trinity.

Gunton utilized an understanding of *perichoresis* as the interpenetrational, mutual indwelling of each of the divine persons by the other as the means by which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give and receive from each other in mutual, dynamic reciprocity. The Godhead, understood *perichoretically*, opens the possibility for three particular divine persons to co-exist in divine relationality.¹⁶⁸ In an effort to clarify what, exactly, was meant by this "unity of persons in relation," Gunton argued that *perichoresis* "implies that the three persons of the Trinity exist only in reciprocal eternal relatedness. God is not God apart from the way in which Father, Son and Spirit in eternity give to and receive from each other what they essentially are. The three do not merely coinhere, but dynamically constitute one another's being."¹⁶⁹

By the same token, Gunton understood that the universal concept of *perichoresis* does not repress the ontological independence—or dynamic plurality—of the divine persons. He remarked that, "If the notion of perichoresis helps us to rethink the matter, it is by virtue of the

167 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 163–179.

168 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 97.

169 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 164.

fact that, although it envisages close relatedness, it never does so to the detriment of particularity.”¹⁷⁰ As such, *perichoresis* functions, in Gunton’s view, as the ideal universal concept through which divine particularity is preserved from becoming overwhelmed by homogeneity, and divine relationality avoids being overcome by the threat of individualism.

In his application of this understanding of *perichoresis* to the doctrine of God primarily, Gunton relied heavily upon the work of the Cappadocian Fathers. For Gunton, the Cappadocian legacy to Christian theology consisted in a unique way of speaking of the interdependent reciprocity between the Father, Son, and Spirit.¹⁷¹ Acknowledging this Cappadocian influence, Gunton wrote, “In its origin, [*perichoresis*] was a way of showing the ontological interdependence and reciprocity of the three persons of the Trinity: how they were only what they were by virtue of their interrelation and interanimation, so that for God to be did not involve an absolute simplicity but a unity deriving from a dynamic plurality of persons.”¹⁷² In this way, Gunton saw that the theology of the Cappadocians afforded a much more effective way to preserve the tension between the competing interests of the one and the many than that offered by Western theologies.¹⁷³ The extent of Gunton’s respect for the Cappadocian implementation of *perichoresis* is made clear in the following statement:

If we ask how three can be one, the answer is that *this* God is one only by virtue of the way in which Father, Son and Spirit mutually and reciprocally give to and receive from each other everything that they are. The Cappadocian Fathers coined the concept of *perichoresis* to characterize this unique form of being. God is ‘a sort of continuous and indivisible community’ says the letter usually attributed to Basil of Caesarea.... God is only what he is as three persons whose being is so closely bound up with one another that they together constitute one God. [*italics in original*]¹⁷⁴

170 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 169.

171 Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” 98–100; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 94–95.

172 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 152.

173 Perhaps overstated, Gunton wrote, “the truly creative achievement of all trinitarian thought was that of the trinitarian ontology produced by the Cappadocians.” Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, 232.

174 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 186; Basil of Caesarea, *Letters*, vol. 38, 4.

It was this notion of *perichoresis*, along with relationality and particularity that Gunton utilized to advance his trinitarian theology of God. In Gunton's view, a proper conceptualization of these universal transcendentals provided an ontological framework for an understanding of the doctrine of the immanent Trinity. Gunton's retrieval of these transcendentals as universal markers led him, as we will now see, to also apply them to other levels of reality, including theological anthropology and cosmology.

ii) Theological Anthropology and Gunton's Open Transcendentals

For Gunton, these transcendentals were not merely ideas that apply exclusively to the ontological being of God, but they are also universal markers that contribute to an understanding of other levels of reality. In this respect, he conceived these trinitarian open transcendentals as resources for overcoming deficient modern views about anthropology. Without these trinitarian concepts, Gunton held "major dimensions of life in the world become incapable of adequate conception."¹⁷⁵ That is, in their fullness, Gunton contended that relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis* provide an adequate trinitarian explanation for what it means to be human, insofar as human personhood is best understood as being in relation.

1) Relationality and Human Personhood

According to Gunton, inadequate views of the doctrine of the Trinity lead to myriad underdeveloped perceptions of anthropology, while proper ontological notions about God's triunity offer compelling insight into the sociality of human personhood. Here, he was convinced that knowledge of God and knowledge of human relationality are intrinsically related because, "Our views of what it is to be human are projected from what we believe about God."¹⁷⁶ As such, Gunton argued that, if God is being in communion, then it follows that relationality is a

¹⁷⁵ Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 184.

¹⁷⁶ Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 3.

fundamental component of what it means to be a human.¹⁷⁷ Gunton wrote, “the eternal relatedness of God gives form and meaning to our human reality as beings in relation to each other.... [H]uman life is conceived not as the play of impersonal and mechanistic forces, not as the play of impotent assertion of a false divinity, not as a collection of isolated atomic individuals, but as a community where the law of our being is worked out, however stumblingly and inadequately.”¹⁷⁸ It is from this understanding of what it means to be human that Gunton frequently argued the image of God in humanity is clearly revealed in the relationality associated with persons as dynamic beings in relation.¹⁷⁹

Such a definition is appropriate, he held, because humans are, by nature and virtue of the fact that they bear the *imago Dei*, relational beings.¹⁸⁰ Human relationality, therefore, is oriented in two distinct relational directions. First and foremost, Gunton held that human personhood is vertically-oriented toward right relationship with God. This divine-human communion—what was intended by the biblical term “covenant”—is a concept that Gunton believed to aptly describe the dynamic potentiality of social relations between God and humans.¹⁸¹ It is in this sense that Gunton remained convinced that adherence to this divine-human social covenant is the means through which human beings find their greatest human fulfillment.

The second focus of human relationality is horizontal, emphasizing relationships between

177 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 59.

178 Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, 107.

179 Gunton said “To be created in the image of God places us first in relation to human beings, especially to the ‘other’ that man and woman are created to be; and second to the rest of the created order.” Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 41; Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 84–87.

180 Gunton stated, “A person, we must learn and relearn, can be defined only in terms of his or her relations with other persons, and not in terms of a prior universal or non-personal concept like species-being, evolution or, for that matter, subsistent relation.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 96.

181 Gunton wrote, “It is significant here that the Bible has given us a word for social relations which allows neither a purely individualist nor a merely legal construal. It is that of covenant. *Covenant* expresses above all the calling of the human race into free and joyful partnership with God, and so with each other.” [italics in original] Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 222 See also: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 113.

human beings.¹⁸² Drawing on the work of John Macmurray, Gunton argued that, “*As persons we are only what we are in relation to other persons.*” [italics in original]¹⁸³ Moreover, a human person does not merely enter into relations with other human persons; rather, according to Gunton, persons are actually “constituted by one another in relations.”¹⁸⁴ Describing Adam’s discovery of this constituted relationality in the Garden of Eden, Gunton wrote, “Humankind is a social kind. Adam can find no true fellow creature among the animals, none that will enable him truly to be himself. It is only when he can rejoice in the fellowship of one who is a true other-in-relation that he is able to transcend the merely *individual* state that is a denial of human fullness.” [italics in original]¹⁸⁵ These statements not only provide insight into the importance of human relationality to Gunton’s trinitarian theological project, they also reveal that he remained convinced that human persons discover their ontological being in communion as social creatures.

Furthermore, Gunton believed that human relationality has eschatological significance.¹⁸⁶ He argued that developments in our understanding of human personhood and relationality, by nature, are forward-looking. That is to say, they do not point backward to a supposedly perfect relationality in Eden; rather, they point forward toward eschatological perfection. Human life and purpose, therefore, “reaches its perfection only at its end and so needs time to become what it truly is.”¹⁸⁷ Personhood, then, is not something that is an abstract ontological property of a human’s creatureliness; rather, it is something that is being realized relationally and is teleological in orientation. In this respect, Gunton believed that human persons are not yet

182 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 113–114.

183 John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), 213; Macmurray as cited in: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 88; See also: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 169–170.

184 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 214; Gunton wrote, “what we and our institutions are is largely a matter of persons in relationship.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 83.

185 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 216.

186 For this idea, Gunton was indebted to Zizioulas. See: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 115.

187 Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 136.

entirely what they will become, for “personhood is being that is to be realised, and whose final realisation will come only when God is all in all.... The image is not a static possession, but comes to be realised in the various relationships in which human life is set.”¹⁸⁸

A number of implications flow from Gunton’s view of human relationality. Firstly, it compels people to uphold and recognize their human responsibility to each other because “we are in the image of God when, like God but in dependence on his giving, we find our reality in what we give to and receive from others in human community.”¹⁸⁹ Secondly, it reinforces the importance of worship as a relational and covenantal practice between divine and human persons. Gunton declared, “To be a human being is to be related to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit, and it is the character of Christian experience to realise that relationship.”¹⁹⁰ Thirdly, an emphasis on dynamic relationality provides motivation for continued investment in human relationships with a future orientation. Gunton insisted these assumptions can be nurtured by a proper understanding of human relationality in correlation with an ontological understanding of God.

2) Particularity and Human Personhood

According to Gunton, relationality is a universal marker that provides insight into what it means to be fully human. In a similar way, he applied the universal reality of particularity, emphasizing temporal and material distinctiveness, to advance this position.¹⁹¹ Gunton justified this conviction by suggesting that human personhood consistently evidences a form of universal particularity that is ontologically correlated to the particularity of the divine persons. His

188 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 60.

189 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 59.

190 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 6.

191 Gunton wrote, “This is, I think, a trinitarian principle. The uniqueness of every human person is an implication of the facts that the Father is not the Son, etc., and that the love of the three persons of the Trinity is that which establishes them each in their particular being.” Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 44 n.12.

argument runs as follows, “if persons are, like the persons of the Trinity and by virtue of their creation in the image of the triune God, *hypostases*, concrete and particular, then their particularity too is central to their being. It is not an unfortunate accident but our glory that we are other: each unique and different.”¹⁹²

Gunton’s notion of personhood, therefore, was rooted in an understanding of the particularity of persons created with different virtue gifting, material substance, temporality, and bodily concreteness.¹⁹³ In this way, persons are conceived as inhabiting particular material and temporal space, a view which stands in stark contrast to neoplatonic views of the person that tend to emphasize human personhood as primarily residing in an isolated soul. Over against the depersonalizing tendencies that Gunton saw in the legacy imparted by these neoplatonic views, he wrote that the “person as a being in relation is one whose materiality is in no way *ontologically* problematic, whatever problems derive from the way in which we relate in actual facts to others.” [italics in original]¹⁹⁴ Gunton utilized an understanding of substantiality to stress that people are, in fact, material beings with distinct and particular realities.¹⁹⁵ He posited, “The time has therefore come to raise again the question of substance ... and to claim that people and things, in dependence upon a God understood substantially and not abstractly, are also to be understood as substantial beings, having their own distinct and particular existence, *by virtue of and not in face of their relationality* to the other.” [italics in original]¹⁹⁶ It is clear, therefore, that Gunton thought human embodiment is not something to be downplayed or avoided, but rather a

192 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 196.

193 Gunton said, “[P]ersons ... are hypostatic in the sense of being substantial particulars, and rendered such by the patterns of relations that constitute them what they distinctly are: with God in the first instance and with other temporally and spatially related particulars in the second.... Everyone and every thing is what it uniquely is as hypostatic being; as we are often told, no two blades of grass are alike. It is our modern homogenizing culture that has tried to improve on the work of God.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 203.

194 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 60.

195 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 193–194.

196 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 194.

reality to be prioritized in relation to human likeness in the image of God.¹⁹⁷ In short, for Gunton, human persons are embodied beings and therefore human bodiliness matters. This emphasis led him to view attacks against the human body (e.g. murder, abortion, human cloning, and mutilation of the body) as particularly heinous.¹⁹⁸

A closely related matter, as will be addressed below, was Gunton's view of human personhood and time. In order to enhance his argument in favour of human particularity, Gunton stressed the notion that particular persons are substantially located in history. The value and affirmation of human-boundedness in time was an important theme for Gunton with references found throughout his whole published corpus.¹⁹⁹ Over against notions of time as an abstract projection of the human mind, Gunton drew anthropological correlations between human particularity and time-bound reality.

In laying stress upon the concrete particularity of persons in time and space, Gunton was careful, however, to avoid modern concepts of person because he held that they lead to misconceptions about freedom as a human commodity possessed in unaffected relation to others. As we saw above, Gunton challenged modern notions of human freedom by arguing that it is nothing other than freedom to *do* that which God has placed before people to do and to *become* that which God has called those people to be. Particularity and human freedom are therefore connected. Gunton said,

The fact is that in one sense I am not free to be other than I am, because I am the product of particular shaping through genetic inheritance, nutrition, nurture and social interaction. It does not follow that what I do now, or tomorrow, is in no way free, merely that my freedom can consist only in what I make of the particular inheritance that I have received. And even here the use of "I" is dangerous, for freedom is a relational concept. My

197 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 205; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 115.

198 See, for example: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 216; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 45, 171.

199 See: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 74–100.

freedom, such as it is, derives from my relation to God and to others.²⁰⁰

Moreover, if particularity, as a universal reality, is evident in human personhood, then Gunton was even more willing to denounce popular contemporary definitions of the person as individualistic, disconnected, abstract, and unrelated to one another. Indeed, for Gunton, to speak about personal particularity cannot be equated with the promotion of individualism for “there is a better way of conceiving particularity than that of individualism, which, as we have seen, loses particularity even as it stresses individuality in terms of the unrelatedness of particulars.”²⁰¹ Therefore, as a corrective measure, Gunton was careful to ensure that his articulation of human particularity did not advance a view of the person in isolation and disconnection from other persons.²⁰² Rather, in his judgment, “a satisfactory conception of human particularity depends upon an acceptance of the fact that persons also are constituted in their particularity both by their being created such by God and by the network of human and cosmic relatedness in which they find their being.”²⁰³ Clearly, the inward turn, so common in modern perceptions of human personhood, was emphatically dismissed as a wholly inadequate way of understanding what it means to be a human person made in the image of God. What emerged in Gunton’s writing, is a description of the person that seeks to strike a balance between the universal reality of particularity and the relationality constituted by vertical and horizontal communion with God and human persons.

3) *Perichoresis* and Human Personhood

It was noted above that Gunton’s contention for the universal concept of *perichoresis*

200 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 45; Gunton wrote, “Our human freedom is in large measure what we make of our particularity: it is what you and I do, or would do, as distinctly ourselves, and not as someone else.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 62.

201 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 153.

202 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 114.

203 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 202.

provides an adequate way to articulate the interrelationality that is ontologically associated with the particular divine persons in the immanent Trinity.²⁰⁴ He also argued that the concept of *perichoresis* provides an appropriate framework within which to describe the realities associated with the nature of human personhood. For Gunton, *perichoresis* was an extremely important tool inasmuch as it could be employed to help limit the consequences of what he saw as an uncritical acceptance of dualism in contemporary conceptions of human personhood. This tendency, he suggested, almost inevitably leads to an overemphasis upon relationality (i.e. the one) or particularity (i.e. the three).²⁰⁵ *Perichoresis*, thus, is the means by which relationality and particularity are held together, “Because it has long been taught that to be human is to be created in the image of God, the idea that human beings should in some way be perichoretic beings is not a difficult one to envisage.... [Therefore,] the notion of perichoresis helps us to rethink the matter, it is by virtue of the fact that, although it envisages close relatedness, it never does so to the detriment of particularity.”²⁰⁶

Employing the concept of *perichoresis* as a corrective mechanism in the struggle to overcome commonly-perceived paradoxical concepts such as time and timelessness, as well as materiality and immateriality, was a theological move that revealed his determination to resist polarities and work toward overcoming them through recourse to a specifically trinitarian framework of thinking. This desire is expressed as follows: “It is important also to realise that this being in the image of God will embrace both what we have been used to call spiritual and our bodiliness. The merit of the approach to anthropology by means of the concept of person is

204 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, xviii.

205 Gunton wrote, “Only where [relationality and particularity] are given due stress is personhood fully enabled. Their co-presence will rule out both the kind of egalitarianism which is the denial of particularity, and leads to collectivism, and forms of individualism which in effect deny humanity to those unable to ‘stand on their own feet.’” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 114.

206 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 168–169.

that it relativises so many inherited dualisms. Relations are of the whole person, not of minds or bodies alone.”²⁰⁷

Gunton frequently used common human relationships to illustrate the reality of perichoretic particularity in community. For example, he alluded to the marriage relationship in which two spouses become one flesh without losing their respective identities as individual persons. Gunton wrote, “Christian theology affirms that in marriage the man and the woman become one flesh—bound up in each other’s being—and why the relations of parents and children are of such crucial importance for the shape that human community takes. Our particularity in community is the fruit of our mutual constitutiveness: of a perichoretic being bound up with each other in the bundle of life.”²⁰⁸

The concept of *perichoresis*, as mentioned above, is the means by which Gunton was able to maintain the tension between relationality and particularity, when applied to human personhood, for it afforded him the opportunity to give due stress to both without unduly overemphasizing either.²⁰⁹ By utilizing the trinitarian concepts of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis*—each universally consistent with the ontological realities associated with communion between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—Gunton was able to formulate a comprehensive framework for a thorough theological anthropology. Beyond this, however, Gunton also observed in these universal realities the structure to develop a robust trinitarian cosmology.

iii) Theological Cosmology and Gunton’s Open Transcendentals

From Gunton’s perspective, a trinitarian understanding of God sheds important insight into the cosmological discussion. He believed that the trinitarian nature of God provides a clearer

207 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 114.

208 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 169–170.

209 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 114.

understanding of how the world operates. Similar to the way in which the open transcendentals of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis* may be applied to theological discussion about God and human personhood, Gunton contended these universal realities are also evident in the non-human created order. An examination of the cosmological contours of Gunton's theology and his substantial efforts to bring the doctrines of creation and the Trinity into close agreement with one another also requires attention.

1) Relationality and Cosmology

As noted above, Gunton held that, if the being of God is relational, in the sense that God is a communion of divine persons, then it is reasonable to conclude that, since God is the creator of everything that exists, the creator of the universe will also consistently express that relationality toward the whole of that which is created. This principle of agreement in Gunton's thinking between divine being and creative action becomes clear in the following statement:

Because the Son and the Spirit are God the Father in action, it has been argued almost from the beginning of Christian theology that they are intrinsic also to God's eternal being. What God is in his relations with the world, he is also in his eternal being, because there is no breach, as there is with fallen creatures, between what God is and what he does. Because the Father's action is mediated by the Son and the Spirit, the Son and the Spirit are correspondingly intrinsic to God's eternal being.²¹⁰

Gunton argued, further, that, since there is an intrinsically close relationship between the Creator and the created order, it is reasonable to expect that relationality to be present within creation as it is within God. He stated, "it can be said that the created world, as that which is what it distinctively is by virtue of its createdness, reflects in different ways the being of God in communion. The human creation, made in the image of God, reflects most directly the divine

²¹⁰ Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 101; Elsewhere, Gunton qualified, "This does not mean that we have a private view into the being of God, but that the general characteristics of God's eternal being, as persons in relation, communion, may be known from what he has done and does in the actions that we call the economy of creation and salvation." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 230.

being in communion.”²¹¹ This conceptualization of the world, created in the image of God, clearly disassociated Gunton from those with a more skeptical neoplatonic view of the materiality and temporality associated with the cosmos.

Indeed, over against conceptions of a deistic, abstract, and uninvolved Creator, Gunton sought to safeguard the personal, loving character of a relational trinitarian God who remains in constant and close proximity with the created world.²¹² He argued that the “point of trinitarian theology is that it enables us to develop an ontology of the personal, or, better, an understanding of God as the personal creator and redeemer of the world.”²¹³ What emerged, therefore, in Gunton’s work was a theological cosmology that emphasized a Creator who creates out of love and free-will as a genuine extension of the divine relationality that exists among the divine persons in the immanent Trinity.²¹⁴ In Gunton’s own words: “God the Father, who in his love wills that there be both for its own sake and for his glory a reality other than he. Creation is the action of God the Father, through the Son and in the Spirit: made through the Son and directed to its perfection by the Holy Spirit who refers it back to the Father through the Son.”²¹⁵

An avowal of this divine freedom to create compelled Gunton to oppose neoplatonic views of creation (e.g. creation of the universe out of preexisting matter) in favour of God’s economic involvement in the creation of the world as a loving Creator who created out of

211 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 217.

212 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 133–134.

213 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 195.

214 Gunton wrote, “To say that God is already, and eternally, an order of love prevents us from having to say that it is in some way necessary for God to create a world, to have another being alongside himself without which he is not truly himself. We need to be able to say that God could remain content with his eternal being, and did not have to create a world.” Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 187.

215 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 180; Gunton stated, “It is not therefore something which holds things together, but someone: the one through whom, in the unity of the Father and the Spirit, all things have their being.” [italics in original] Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 179.

nothing (i.e. *ex nihilo*).²¹⁶ For this view, Gunton drew upon the incarnational work of Barth and his emphasis on “God’s free becoming.”²¹⁷

In this respect, Gunton established connections between divine freedom to create and divine mediation and providence. Indeed, providence—a reflection of God’s unconstrained free-will and loving provision for creation—served as an important theme for Gunton inasmuch as it is “that activity, mediated by the two hands of God, which at once upholds the creation against its utter dissolution and provides for its redemption by the election of Israel and the incarnation of the one through whom all things were made and are upheld, and to whom, as the head of the church (Colossians 1:18), in the Spirit all things move.”²¹⁸ Increasingly, the image of the two hands of God, borrowed directly from Irenaeus, represented Gunton’s most frequent descriptor for the economic mediation of God with creation. Gunton said, “God’s actions are *mediated*: he brings about his purposes towards and in the world by the mediating actions of the Son and the Spirit, his ‘two hands.’” [italics in original]²¹⁹ That is to say, Gunton considered it important to convey the acts of the Creator—past, present, and future—as purposeful, mediated, and reflective of the being in communion of the triune Godhead.

216 It was important to Gunton that creation has a specific, real beginning in time. Opposing Augustine’s analogical notions of creation, Gunton, nonetheless, also opposed literalist creationism views. As such, Gunton endorsed a theistic evolution position that engaged theology and science as mutually agreeable.

217 See: Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. III/1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1957), 257–318; Barth as quoted in: Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, 187–199.

218 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 192.

219 Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 77; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 5.6.1.; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 4.20.1; Gunton wrote, “I do not think that we can do better than hold to Irenaeus’ straightforward characterization of God’s action in the world: the Father works ... by means of his two hands, the Son and the Spirit.... And these hands do not act separately, like someone holding a baby in one hand and trying to bang in a nail with the other—though I fear that our talk of the Spirit might sometimes suggest that. The Spirit works through the Son, paradigmatically as Jesus’ ministry was empowered by the Spirit.” Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 79–80; For an expanded view on mediation in Gunton’s work, see also: Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 41–64; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 3–19; Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 164–180; Gunton, “Creation and Mediation in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson: An Encounter and a Convergence”; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 10, 13–15, 18; While Gunton commonly associated the origins of the two hand imagery to Irenaeus, Terry J. Wright suggests that Theophilus of Antioch may have been the first to actually use this terminology. Wright, “Colin Gunton on Providence: Critical Commentaries,” 147 n.5.

The notion of creation as a project was also taken up from Irenaeus²²⁰ as a way to convey the reality of the dynamic cosmological relationality with the Creator.²²¹ Both the Creator and creation are engaged in a teleological, forward-moving, project, according to Gunton, one in which God acts sovereignly to bring creation to its intended end. We find this notion expressed concisely in his own words, “The created world becomes truly itself—moves towards its completion—when through Christ and the Spirit, it is presented perfect before the throne of the Father.”²²² Understood in this way, the creation is viewed as a stage upon which God’s loving-kindness for the whole created order is worked out in the form of an ever-expanding project. Consequently, the idea of the Garden of Eden as a perfect paradise, is replaced by a view of Eden as the inauguration of an emerging project en route to its eschatological completion.²²³ When this line of thought is followed to its logical conclusion, Gunton came to view the universe not as a closed and isolated system, but rather one that is on an eschatologically-orientated trajectory toward maturity and perfection.²²⁴

The cosmological implications of Gunton’s view are widespread. Firstly, the idea that the Creator and creation are relationally-engaged in a cosmological project brings otherwise opposed themes and concepts into closer proximity with one another. Advocating for dialogue, for example, between science and theology, Gunton wrote, “we are engaged not merely in a dialogue between science and theology, but in an encounter between what makes for life and for

220 See: Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 5.29.1; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 5.36.2–3; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 4.5.1.

221 Gunton wrote, “creation is a project—that is to say, it is made to go somewhere.” Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 12.

222 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 230–231.

223 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 197; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 109–110; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 20; This cosmological view also has correlations to Gunton’s view about Adam and Eve’s completeness. Gunton wrote, “Irenaeus’ famous analogy, that Adam and Eve when first created were like children called to grow to maturity, indicates that person is an eschatological concept. Like the world created very good, human beings are called to become perfect.” Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 45; See: Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 4.38.1–3.

224 Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 24–25.

death. Ontology and ethics, creation and redemption, cannot be treated apart from one another.”²²⁵ Clearly, Gunton’s theological convictions concerning the relationality between Creator and creation led him to perceive the close theological interconnectivity of the doctrines of creation, salvation, and eschatology.²²⁶ If the created world is a project with a beginning and an end, then God’s economic acts throughout all of time cannot be viewed in isolation from each other. Inevitably, Gunton’s soteriology rejected common salvific notions of escaping the world.²²⁷ Instead, Gunton viewed salvation and redemption in terms of real time and space and in correlation with God’s divine purpose throughout salvation history. In effect, Gunton advocated a thoroughly Christian eschatology as a corrective to what he saw as non-Christian escapism that masquerades as eschatology and is endemic in contemporary society.

Secondly, holding to a high view of cosmological relationality obliged Gunton to call for human responsibility to be exercised in the care for creation.²²⁸ He considered that humans are called to recreate, restore, and renew the cosmos.²²⁹ Accordingly, the “ethics of the environment is one area where attempts are being made to heal the fragmentation, and indeed if the universe is to provide adequately conceived coordinates for human being, the character of our relation with the natural world will be at the centre of human concern.”²³⁰ These cosmological implications,

225 Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” 110.

226 Gunton used the notion of creation as a project or journey—from creation to eschaton. On this issue, Gunton parted from Barth and expressed concern that Barth’s eschatology tended to advance a breach between time and eternity. Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 42.

227 Gunton wrote, “if it is remembered that the doctrine of creation has much to say about the human continuity with the rest of the world in which we are set, the outcome is less likely to be a spiritualising of redemption as a process in which the Christian is taken out of the world into the ‘religious’ sphere.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 123.

228 Gunton stated, “As created beings, human persons are bound up closely with the fate of the rest of the material universe, as stewards rather than absolute lords.” Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 61.

229 This “redeem creation” view is also pervasive in T.F. Torrance’s work on the doctrine of creation. See, for example: Thomas F. Torrance, *Reality and Evangelical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1982), 11.

230 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 173; See also: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 116; Elsewhere, Gunton wrote, “Much current misuse of the creation,

derived from Gunton's contention of a correlation between ontological aspects of God as Creator and the relationality reflected in creation, bear importance for this current study and will be discussed in greater detail in the section to following chapters.

2) Particularity and Cosmology

Gunton was a particularly astute theologian and scholar. He therefore, sought to avoid the homogenization evident in the modern overemphasis on relationality by employing particularity as a corrective measure.²³¹ In the work of scientific and political theorists such as Stanley Jaki and Michael Polanyi, Gunton found the resources that enabled him to observe that the cosmos and its contents universally exhibit a substantial particularity that correlates with God's triune particularity.²³² He saw that as God is various in God's being so, too, the material world—albeit in its own limiting way—reflects a similar variety.²³³ Utilizing one of his favourite patristic interlocutors, Gunton wrote, "Irenaeus' triune God is one who creates by his will a particular world to which particularity is integral."²³⁴

The importance of the issue at stake becomes clear through Gunton's belief that "something is real—what it is and not another thing—by virtue of the way it is held in being not only by God but also by other things in the particular configurations in space and time in which

with its attendant ecological disasters, derives from a lack of realisation of human community with the world.... Here, being in the image of God has something to do with the human responsibility to offer the creation, perfected, back to its creator as a perfect sacrifice of praise." Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*," 60; For more on Gunton's ecological concern, see: Gunton, "The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework," 229; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 187; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 235; Colin E. Gunton, *The Actuality of Atonement: A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids; Edinburgh: Eerdmans; T & T Clark, 1989), 119.

231 Gunton wrote, "In practice, science operates with particulars, sets of entities and events abstracted from the whole and mapped in their relations to each other and to their context. Yet almost everywhere there operates a strong Platonist drive to turn particularities into abstractions, variety into homogeneity." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 44.

232 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 43–44.

233 Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, 141.

234 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 54.

its being is constituted; that is to say, in its createdness.”²³⁵ Here, again, we can detect a priority that Gunton afforded to the materiality and temporality of the created order, an approach he chose deliberately insofar as it stands opposed to notions of the abstract conceptualization of created objects. In contrast, Gunton stressed that the diversity of created things, including their particular shaping in the world, is a reflection of “the transcendentalism of hypostasis or substantiality.”²³⁶ About this very issue, Gunton wrote, “If things can be so understood, if to be temporal and spatial is to echo in some way, however faintly, the being of God, may we not find in this concept a way of holding things together that modernity so signally lacks?”²³⁷

In order to advance his arguments for cosmological particularity, once again, Gunton drew upon a theology of the Holy Spirit.²³⁸ Against notions of the abstract nature of the Spirit, Gunton argued that it is the Spirit who both maintains and strengthens particularity within the world. According to this view, it is the Spirit who brings the triune God into a relationship with the world and the world into relationship with God while maintaining the distinctiveness and particularity of both.²³⁹ The notion of a particularizing role of the Spirit is acknowledged thus: “we can understand the Spirit’s distinctive mode of action as the one who maintains the particularity, distinctiveness, uniqueness, through the Son, of each within the unity. The stress

235 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 200; Elsewhere Gunton wrote, “Everything that exists is particular. In the immortal words of Bishop Butler, ‘Everything is what it is and not another thing.’” Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 45.

236 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 206; Gunton posited, “Thus it is that the failure of Plato to give due place to particularity in his vision of things is replicated both in modernism’s suppression of the particular through the universal and in postmodernism’s homogenizing tendency to attribute to all particulars essentially the same value.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 70.

237 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 165–166; Gunton said, “I want to suggest that the crucial and concrete realities of our world are the particular things—substances—which are what they are by virtue of being wholes that are constituted indeed of parts but in such a way that they are more than simply the sum of the parts.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 201.

238 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 181–188.

239 Gunton, however, was quick to acknowledge that distinctions must be maintained between God and the world. Gunton, “Creation and Mediation in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson: An Encounter and a Convergence,” 80–93.

here is on uniqueness. The mystery of existence is that everything is what it is and not another thing.”²⁴⁰

3) *Perichoresis* and Cosmology

The transcendental of *perichoresis* also provided Gunton with a notion of unity in particularity allowing him to establish an understanding of the interconnectivity associated with the cosmos without ignoring its particularity.²⁴¹ However, here, as elsewhere, he was conscious of avoiding any perception of prioritization of either cosmological relationality or particularity by advocating a perichoretic view of the world as diversity within unity.²⁴² In this way, Gunton was enabled to employ elements of the doctrine of the Trinity as the means to affirm, simultaneously, both the otherness and autonomy of the world *from* God, while also insisting upon the cosmological dependency of the world *to* its Creator.²⁴³

Gunton argued it is the nature of the universe, as a creation of God, to reflect the interdependent reciprocity of the persons of the Trinity who are dynamically constituted by the relations shared with one another.²⁴⁴ Here, he drew upon the theological concept of *perichoresis* where mutual interpenetration of the divine persons simultaneously guarantees the distinctiveness of each and the unity of the three. The connection, by way of analogy, to the created order is made in the following manner: “[the world] is perichoretic in that everything in it contributes to the being of everything else, enabling everything to be what it distinctively is. The

240 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 206.

241 Gunton argued, “the first of three open transcendentals, perichoresis, which offers a way of articulating the oneness of things without derogating from their plurality. A perichoretic unity is a unity of a plural rather than unitary kind.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 212.

242 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 213.

243 Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 2003, 14; In this respect, Gunton also used the trinitarian notion of *perichoresis* to avoid both the extreme of deism, where God is relegated from creation, and pantheism, where God and creation are viewed as synonymous. Alan Spence, “The Person as Willing Agent: Classifying Gunton’s Christology,” in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 57.

244 Gunton wrote, “Everything in the universe is what it is by virtue of its relatedness to everything else.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 171–172.

dynamism of mutual constitutiveness derives from the world's being a dynamic order that is summoned into being and directed towards its perfection by the free creativity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit."²⁴⁵ Gunton, therefore, considered that the universe is constituted as a perichoretic unity—a dynamism of relatedness²⁴⁶—which provided the grounds to argue against persistent notions of the unreliability and unimportance of the material and temporal order, since, in his judgment, the universe reflects the goodness of an engaged and loving Creator. To make this point, Gunton declared that the “advantage of a trinitarian approach to the theology of creation is that it enables us to say a number of important things, chief among them that the world is ‘good,’ a distinct reality with its own being, and yet only so by virtue of its dependence upon and directedness to God.”²⁴⁷

Again, a careful reading of Gunton's thoughts will note that it was not uncommon for him, as a theologian, to draw from the realm of science in order to support the argument for cosmological *perichoresis*.²⁴⁸ For example, it was the work of one of the founders of modern physics, Michael Faraday,²⁴⁹ that provided resources upon which Gunton drew to argue that the concept of *perichoresis* correlates to certain scientific discoveries in the created order.²⁵⁰

245 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 166; Gunton stated, “the created world, as that which is what it distinctively is by virtue of its createdness, reflects in different ways the being of God in communion.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 217.

246 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 173, 165; Gunton referred to “the universe as a *perichoresis* of interrelated dynamic systems.” Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 151.

247 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 142.

248 See, for example: Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 56; See also: Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” 103–112; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 178 n.4; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 140–143; Gunton wrote, “We can ... point to the perichoretic world revealed in some of the discoveries of modern physics.” Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 173.

249 Michael Faraday, “A Speculation Touching Electric Conduction and the Nature of Matter,” in *On the Primary Forces of Electricity*, ed. Richard Laming (London: Richard and John E. Taylor, 1838), 2–10.

250 Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” 94–95; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 117; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 138–139; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 171–172.

Gunton's appreciative acceptance of the nineteenth century scientist's work is evident when he remarked that:

[Faraday's] way of putting the matter is remarkable, that 'matter is not merely mutually penetrable, but each atom extends, so to say, throughout the whole of the solar system, yet always retaining its own centre of force.' ... He speaks of the solar system rather as the classical trinitarian theologians did of the Trinity. What we have in Faraday is a kind of doctrine of *perichoresis*, the interpenetration, of matter. As the three persons of the Trinity interpenetrate the being of the others, so it is with the matter of which the world is made.... The claim to be argued is that some trinitarian concepts appear to bear a certain likeness to some of the concepts that have been either appropriated or developed by modern scientists.²⁵¹

Interestingly, as early as 1983, in his book, *Yesterday and Today*, Gunton had begun to grasp the connections between the theological concept of *perichoresis* and the realm of music. Referring to Jewish-Austrian composer, Victor Zuckerkandl's monograph, *Sound and Symbol*, Gunton remarked that music is "the product of tones in dynamic interrelationship with one another" and "the interpenetration of tones in auditory space."²⁵² Here, again, the language Gunton chose to employ is remarkably similar to the terminology used later in his work to speak about the way in which the concept of *perichoresis* is observable in creation.

There can be very little doubt that Gunton's mature theology of God, human personhood, and the created world was informed by and developed in conjunction with his understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. This section has provided a description of his use of open transcendentals—namely relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis*—as the means by which to

251 Gunton, "Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World," 95–96; For a similar argument, see: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 140.

252 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 116; Victor Zuckerkandl, *Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World*, trans. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 15, 299; Evidently concerned about dualism even at this early stage of his career, Gunton wrote, "According to Zuckerkandl this happens particularly when we look with the help of music at the choice with which the philosophical and theological traditions have faced us: a choice between the timeless and the transient. Music shows us that we are not faced with the alternatives of absolute eternity and absolute temporality." Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 121; For a similar argument on the compatibility of music and the doctrine of the Trinity, see also: Jeremy Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God: Essays in Listening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 169–170; Chiara Bertoglio, "A Perfect Chord: Trinity in Music, Music in Trinity," *Religions* 4 (2013): 485–501.

understand God, humanity, and the world. These open transcendentals moreover, were chosen by Gunton as a theological corrective to what he considered to be insufficiently trinitarian impulses in contemporary Western Christianity. To this end, he argued that embracing these universal trinitarian realities provided an important prescriptive remedy to pervasive theological deficiencies and dualisms particularly evident throughout Western Christianity. Our attention now turns from a description of key features of Gunton's theological project to an assessment of his contribution trinitarian theology.

C) Assessment and Limitation of Gunton's Trinitarian Theology

This section outlines three key characteristics and related limitations of Gunton's theological project. Gunton's trinitarian theology is assessed, in the first place, as an open, dialogical, and flexible exchange of ideas. Secondly, his work is compared cautiously against contemporary social trinitarian theologies. Thirdly, a critical correlation is established between Gunton's trinitarian theology and his assessment of modern culture. Developed in this way, this section is an attempt to make a critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of Gunton's trinitarian theology and its suitability as an analytical framework for the purposes of my study.

i) A Dialogical, Flexible, and "Scruffy" Trinitarian Theology

Gunton's trinitarian theology arose from a process of open exchange of ideas and a synthesis of diverse and sometimes disjointed concepts. Indeed, his life and work evidenced a willingness to engage a high number of interlocutors across several centuries and disciplines, including theology, philosophy, science, and ethics. As John Webster has written, "Gunton had no ambitions to be a specialist on Barth or any other thinker: he was primarily a constructive theologian, and though he published a good deal on theological issues approached 'through the theologians,' his work as a commentator was ancillary to the central enterprise of giving a

rational articulation of the Christian confession.”²⁵³ A multidisciplinary approach was evident early in his career, for example, in *Enlightenment and Alienation*, published in 1985. Gunton took this opportunity to ambitiously engage the scientific reflections of Michael Polanyi on personhood, the philosophical work of Iris Murdoch on the good, and the trinitarian and philosophical thought of Samuel Taylor Coleridge as complementary prescriptions to address perceived theoretical weaknesses in Enlightenment thinking that he believed continue to perpetuate an unnecessary dualistic breach between God and humanity.²⁵⁴ Later, this synthesizing methodological approach provided the structural framework for the arguments advanced in *The One, the Three and the Many*. In this text, Gunton gave attention to the ways in which modern thought has been impacted by an exhaustive list of forbearers, including such thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, the Cappadocians, Irenaeus, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Georg Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Charles Taylor, Hans Blumenberg, John Zizioulas, and Alasdair MacIntyre.²⁵⁵

Commentators have remarked that this wide-ranging, synthesizing approach has meant that Gunton’s trinitarian theology is marked by a degree of flexibility, even as it adheres to characteristic orthodoxy. As such, Gunton’s predisposition to engage with a wide range of ecumenical voices has given shape to his trinitarian theology ensuring that it remains pliable and flexible.²⁵⁶ While he remained strong and vocal in certain convictions, his published works

253 J.B. Webster, “Gunton and Barth,” in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 18.

254 Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, 30–36, 37–44, 77–81, 85–88.

255 Describing Gunton’s work in the 1998 text *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, Philip Butin wrote, “If many contemporary academic forays into historical theology tediously analyze one detailed aspect of a single tree (or even a single leaf) from every imaginable contextual angle, this one presents us with a breathtaking view of the entire forest from one particular, towering promontory overhead. As one friend of mine put it, ‘Gunton is just a “metanarrative” kind of guy.’” Philip Walker Butin, “The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study,” *Pro Ecclesia* 10, no. 2 (March 1, 2001): 238.

256 Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*, 27; Describing Gunton’s theological pursuits, Douglas Farrow has

revealed a theologian intent upon dialogical engagement with a variety of interlocutors combined with the requisite preparedness to be influenced and shaped by that dialogue. Those who may be tempted to consider that Gunton was a Barth *simpliciter*, for example, run the risk of doing so by overlooking the significance of Gunton's increasingly critical view of Barth's narrow pneumatology and underdeveloped trinitarianism.²⁵⁷ His gradual embrace of Zizioulas' trinitarian theology, even to the point of adjusting some of his earlier positions in favour of Zizioulas' patrology of the Father as a primordial cause, is yet further evidence of this flexibility, as well.²⁵⁸

At its broadest level, this openness to the opinion of others was evident in Gunton's gradual embrace of the significance and centrality of the doctrine of the Trinity and its intersection with the doctrine of creation. Indeed, it may be possible to chart a trajectory through Barth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Edward Irving, and John Owens whereby Gunton's theology undergoes development and acquisition of key concepts, including his adoption of the Irenaean metaphor of God's two hands.²⁵⁹ This gradual embrace of concepts drawn from the work of others exemplifies the work of a scholar on a theological and intellectual journey throughout his life. Energized by ideas, stimulated by conversation, and satisfied to hold multidisciplinary

stated, "Colin Gunton, who stood in the very front ranks of English-speaking theologians, understood theology as a communal activity whose participants should be 'dedicated to thinking in as orderly a way as possible'; but that order, he believed, could not be determined in advance or controlled by anything less dynamic than the gospel itself. It must be 'free and open' order." Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*, xi.

257 For examples of this, see the revised version of *Becoming and Being* (2001), particularly the epilogue, in which Gunton expressed a far more critical, though still respectful, view of Barth than in the original monograph. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, 225–245; See also: Webster, "Gunton and Barth," 17–31; Stephen R. Holmes, "Towards the *Analogia Personae et Relationis*: Developments in Gunton's Trinitarian Thinking," in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 32–34; Schwöbel, "The Shape of Colin Gunton's Theology: On the Way towards a Fully Trinitarian Theology," 183–186.

258 Gunton expressed these views in an unpublished typescript currently in the possession of Christoph Schwöbel. Colin E. Gunton, *A Christian Dogmatic Theology. Volume One: The Triune God. A Doctrine of the Trinity as Though Jesus Makes a Difference*, 2003, 2.7.31.1.1.Preface.5.1 as quoted in: Cumin, "The Taste of Cake: Relation and Otherness with Colin Gunton and the Strong Second Hand of God," 75–78.

259 Gunton also found the work on Irenaeus by Farrow, a former student, particularly stimulating. See: Douglas Farrow, "St. Irenaeus of Lyons: The Church and the World," *Pro Ecclesia* 4, no. 3 (June 1, 1995): 333–55.

concepts in tension, Gunton's career evidences an openness to change.²⁶⁰

However, as some critics have observed, this particular approach left Gunton vulnerable to oversimplification, premature and sometimes inaccurate comparisons, as well as some uncritical assessments.²⁶¹ Accordingly, his creative interplay with a variety of interlocutors meant that Gunton often failed to take sufficient time to focus more intently on the arguments of the theological luminaries he chose to use. Dave Scott, for example, has observed that at "times Gunton develops his ideas sketchily, summarizing major developments in a single sentence, leaving the reader a bit breathless and wishing for a fuller exposition. At times the reader might get the impression of a hasty reworking of notes for lectures or seminars."²⁶² This inclination, it may be argued, increased Gunton's susceptibility to make mischaracterizations in his work.

The most specific example in this respect concerns Gunton's sustained critique of Augustine's dependence upon a neoplatonic framework of thinking which, in turn, formed deficient trinitarian thought to Western Christianity. As seen above, Gunton contended that it was Augustine's inward, psychological turn that has exercised a disproportionate influence over Western articulations of the doctrine of the Trinity. This, in turn, perpetuates a longstanding

260 Surely, as mentioned above, Gunton's investment in the Research Institute in Systematic Theology at King's College offers but one example of his satisfaction associated with the collegiality of a scholarly environment in which theologians, lecturers, and students engaged openly and critically with one another.

261 For examples of this complaint, see: Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, "Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth," *Horizons* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 1980): 120; Charles R. Hogg, "Enlightenment and Alienation," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (April 1, 1986): 145; T.S.M. Williams, "Enlightenment and Alienation," *Modern Theology* 5, no. 1 (October 1, 1988): 79; Michael Brierley, "Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth," *Modern Believing* 43, no. 3 (July 1, 2002): 53–55; Ronald J. Feenstra, "A Brief Theology of Revelation," *Calvin Theological Journal* 31, no. 2 (November 1, 1996): 575–576; Fred Sanders, "The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study," *Theology Today* 59, no. 4 (January 1, 2003): 631.

262 David A. Scott, "The Promise of Trinitarian Theology," *Anglican Theological Review* 74, no. 3 (June 1, 1992): 396–98397; Similarly, William Placher has described Gunton's susceptibility to "the dangers of thinking and writing with a broad sweep." William C. Placher, "The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity," *Theology Today* 52, no. 2 (July 1, 1995): 290; In addition, Andrew Moore also distinguished him as follows, "Gunton was not the kind of academic who stakes out a position and spends the rest of his life refining it and defending it against attack. His thought was fluid, rushing on, rarely resting." Andrew Moore, "Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes," *Journal of Theological Studies* 55, no. 2 (October 1, 2004): 780.

modalistic view of God and overemphasizes divine oneness to the detriment of divine personhood and communion.²⁶³ This critique led Gunton to claim that the “Achilles’ heel of all Western theology is Augustine’s failure to make the Spirit *a* person.” [italics in original]²⁶⁴

Since Gunton’s death, a growing number of scholars, commonly referred to as New Canon Augustinians (e.g. Michael Barnes, Bradley Green, and Lewis Ayres), have challenged what they believe to be Gunton’s harsh judgment of Augustine. The criticism of Augustine, they charge, represents a simplistic misreading of Augustine’s understanding of human consciousness, an overstatement of his concern to maintain priority of divine unity, and fails to take into account several contextual factors within which Augustine developed his own trinitarian theology.²⁶⁵ Even those most sympathetic supporters of Gunton’s trinitarian theology concede that his seemingly relentless critique of Augustine’s divine simplicity was, perhaps, short-sighted and excessive.²⁶⁶

263 Another common critique against Gunton is that he overstressed the divide between Eastern and Western Christianity and idealized the Cappadocians. See: Catherine Mowry LaCugna, “The Promise of Trinitarian Theology,” *Modern Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1, 1993): 308; Nausner, “The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding,” 413–415; Uche Anizor, “A Spirited Humanity: The Trinitarian Ecclesiology of Colin Gunton,” *Theomelios* 36, no. 1 (May 2011): 26–41; Najeeb G. Awad, “Between Subordination and Koinonia: Toward a New Reading of the Cappadocian Theology,” *Modern Theology* 23, no. 2 (April 1, 2007): 181–204; Awad, “Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood,” 2,4, 7–8; Richard M. Fermer, “The Limits of Trinitarian Theology as a Methodological Paradigm: ‘Between the Trinity and Hell There Lies No Other Choice’ (Vladimir Lossky),” *Neue Zeitschrift Für Systematische Theologie Und Religionsphilosophie* 41, no. 2 (January 1, 1999): 164–166.

264 Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2001, 238; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 47.

265 See: Michael R. Barnes, “Rereading Augustine’s Theology of the Trinity,” in *Trinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 145–76; Michael R. Barnes, “Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology,” *Theological Studies* 56, no. 2 (June 1, 1995): 237–50; Bradley Glen Green, *Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine: The Theology of Colin Gunton in Light of Augustine* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011); Bradley Glen Green, “Colin Gunton and the Theological Origin of Modernity,” in *Theology of Colin Gunton* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 165–181; Bradley Glen Green, “The Protomodern Augustine? Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 328–341; Lewis Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Anizor, “A Spirited Humanity: The Trinitarian Ecclesiology of Colin Gunton,” 34–35; Robert Dodaro and George Lawless, *Augustine and His Critics: Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000); Neil Ormerod, “Augustine and the Trinity: Whose Crisis?,” *Pacifica* 16 (February 2003): 17–32; Keith E. Johnson, *Rethinking the Trinity and Religious Pluralism: An Augustinian Assessment* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 220–258.

266 See, for example: Jenson, “A Decision Tree of Colin Gunton’s Thinking,” 10–12. See also, the work of Douglas

I wonder, if Gunton had lived longer, whether he may have developed a more nuanced critique of Augustine in response to these interlocutors.²⁶⁷ Based on the characteristic openness of his lifework, it is not inconceivable that Gunton might have acquiesced on his Augustinian commentary without allowing this potential adjustment to impair his ultimate pursuits toward a more developed trinitarian theology.²⁶⁸ Stephen Holmes, who worked closely with Gunton at King's College in the 1990s, has recalled "many conversations in seminar rooms, and restaurants and conference bars, how he positively encouraged me and other apprentice theologians to question and object to his ideas, I dare to hope that he would have liked to have been remembered in such terms—not necessarily as someone whose theology we should agree with, but as someone who taught us why it was worth thinking hard enough about theology to disagree."²⁶⁹ In this respect, it is worth considering, once again, that Gunton was an accomplished academic theologian who was also a thoroughly *pastoral* theologian, committed to the notion that Christian theology must be worked out in the midst of the community of believers. Theology, he held, was not simply an academic exercise concerned with the maintenance of internal logical consistency; rather, Christian theology is at the service of the Church and, therefore, must be a pastoral and congregational exercise at least as much as it is an academic one.²⁷⁰ Thus, rather than dismiss his current critics outright, I suggest that it is worth considering whether Gunton's pastoral convictions, characteristic zeal, and openness to fresh ideas would have invited a straightforward and hearty conversation that challenged him to refine

Farrow and Stephen Holmes for similar concessions.

267 A reasonable example of a position between Gunton's Augustinian critique and an unqualified embrace of Augustinian trinitarianism is found in Josh McNall's unpublished 2013 dissertation from the University of Manchester, entitled "'A Free Corrector' Colin Gunton and the Legacy of Augustine."

268 An apt rubric of Gunton's work, Lincoln Harvey has written, "His overall direction is right, the details sometimes wrong, the arguments seldom watertight, the small things somewhat scruffy." Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*, 7.

269 Holmes, "Towards the *Analogia Personae et Relationis*: Developments in Gunton's Trinitarian Thinking," 45.

270 I have no doubt that this contributed to his reasons for serving 28 years as the associate pastor of Brentwood United Reformed Church.

his Augustinian critique.

ii) A Calculated and Cautious Position toward Social Trinitarianism

While it may be argued that Gunton's trinitarian and creation theology was flexible and open in some regards, his association with what is generally viewed as social trinitarianism is, perhaps, best described as calculated and cautious. It is true that Gunton joined a group of theologians who have sought, in recent decades, to redeem notions of relationality, communion, and *perichoresis* as bridging concepts to conceive, albeit in a limited way, the triune God. As Gunton wrote, "If God is God, he is the source of all being, meaning and truth. It would seem reasonable to suppose that all being, meaning and truth is, even as created and distinct from God, in some way marked by its relatedness to its creator."²⁷¹ Clearly, Gunton's trinitarian work stood in contrast to those who warn that the use of analogy applied to theology proper is *intrinsically* prone to misdirection and, therefore, *always* to be avoided.²⁷²

On the other hand, if a spectrum exists between the theological extreme of modalism and the social trinitarian extreme of tritheism, though modestly inclined in the direction of the latter, Gunton was not willing to do so without "careful systematic consideration."²⁷³ This is evident in the preface to the revised edition of *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, where Gunton warned against the "danger of analogical arguments" and "premature appeals to something called the social analogy, as if it is easily distinguishable from what is opposed to it."²⁷⁴ These thoughts

271 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 167; Gunton stated, "A theology of experience more centred on particularities would want to say against this that although we are fallen creatures, and certainly often do fail to know things as they are, our experience can yet be and is from time to time redeemed." Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 177.

272 For example, see: Stephen R. Holmes, *The Quest for the Trinity: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2012).

273 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, xxi.

274 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, xix–xx; He went on to write: "[I]t remains true that moves from the immanent Trinity to the created world are not obvious, and are fraught with dangers of idealising and projection.... Their chief defect is that they turn Christ into a world principle at the expense of Jesus of Nazareth, and treat his cross as a focus for the suffering of God rather than as the centre of that history in which

appear to represent a strategic effort to distance his trinitarian theology from the positions taken by others such as Catherine LaCugna, Jürgen Moltmann, and Ted Peters, whom Gunton may have interpreted as leaning too far toward an unequivocal embrace of social analogies of the Trinity.²⁷⁵ In general, Gunton remained cautious about the ability of human beings to offer reasoned arguments regarding the divine essence.

A particular example of this approach may be found in Gunton's reticence to offer unqualified acceptance of Rahner's Rule.²⁷⁶ Instead, following Barth, Gunton maintained that human knowledge cannot possibly grasp the immanent Trinity in its entirety.²⁷⁷ As we have seen, Gunton held that Irenaeus' notion of mediation, described by a vision of God's loving two hands, offers a more defensible trinitarian construct that honours both the relationality and particularity of the Trinity, while also allowing for space between the Creator and the creature. According to Gunton, the metaphor of the two hands of God respects both the space between and particularity of the eternal communion within the Godhead and the freedom inherent in creation and affirmed the triune God's universal and relational loving kindness toward creation.

Notwithstanding the importance of the mitigating characteristics of these precautions and

God overcomes sin and evil." Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, xx; See also: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 170, 190; Gunton also stated, "I think that it is important in this context to beware of the apparently tritheist tendencies of some of what are called social theories of the Trinity. We are not licensed by revelation to speak of a social life; we are, however, to say that if the Spirit works in a particular way in the economy as the one who perfects creation, it is reasonable to suppose that he has a similar kind of function to perform in relation to the being of God, to the communion that is the life of God." Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 190.

275 For example, see: Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 184 n.9; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, xvii–xx; Even some of Gunton's harshest critics, such as Bernhard Nausner, have conceded that Gunton's trinitarian theology ought to be distinguished from those who make less qualified distinctions between the ontological being of God and the earthly and human implications associated with that being. Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 406–407.

276 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 134; In *Yesterday and Today* (1983), Gunton also took issue with Rahner's christology from below, arguing that it was anthropocentric and drew too heavily on modern existentialism. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 15.

277 Here, Gunton also distanced himself from his theological mentor, Robert Jenson, who views Rahner's Rule more favourably. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 134.

qualifications, Gunton's work has continued to be criticized by those, such as Karen Kilby, Uche Anizor, and Bernhard Zausner, who have perceived it as an overall failure to take account of the limits associated with projecting any notion of relationality onto God and then redirecting that projection back onto creation.²⁷⁸ In particular, Gunton's insistent attempt to redeem terms such as person and *perichoresis* obviously have not endeared him to those who remain convinced that ideas framed by human language and intellect cannot adequately capture the mystery of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and, therefore, should be used with great caution.²⁷⁹ Critics, such as Nausner, have also challenged Gunton's use of relationality as an all-encompassing ontological concept, arguing that his use of the term was too narrow and, therefore, threatens to undermine other aspects of what it means to be a human person (e.g. human reasoning, and other traits associated with human nature).²⁸⁰

For all these challenges that, for their part, merit some form of rebuttal as possible manifestations of apophatism, this project advances on the argument that Gunton's embrace of trinitarian theology is the work of a cautious, constructive theologian. Gunton was, for example, careful to acknowledge the limits of the analogy of *perichoresis*, urging that, at its very best, human efforts to understand and reflect upon perichoretic relationality can, ultimately, only be a

278 See, for example: Karen Kilby, "Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity," *New Blackfriars* 81, no. 957 (November 2000): 10; Anizor, "A Spirited Humanity: The Trinitarian Ecclesiology of Colin Gunton," 7; Holmes, *The Quest for the Trinity: The Doctrine of God in Scripture, History and Modernity*, 185, 300; Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 417–418.

279 Apart from his lifelong respect for the work of Barth, Gunton disagreed with Barth's hesitancy to utilize the term "person" to describe the divine relations between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. In fact, Gunton's ambitious insistence on the term "personhood," with clarification, served to advance his notion of particularity. As Nausner wrote, "What Gunton wants to do is not to project a concept of the person defined by the human sciences onto God but rather to develop theologically a concept of the person through the trinitarian concepts of perichoresis and relatedness, concepts that also seem to be essential within creation. Neither modern individualism nor collectivism will do. Rather, we are in need of a new understanding of personhood in the image of the triune God." Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 411.

280 Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 415–417; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 88; Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*," 58.

“temporal echo” of the eternal Godhead.²⁸¹ Fred Sanders has declared that Gunton’s works “contain arguments for the necessity of acknowledging the immanent Trinity, rejecting as shortsighted and naïve the recent tendency in much theology toward reducing this field of doctrine to a merely economic Trinity.”²⁸² For her part, Catherine LaCugna also noted Gunton’s attempts at a balance between “the typically Eastern concern for the monarchy of the Father with the typically Western concern for equality.”²⁸³ Scholars such as Joseph Mangina and Reinhard Hütter have also spoken of Gunton’s careful integration of theological views within conversations among a wide range of dialogue partners across many disciplines and denominations.²⁸⁴

Ultimately, Gunton remained convinced that the triune God, as the giver of human language, faculty of reason and intellectual ability, has called people into a trusting, covenantal relationship. These abilities, he held, are given to human beings as bearers of the *imago Dei*. As God is progressively revealed through the divine economy in practical ways and through the acts of history, Gunton was adamant that this reflected the character of a loving triune God made known. In this respect, he held that the resources (e.g. language, faculties, and heart knowledge) provided to human beings must be adequate for the task of knowing God, not of course in an absolute, complete, and inexhaustible way, but certainly in a way for us to know, love, follow, and live for God. Therefore, Gunton’s theology was characterized by an embrace, though not unqualified, of the language associated with relationality that is so evident in recent developments in twentieth and twenty-first century trinitarian theology.

281 Gunton, “The Church on Earth: The Roots of Community,” 75.

282 Sanders, “The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study,” 631–632.

283 LaCugna, “The Promise of Trinitarian Theology,” 309.

284 Joseph L. Mangina, “The Barth Lectures,” *Modern Theology* 25, no. 2 (April 1, 2009): 356; Reinhard Hütter, “The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 23, no. 1 (February 1, 1996): 52.

iii) A Trinitarianism with a Critical Eye toward Modernity

It is difficult to comprehend the significance of Gunton's trinitarian theology without recognizing that an important goal of his work was to offer a robust theological assessment and prescription to the deep-rooted societal problems that he observed in modernity. That is, aside from his desire to use the doctrine of the Trinity as a framework for theology, Gunton also wished to utilize trinitarian theology as an answer to problems experienced today.²⁸⁵ This critical approach sets him apart as a theologian whose desire was to apply the doctrine of the Trinity not only to an understanding of communal relationality, but also as a pivotal response to theological, philosophical, scientific, and ethical problems facing contemporary culture.²⁸⁶ In this respect, Gunton was convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity contained great potential with practical and far-reaching application. Indeed, Gunton was convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity, as both the first doctrine and as a methodological framework, should serve as the point of departure for the entire Christian theological enterprise. As such, he saw the advancement of the doctrine of the Trinity not only for "the future of the Church, but also the being and flourishing of all humankind."²⁸⁷

While the tendency today is to argue that the root of modernity's problems are almost exclusively derived from the influence of the Enlightenment (e.g. modernity's egocentricism, individuality, etc.), the discussion above has shown that Gunton considered a longstanding and deficient view of the doctrine of the Trinity as a more adequate explanation for the cause of many modern problems. In his opinion, an overemphasis on divine essence that comes at the

285 Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 403;

Stephen Holmes wrote, "[Gunton] pioneered a vision of classical Christian theology as a credible intellectual discipline which, far from needing to accommodate itself to modern fashions of thought, provided the resources needed to criticise them." Stephen R. Holmes, "The Rev. Prof. Colin Gunton: Classical Theologian Who Sought to Expose the Intellectual Incoherence and Ethical Confusion of Modern Society," *The Guardian*, June 3, 2003.

286 Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 404.

287 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 28.

expense of particularity, a feature that he identified to be present in Augustine's theology, has many unfortunate and unhelpful consequences.²⁸⁸ There are some scholars who decry Gunton's critique of modernity as erroneous inasmuch as it constituted an historical oversimplification that too easily connected misconceptions of divine unity to cultural homogeneity and the suppression of particularity.²⁸⁹ There are also many who are critical of any attempt to utilize trinitarian theology as an all-encompassing theological framework, claiming to do so is to go well beyond the bounds of what is proper for this particular doctrine. A more sustained criticism of Gunton's analysis of modernity, however, is that it implies a low view of sin. Paraskev  Tibbs and Bradley Green have challenged Gunton's work on this issue.²⁹⁰ These scholars question whether Gunton's assessment of modern problems, paradoxically, served to undermine the important roles played by sin and death in modern forms of individualism and consumerism.²⁹¹ If this is true, argue Tibbs and Green, then Gunton's insistence that an Augustinian influence upon Western Christianity imparts an inadequate emphasis on triune relationality has succeeded merely in deflecting attention from far more serious and insidious theological culprits.

Whether or not Gunton's critique of modernity could have been strengthened by a thorough and sustained explanation of the impact of sin and evil is a point of contention worthy of more investigation than is possible in this thesis. However, even the most cursory reading of Gunton's corpus reveals that it is neither accurate to argue that Gunton neglected the topic of sin altogether nor that he took the fallen human condition too lightly. William Whitney, in his work, *Problem and Promise in Colin E. Gunton's Doctrine of Creation*, has offered an important

288 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 38.

289 Nausner, "The Failure of a Laudable Project: Gunton, the Trinity and Human Self-Understanding," 419.

290 Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*; Green, "Colin Gunton and the Theological Origin of Modernity"; Green, "Colin Gunton and the Failure of Augustine: An Exposition and Analysis of the Theology of Colin Gunton in Light of Augustine's 'De Trinitate.'"

291 Green, "Colin Gunton and the Theological Origin of Modernity," 124; Harvey, *The Theology of Colin Gunton*, 173.

defense against these claims. Whitney has stated, “[Bradley] Green’s reading of Gunton has the tendency to see Gunton’s evaluation of Modernity as merely highlighting what was intellectually wrong with the Enlightenment thought, and his attempt to correct it with ‘better’ theology. This, however, neglects that Gunton understands the greatest difficulty of Modernity to be *displacement of God*. Gunton’s primary concern is how Modernity displaced divine agency to human agency.” [italics in original]²⁹² Moreover, it can be argued that Gunton’s integration of the doctrine of creation and the Trinity (i.e. specifically, his defense of creation out of nothing—*ex nihilo*) increasingly forced him to articulate clearly the origins of sin and evil. Thus, while a more sustained acknowledgment of social and human sin may have forestalled this common critique of Gunton, it is nevertheless careless scholarship to argue that the doctrine of sin and evil is absent—either in whole or in part—from his critique of modernity.

It has been observed by Mark Noll that Christians, particularly Evangelicals, seem generally incapable of committing to the hard work of thinking theologically about the world.²⁹³ Frankly, this criticism does not apply to Gunton. He was a uniquely courageous theological and philosophical thinker who repeatedly and willingly engaged in serious reflection about the nexus of Christian theology and cultural phenomena. In this respect, then, Gunton was a rare theologian indeed, one who thought deeply about social, theological, anthropological, and cosmological issues. His prescription took the form of a thoroughly trinitarian theology. Moreover, his theological legacy continues to serve as a particularly important and relevant contribution; not only for those who were influenced by his trinitarian theology during his academic and pastoral career in Britain, but also for the wider Christian theological enterprise as it is applied to

292 William Baltmanis Whitney, “Problem and Promise in Colin E. Gunton’s Doctrine of Creation” (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Theology, 2011), 166.

293 Noll began one of his more widely read books with the phrase, “The scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind.” Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 3.

countless Christian congregations around the world.

In this chapter, a detailed description of the general characteristics of Gunton's trinitarian theology has been provided, together with an evaluative analysis of the lasting importance of his work. In my judgment, Gunton's most important contributions to the field of Christian thought consist within his analysis of modern culture and his preference for a flexible and dialogical theology that emphasizes the triune God as a unique community of persons. This chapter has afforded the opportunity to examine what Gunton perceived to be deficiencies in the history of the doctrine of the Trinity. The discussion covered key touchstones of his theological project through the framework provided by his theology of God, anthropology, and cosmology. Particular attention was given to an assessment of Gunton's proposal for a recovery of the doctrine of the Trinity in an attempt to access resources relevant for this thesis. That is to say, a close examination of Gunton theology has revealed the appropriateness of the decision to utilize elements of his scholarship as a theoretical framework for analysis of trinitarian actuation in the music worship practices utilized by Canadian Pentecostals within the PAOC. In the chapter that follows, I will seek to show how these concepts methodologically coalesce to advance the overall purposes of this thesis.

CHAPTER 3: PROJECT METHODOLOGY FOR A TRINITARIAN LYRICAL ANALYSIS OF PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA SONGS

This chapter describes the methodology for the lyrical content analyses in this study. For the purposes of this project, the theological content of the lyrics expressed in the most popular contemporary worship songs utilized by a sample of Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) churches has been chosen for analysis (See: Appendix A). More particularly, this project represents an operational measure of trinitarian impulses in PAOC contemporary worship choruses. The most commonly used songs reported by PAOC churches to Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) are the primary focus. In the first section of this chapter, I explain the rationale for choosing the PAOC as a Canadian Evangelical denomination. This section is also intended to provide a sense of the unique characteristics ascribed to the PAOC sample associated with this study. In the second section, information is provided to indicate, as precisely as possible, how many PAOC churches are represented in this study and to outline the general process by which these churches were selected. The third section offers a description of the steps employed to determine which commonly used songs are to be incorporated into this study. Here, the establishment of the 82 song corpus for this project and the rationale for a six year analysis of popular songs sung by PAOC churches from April 2007 to March 2013 is explained in great detail (See: Appendix B). Finally, in the fourth section, an exploration is given of how Colin Gunton's trinitarian work is utilized as an analytical framework for the completion of eight qualitative lyrical content analyses of the selected PAOC songs. In this section, a detailed description of the collection, analysis, and coding of the lyrical data is articulated. In each of the following four sections, I address the limitations and strengths of the research methodology applied to this study. Viewed as a collective whole, this employed project

methodology provides the instrumentation to carefully measure the consistency between PAOC trinitarian statements of faith and the most commonly used contemporary worship songs utilized in various Pentecostal contexts.

A) Selection of the PAOC as a Research Focus Group

This first section provides three main arguments defending the selection of the PAOC as a denominational research focus for this project. At the onset, I must note that there is some hesitation about the relevance of studying religious denominations for the purpose of scholarly work.¹ This is due, in large part, to the recent growth of non-denominational and independent Evangelical churches around the world and the apparent decline of denominational allegiances among many church adherents.² These realities among Canadian Evangelical churches merit close attention. Nevertheless, this project builds on a solid foundation of research avowing that denominations today have not disappeared and, in fact, continue to occupy a relevant place within the religious life of Canadian Evangelicals, including members and attendees of the PAOC.³ In this respect, as I will contend below, the significant size and impact of this

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- 1 See, for example, David A. Roozen and James R. Nieman, *Church, Identity, and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005); David A. Roozen, *A Decade of Change In American Congregations, 2000-2010*, The Faith Communities Today Project (Hartford, CT: Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2010).
 - 2 For an assessment of the history and future of Evangelical denominations, See: David S. Dockery, Ray Van Neste, and Jerry Tidwell, eds., *Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2011); See also: Martin E. Marty, *Righteous Empire: Protestantism in the United States*, 2d ed (New York: Macmillan, 1986); H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Henry Holt, 1929); Craig Van Gelder, *The Missional Church and Denominations: Helping Congregations Develop a Missional Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008).
 - 3 Samuel H. Reimer and Michael Wilkinson, "A Demographic Look at Evangelical Congregations," *Church and Faith Trends* 3, no. 2 (August 2010): 3; See also: Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Roozen and Nieman, *Church, Identity, and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times*; Bruce L. Guenther, "Ethnicity and Evangelical Protestants in Canada," in *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, ed. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 365–414; Edward Stetzer, "Life in Those Old Bones," *Christianity Today*, no. June (2010); Bruce L. Guenther, "Life in a Muddy World: Historical and Theological Reflections on Denominationalism," in *New Perspectives in Believers Church Ecclesiology: Congregationalism, Denominationalism and the Body of Christ*, ed. Abe Dueck, Helmut Harder, and Karl Koop (Winnipeg: CMU Press, 2010), 51–72.

Pentecostal entity, its racial and ethnic diversity, and the current research of and accessibility associated with the PAOC makes it a selection worthy of study for this doctoral thesis.

Firstly, the PAOC is an acceptable group to analyse because it represents a significant segment of the larger Canadian Evangelical population. Among the approximate 11,000 Evangelical churches in Canada, close to 10% are affiliated with the PAOC.⁴ There are more PAOC congregations in Canada than any other Evangelical denomination or association.⁵ According to the most recent denominational statistics submitted by PAOC churches, there are approximately 1,070 PAOC churches in Canada (see: table 3.1).⁶ In the six most recent “fellowship reports” (2008 to 2013) submitted by denominational leaders, the PAOC reported an annual total adherent population of approximately 230,000 people.⁷ On average, this

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- 4 Rick Hiemstra, chief research analyst at the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, has posited that there are approximately 30,000 religious congregations across Canada. Based on these numbers, Canadian Evangelical churches represent approximately one-third of all religious congregations in Canada while PAOC churches represent approximately 4% of all Canadian religious congregations. Reimer and Wilkinson, “A Demographic Look at Evangelical Congregations,” 5.
 - 5 While all the Convention Baptist churches associated with the Canadian Baptist Ministries total approximately 1,000 churches, unlike the PAOC, this Evangelical association is not primarily organized by a centralized national headquarters, but rather by four main offices (i.e. Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, l’Union d’Églises Baptistes Françaises au Canada, and Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches).
 - 6 Acquiring an exact number of churches in any given denomination poses many challenges. Church plants, preaching points, satellite campuses, and church closures, for example, often require subjective interpretations for denominational officials. For this study, I chose to minimize this subjectivity by only considering “established” PAOC churches. See: Rick Hiemstra, “Counting Canadian Evangelicals,” *Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism*, 2003.
 - 7 See: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *Fellowship Statistics (as at January 5, 2015)*, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/fellowship-services-docs/fellowship-stats-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=0> (accessed January 27, 2015). Adam Stewart’s 2012 doctoral work noted a discrepancy between 2001 Canadian census data, indicating a significant decline of 15% among PAOC adherents between 1991 and 2001, and otherwise consistent, if not only slightly declining, adherent numbers in PAOC annual church reports. Stewart concluded that declining PAOC numbers in the 2001 Canadian census data did not accurately reveal an actual decline among PAOC adherents, but rather reflected a significant cognitive shift in the religious identity among adherents in the PAOC. In other words, adherents and attendees did not likely leave PAOC churches but, instead, embraced a more “generic Evangelicalism” that led them to avoid and resist self-categorization as “Pentecostals.” A similar argument is advanced by researchers such as Reimer and Hiemstra who argue that the decision to drop “Pentecostal” from the list of religious groups on the 2001 Canadian census contributed to inaccurate data concerning actual PAOC adherents. The decision to drop the religious affiliation question from the 2011 Canadian Census has only further complicated the process of gaining accurate numerical Statistics Canada data on the PAOC and, for that matter, any religious group’s adherent totals. See: Adam Stewart, “Quenching the Spirit: The Transformation of Religious Identity and Experience in Three Canadian Pentecostal Churches” (University of Waterloo, 2012); Samuel H. Reimer, “Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada’s

denomination recorded regular Sunday morning national attendance between 150,000 and 160,000 attendees during this time frame.

Table 3.1. PAOC churches, adherents, and attendees, 2008 to 2013⁸

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Total Churches	1064	1,070	1,069	1,077	1,084	1,102
Sunday Morning Attendance	149,774	154,743	152,064	154,134	154,630	160,547
Total Adherents	233,294	237,451	231,196	236,557	234,385	233,400
Yearly Change in Adherents	-1.8%	2.7%	-2.3%	0.9%	0.4%	1%

Numbers notwithstanding, the PAOC and its key leaders have been associated with important national developments in Canadian Evangelicalism over the past several decades. It was PAOC minister, J. Harry Fraught, for example, who was instrumental in the evolution of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) in the 1960s. Contributing to both the EFC's growth and, more recently, to Tyndale College and Seminary's reemergence from bankruptcy, Brian Stiller has also been an important Evangelical and Pentecostal figure in Canada over the past thirty years. During this time, David Mainse, through the ministry of Crossroads Christian Communications, has become an important and influential Pentecostal figure augmenting the religious identity of Evangelicalism across Canada.⁹ These three prominent Pentecostal figures typify the impact of the PAOC upon the Canadian Evangelical population and ethos in recent decades.¹⁰ Therefore, based on the PAOC's size and national Evangelical influence, I argue, it, representatively, serves as a worthy focus of this study.

Secondly, the PAOC is, in the strictest sense, a truly national religious entity thereby

Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity," *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*, no. 3 (2012): 44; Rick Hiemstra, "Evangelicals and the Canadian Census," *Church and Faith Trends* 1, no. 2 (February 2008).

8 Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *Fellowship Statistics (as at January 5, 2015)*, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/fellowship-services-docs/fellowship-stats-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=0> (accessed January 27, 2015).

9 In particular, Mainse's 100 Huntley Street, as Canada's longest running talk show, has operated for four decades with national exposure on Shaw Communication's Global television stations.

10 PAOC leaders, George Werner and David Wells, have also served prominently in various Evangelical board and leadership positions.

justifying its selection as a nationwide Canadian religious group. Unlike some Canadian Evangelical denominations, PAOC churches are broadly distributed in every major geographical region in Canada. Collectively, these churches were organized in ten regional districts in 2013 spread across Canada: BC/Yukon (171 churches), Alberta/NWT (113 churches), Saskatchewan (55 churches), Manitoba/NW Ontario (77 churches), Western Ontario (319 churches), Eastern Ontario (138 churches), Quebec (98 churches),¹¹ Maritime (68 churches),¹² Finnish Branch Conference (7 churches), and Slavic Branch Conference (18 churches).¹³

Furthermore, as the most racially and ethnically diverse group among the major Evangelical denominations, it stands as a compelling religious denomination for evaluation.¹⁴ Of the 1,064 established PAOC congregations in 2013, 700 of them existed as churches in which the primary language spoken in corporate settings was English. The remaining one-third of PAOC churches (364 in total) were those in which the most common dialects spoken were Aboriginal languages, French, and Spanish (see: table 3.2). A 2006 study by Michael Wilkinson indicated that the emergence of PAOC churches of predominantly racial and ethnic minorities, particularly in urban centres, has significantly contributed to the PAOC's sustained national population (or, put another way, to the avoidance of a more drastic population decline) over the past few decades.¹⁵ By comparison, urban immigrant PAOC congregations appear to be growing at a

11 While most Evangelical denominations in Canada have experienced challenges in establishing churches in the province of Quebec, the PAOC has planted more Evangelical churches in Quebec than all the other Evangelical denominations combined. Reimer, "Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada's Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity," 48–49.

12 The PAOC totals in the Maritimes exclude approximately 130 churches in Newfoundland and Labrador that make up the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador. See: <http://www.paonl.ca/churches/index> (accessed January 10, 2014). Although this Canadian Pentecostal group shares a cooperative affiliation with the PAOC, they, nonetheless, distinguish themselves as a distinct Pentecostal association.

13 Based on the 2014 statistics at Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, *Fellowship Statistics (as at January 5, 2015)*, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/fellowship-services-docs/fellowship-stats-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=0> (accessed January 27, 2015).

14 Reimer, "Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada's Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity," 63–64.

15 See: Michael Wilkinson, *The Spirit Said Go: Pentecostal Immigrants to Canada*, American University Studies (New York: Peter Lang, 2006); The work of Reimer and Wilkinson utilize commonly-accepted methodologies

faster pace than smaller, rural and predominantly white PAOC churches.¹⁶

Table 3.2. PAOC ethnicity statistics, 2008 to 2013¹⁷

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Total Churches	1064	1070	1069	1077	1084	1102
English	700	711	714	715	720	738
French	81	82	81	80	80	80
First Nations	78	82	83	85	89	90
Spanish	47	44	41	40	40	39
Korean	19	18	18	21	18	18
Filipino	19	16	13	13	13	13
Slavic	14	15	15	19	19	19
Portuguese	12	11	11	12	13	14
Chinese	11	11	11	12	15	14
Other	83	80	82	80	77	77

Reimer has discovered that close to 15% of rural churches are also multiracial in character (The highest ethnicity represented in rural churches is First Nations at 13%). These PAOC figures are proportionately higher when compared to other Evangelical denominations that report significantly lower racial and ethnic diversity in both urban and rural Evangelical churches.¹⁸ These recent trends suggest that, in comparison to other Evangelical denominations, the PAOC represents a national religious group with a racial and ethnic diversity that, perhaps more appropriately, reflects the diversity celebrated by many in the broader Canadian culture. Thus, as a denomination with a wide geographic presence and at least a modest representation of practiced diversity, I consider the PAOC as a worthy focus for Canadian research.

Thirdly, recent years have yielded sustained interest and analysis of the PAOC. The thorough research on the PAOC by Canadian sociologists, Reimer and Wilkinson, provides a worthy case in point. Their 2015 monograph entitled, *A Culture of Faith: Evangelical*

suggesting that “multiracial” and “multiethnic” refer to congregations in which no more than 80% of the congregation is a particular ethnic group. Reimer, “Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada’s Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity.”

16 Reimer, “Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada’s Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity,” 46.

17 See: *Fellowship Statistics (as at January 5, 2015)*, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/fellowship-services-docs/fellowship-stats-2014.pdf?sfvrsn=0> (accessed January 27, 2015).

18 Reimer’s 2012 study indicates that 23% of a representative sample of Evangelical urban churches report racial and ethnic diversity while only 2% of a representative sample of Canadian Evangelical rural churches can claim the same. Reimer, “Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada’s Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity,” 62–64.

Congregations in Canada, is the product of face to face and telephone interviews with over 500 Evangelical ministers, 96 of whom were PAOC pastors. Reimer and Wilkinson's work provides important data on PAOC ethnicity, urbanization, demographics, identity, worship styles, and religious inclusivity.¹⁹ While studies of this nature cannot provide a representation of *every* aspect of religious identity in the PAOC, nor speak for an entire religious community, nevertheless, the academic controls and sheer size of this study affirm it as a robust source of data and analysis. It is quite likely that future academic research on the PAOC will draw heavily on this corpus of research.

For the specific purposes of this study, it is Reimer and Wilkinson's research on PAOC "worship elements" that provides relevant insight. Table 3.3 presents the key findings of Reimer and Wilkinson's interviews with the 96 PAOC interviewed pastors in relation to questions related to corporate worship practices. In comparison to the responses of the other interviewed Evangelical pastors, PAOC ministers described their corporate PAOC worship environments with a characteristically higher likelihood to "always" or "usually" demonstrate "raising of hands, speaking in tongues, and dancing, jumping, or shouting."²⁰ While most of the Evangelical churches represented in the Reimer and Wilkinson study frequently utilized drums or electric guitars (68%), these musical instruments were even more commonplace in PAOC churches (83%).

19 In total, Reimer and Wilkinson's research utilized the 2009 data from 478 phone interviews and 50 face to face interviews with pastors from across the country in five of the major Evangelical denominations in Canada, including the PAOC. Reimer and Wilkinson call their project the Canadian Evangelical Churches Study (CECS)—the most significant of its kind since George Rawlyk's research on Canadian Evangelicals in the early 1990s. Besides the PAOC, the other four Evangelical denominations that Reimer and Wilkinson utilized for their research are: the Christian Reformed Church, the Mennonite Brethren, the Christian and Missionary Alliance and Canadian National Baptist Convention. Reimer and Wilkinson's findings reinforce the commonly-accepted history of the PAOC that, by comparison to other Canadian Evangelical groups, self-describes as slightly less educated, more "missional" in purpose, (although the contemporary use of the term "missional" in Evangelical circles does not seem to be very clearly defined), more rurally located, and, of course, more charismatic, in identity. Reimer, "Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada's Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity."

20 Reimer, "Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada's Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity," 59–60.

Table 3.3. PAOC corporate worship characteristics, 2009²¹

% of pastors who say this is always or usually part of their worship service:	PAOC	Other
raising hands and clapping	95%	54%
praise band with drums and/or electric guitar	83%	68%
speaking in tongues	36%	2%
spontaneous dancing, jumping or shouting	14%	5%
traditional hymns part of worship services	56%	60%
use of visual projection equipment	87%	85%
following liturgy/prayer book	0%	7%

Interestingly, Reimer and Wilkinson observed, however, that a highly expressive and instrument-laden PAOC worship environment did *not* correspond with the complete absence of traditional hymns in PAOC corporate worship settings.²² In fact, 56% of PAOC churches in the Reimer and Wilkinson study,²³ “always” or “usually” incorporated hymns into their church services. As will be discussed below, the continued use of public domain hymns in PAOC church contexts represents a limitation to a study like mine that focuses predominantly on licensed contemporary worship choruses.

Aside from interdisciplinary academic research such as that initiated by Reimer and Wilkinson, researchers of the PAOC also benefit from an exceptional national archive collection at the PAOC denominational headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario. This well-organized research centre houses an extensive range of rare and historical documents, including many contemporary PAOC and Pentecostal resources.²⁴ The interest associated with the study of this religious group, coupled with the excellent Pentecostal resources accessible to the researcher, as well as its size, impact, and national and ethnic diversity establishes it as a reasonable case study.

21 Reimer, “Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada’s Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity,” 60.

22 Reimer, “Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada’s Congregations: Vitality, Diversity, Identity and Equity,” 59–60.

23 This statistic is only slightly less (60%) than other Canadian Evangelical denominations/churches who claim that hymns are “always” or “usually” part of their worship services.

24 The head PAOC archivist, James Craig, provides helpful information to enthusiasts and academic researchers alike and, for the purposes of our study, proved to be very accessible, thorough, and helpful.

B) Selection of PAOC Churches

This second section is intended to explain the process of securing a sampling of PAOC churches for the content analyses performed in this thesis. The methodology for this study relies heavily on song usage report data collected from PAOC churches and compiled and analysed by Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI). By law, churches that do not have express permission from the copyright owner of a song may not legally use or make a copy of that song for the purposes of corporate worship.²⁵ Therefore, in order to ease the process of gaining these non-exclusive rights, CCLI, in compliance with copyright laws and royalty payout protocols, urges churches that use contemporary Christian songs in their worship contexts to purchase an annual Christian Copyright License (CCL).²⁶ By possessing these copyright licenses, PAOC churches agree to complete a series of online copy activity reports every two and one half years.²⁷ The length of this agreed upon reporting period is six months in duration. During this time, church music leaders are encouraged to report, on a weekly basis, any new copies of songs that are used for print (e.g. bulletins, song sheets, and song books), digital (e.g. computer presentation software such as PowerPoint and MediaShout), recording (e.g. video podcasting and streaming), and/or translation purposes. From the completed song usage reports of cooperating churches, CCLI compiles a public twice-per-year document that indicates the “top 25”

25 The Copyright Act of Canada is the federal statute governing copyright laws.
<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42> (accessed January 28, 2014).

26 CCLI cannot force churches against their will to purchase song usage licenses, nor does CCLI act as a legal policing agency against churches that do not.

27 By obtaining the CCL, licensed churches also agree to strict guidelines limiting any personal adjustments to “the basic lyric, melody, or fundamental character of any song.” By signing the CCL agreement, churches are also obliged, in presentation and form, to visibly show copyright notices for each song they use. See: <http://support.ccli.com/ccl-terms-of-agreement> (accessed February 20, 2014). The cost of the annual CCL is commensurate with the size profile of the licensed churches. In this respect, the annual license fees range from \$60.00 for smaller churches to \$5,338.00 for very large churches.
<http://www.ccli.com/WhatWeOffer/LicenseFees.aspx> (accessed February 20, 2014).

commonly used songs in licensed churches around the world.²⁸ In total, 300,000 authorized songs form the database covered under the CCL agreement. Presently, there are over 158,000 churches in Canada and the United States that possess annual licenses.²⁹ CCLI operates as an external licensing organization with no particular association with a specific religious denomination.³⁰

As well as providing analysis reports of commonly used songs by churches in different countries, CCLI is also capable, upon request, of compiling song data reports for specific denominations.³¹ These data are publically-accessible and can be bought.³² In particular, data associated with most commonly used PAOC songs were of primary interest for this project. In total, 741 PAOC churches obtained CCLI licenses in 2012. This represents more than two-thirds of all PAOC churches in Canada.³³ Of note and perhaps not by coincidence, the number of PAOC churches in 2012 with a CCL corresponded closely with the number of PAOC churches (711) in which English was the primary spoken language in corporate worship. This is

28 From the CCLI website: “Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) was established in 1988 to provide churches with simple, affordable solutions to complex copyright issues. CCLI helps churches maintain their integrity and avoid costly lawsuits, while also giving churches the freedom to worship expressively and spontaneously.” CCLI’s Vision statement is: “To establish a strong communications network serving the Christian community, providing resources that inform, inspire, equip and add value.” CCLI’s Mission Statement is: “To encourage the spirit of worship to churches, organizations, and Christians individually, so that they may enhance their worship expression spontaneously, conveniently, affordably and legally.” See: <http://www.ccli.com/WhoWeAre> (accessed April 12, 2013).

29 <http://www.ccli.com/WhatWeOffer/ChurchCopyrightLicense.aspx> (accessed January 17, 2014). It is estimated that approximately 10,000 Canadian churches possess annual CCLI licenses (estimate provided by Mary O’Dea, CCLI specialist on May 6, 2013).

30 I argue that this reality reduces the potential for biased analysis of denominational data in this study.

31 The CCLI denominational code for the PAOC song usage data in this study was “PEN60.” For the purposes of this study, I obtained copies of twelve song usage reports for this denomination. I also reviewed and surveyed a report indicating the number of PEN60 churches, sampled and reporting, over a six-year period from April 2007 to March 2013.

32 Based on email correspondence with CCLI representative, Mary O’Dea, in April 2014, CCLI will not be supplying data for future “ad hoc inquiries” to the general public. O’Dea cited limited CCLI work force and updated tabulating software as the main reasons for this shift in policy.

33 There are various reasons why a church would not possess a CCLI copyright license. The most likely reasons, however, are either a) the church chooses to use public domain songs and not songs covered under the CCL agreement or b) the church uses songs covered under the agreement, but knowingly or unknowingly does so at the risk of copyright violations.

particularly intriguing because, while songwriters translate some songs covered under the CCL into different languages, the original language of the large majority of the songs in the authorized CCLI database is predominantly English. Unfortunately, it was not possible to gain information from CCLI indicating the primary language of the reporting PAOC churches. If this was the case, it would have been possible to determine the percentage of English-speaking PAOC churches that have CCLI licenses and, likewise, the percentage of non-English-speaking PAOC churches that do not.

Furthermore, CCLI was not able to provide any information on the name, location, size, or ethnicity of the reporting PAOC churches in this study. Based on the large church sample represented in the purchased CCLI reports, however, it is assumed the PAOC churches linked to this project fairly represent the type of characteristic diversity and influence (e.g. size, location, and demographics) of this Canadian religious denomination. Nonetheless, without further unequivocal data from CCLI, there are obvious limitations to what can and cannot be said about the church sample in this particular study.

Table 3.4. PAOC response rate to CCLI audit, 2007 to 2013³⁴

	Sampled	Responded	Response Rate
Apr-07	123	68	55%
Oct-07	130	83	64%
Apr-08	131	70	53%
Oct-08	122	67	55%
Apr-09	125	79	63%
Oct-09	124	79	64%
Apr-10	134	92	69%
Oct-10	134	83	62%
Apr-11	137	78	57%
Oct-11	129	73	57%
Apr-12	121	70	58%
Oct-12	143	68	48%
AVG	129	76	59%

Table 3.4 indicates that the average number of PAOC sampled churches (i.e. summoned

³⁴ Data from acquired CCLI Report acquired in 2012 and 2013.

to report as part of the CCL agreement) for each 6 month reporting period between April 2007 and March 2013 was 129 PAOC churches.³⁵ Of the churches that were sampled, the average response rate among PAOC churches for each reporting period was 59%.³⁶ Taking into account that each church was encouraged to report their music usage every two and one half years, the almost two-thirds responsive rate among licensed PAOC churches indicates that this study was likely to comprise of approximately 375 PAOC churches across Canada. This number represents about 35% of all the PAOC churches in Canada. Thus, while CCLI's reporting protocol does not provide song usage from *every* PAOC church, according to widely-respected measurement standards in the social sciences, the data for this project represents a reasonable representative sample for research associated with a religious population.³⁷

C) Selection of PAOC Commonly Used Songs

This third section outlines the process of selecting the 82 song corpus for my study (see: Appendix B). In addition to providing data on the PAOC churches sampled, CCLI was also able to provide data indicating the “top 25” used songs of reporting PAOC churches over several six month periods. For the purposes of this study, I collected 12 twice-per-year “top 25” lists of the most commonly used songs by the targeted 375 PAOC churches. These lists included a sequential six year period from April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2013.³⁸ The selected time frame

35 Attempts were made to inquire why there was a discrepancy between the approximate number of PAOC churches sampled every five copy report periods (647) and the total number of PAOC churches with CCLI licenses (741). CCLI was not able to provide a clear reason for this discrepancy. Note that the response rate is based on the sampled PAOC churches only, not on the total number of licensed PAOC churches.

36 This percentage represents, on average, 76 reporting PAOC churches during each reporting period. The approximate 40% non-responsiveness among PAOC churches was not necessarily interpreted as subversive to the purposes of this study. There are many contextual reasons why a church might not respond to a CCLI reporting request including: lack of music personnel (particularly among smaller PAOC churches), pastoral staff transitions, church closures, and, perhaps most significantly, the inconvenience of regularly tracking church music usage for an extended period of time.

37 Robert V. Krejcie and Daryle W. Morgan, “Determining Sample Size for Research Articles,” *Education and Psychological Measurement* 30 (1970): 607–10.

38 In June 2012, I received “top 25” lists for PEN60 from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2012. In November 2013, I received “top 25” lists from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. CCLI is capable of expediting the processing of

chosen for this project provided an opportunity for each reporting church, in theory, to participate twice in CCLI's copy activity reporting protocol.

A song was selected as part of this study if it appeared *at least once* in any of the 12 “top 25” lists of the reporting PAOC churches in the determined six year period.³⁹ When redundancy was accounted for, it was observed that 82 unique songs had appeared on the PAOC “top 25” lists from April 2007 to March 2013. The lyrics of these 82 songs make up the extensive dataset for this study (see: table 3.5).

Table 3.5. Complete list of selected song titles⁴⁰

10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)	Draw Me Close	Here I Am To Worship	In Christ Alone	Our God	We Fall Down
Above All	Enough	Holy And Anointed One	Indescribable	Our God Saves	You Are Good
All Who Are Thirsty	Everlasting God	Holy Is The Lord	Jesus Messiah	Overcome	You Are My King (Amazing Love)
Amazed	Filled With Your Glory	Holy Spirit	King Of Majesty	Revelation Song	Your Grace Is Enough
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)	For All You've Done	Hosanna	Love Came Down	Shout To The Lord	Your Great Name
At Your Name	Forever	Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)	Made Me Glad	Sing , Sing, Sing	Your Love Never Fails
Awesome Is The Lord Most High	Forever Reign	How Deep the Father's Love For Us	Majesty	Sing To The King	Your Name
Beautiful One	Freedom Reigns	How Great Is Our God	Mighty To Save	Son Of God	
Because He Lives	Friend Of God	How He Loves	My Redeemer Lives	Still	
Blessed Be Your Name	Glory To God Forever	I Am Free	My Savior Lives	Surrender	
Breathe	God of Wonders	I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever	O Praise Him	The Heart of Worship	
Come Now Is The Time To Worship	Great Is Thy Faithfulness	I Exalt Thee	Offering	The Stand	
Consuming Fire	Hallelujah	I Give You My Heart	Once Again	Today is the Day	
Days Of Elijah	Happy Day	I Know Who I Am	One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)	Trading My Sorrows	
Desert Song	Healer	I Love You Lord	Open The Eyes Of My Heart	Unchanging	

To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the song lyric analysis described below, a

denominational “top 25” lists within six months of the previous “pay period.”

39 In this respect, the frequency of the songs as they appeared on the “top 25” lists was not given a weight or comparable rank order. Frequency analysis of the songs might have provided an even more accurate depiction of the most commonly utilized songs in the reporting PAOC churches. However, this assessment was not pursued in this project.

40 An extended list of these songs, with their frequency of appearance, year of origin, original songwriter, and publisher appears in Appendix B.

master copy of the full version of each of the 82 songs was collected from CCLI's SongSelect database. This database represents the most accurate version of song lyrics written by various Christian songwriters. In total, the PAOC song list under review was comprised of 1,783 lines of lyrical prose.

The methodological approach for song selection in this study closely resembles Lester Ruth's lyrical analysis of commonly used songs dating back to the 1980s. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Ruth has served as a worship studies innovator in lyrical content analysis of contemporary worship music over the past few decades. Forty-four of the 82 songs in this study are also present in Ruth's song evaluation. Thirty-eight (or 46%) of the songs in this study do not presently appear in Ruth's work.⁴¹

Undeniably, there are limitations to utilizing the content of CCLI's "top 25" reports. Firstly, CCLI's auditing and reporting protocol, does not, obviously, account for *every* song used within PAOC churches throughout the selected period of this study. It can be assumed there are songs *not* represented in this study that were, most certainly, used by PAOC churches associated by the project sample. While the songs analysed for this study were reported as the most commonly used songs in a representative sampling of PAOC churches between April 2007 and March 2013, it would be unreasonable to assume these songs were the *only* ones integrated into PAOC corporate worship settings during this period of time.

Secondly, this study is limited by the fact that it only analyses the lyrical content of the selected songs. It does not take into consideration, for example, the musicological (i.e. melody, rhythm, harmony, or dynamics), ethnographic, nor secondary influences related to the songs.⁴² In

41 For a list of 110 of the "top 25" CCLI contemporary worship songs (1989 through 2014) that Ruth has evaluated, see: Lester Ruth, "Public Presentations," Duke University, <http://sites.duke.edu/lruth/public-presentations/> (accessed February 28, 2015).

42 As mentioned in the previous chapter, two studies that *do* assume a significantly broader methodological

addition, the songs that were analysed for this study were processed under an assumption that the lyrics of each song were used by reporting PAOC churches precisely as they were written by the songwriter.⁴³ This is not likely the case. In this respect, an excessive emphasis on lyrical content, irrespective of musicology (as well as verse, chorus, and line repetition) is not likely to capture the way the nuanced lyrics “live within the music.”⁴⁴ As Mark Evans has rightly cautioned, “there is always a danger of focusing too intently on lyrical deconstruction at the expense of ... the musical text.”⁴⁵

On the other hand, while some might lament that the lyrics of congregational songs mean very little to those who sing them in churches today,⁴⁶ this research project advances on the assumption that the words and theological intention in contemporary worship songs *do* mean something to songwriters, worship leaders, and worshippers.⁴⁷ Defending the value of lyrical content analysis, Evans has also written, “lyrics cannot be overlooked and are an integral part of the text. Historically, lyrical analysis affords an important view of the cultural pertinence of lyrics. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the constant censorship lyrics attract, and in the case of congregational song, the blanket rejection or acceptance that can result from one lyrical

approach to an assessment of contemporary worship music are Mark Evans’ *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church* monograph (2006) and Monique Ingalls’ *Awesome in the Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship* thesis (2008). Mark Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church* (London: Equinox, 2006); Monique M. Ingalls, “Awesome in This Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship” (University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

43 In many PAOC worship contexts, worship leaders may have taken liberties to omit certain verses and choruses in songs and repeat others.

44 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 113–114.

45 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 8; Evans wrote, “Congregational song is not produced in isolation; it is a consequence of numerous factors: denominational, national, economic and cultural—to name but a few. Theomusicological enquiry must necessarily deal with these external forces and secondary influences. Dealing only with the notes, or solely with lyrics, is a disservice to the discipline and the researcher alike.” Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 110.

46 For example, see: David Roozen: Roozen and Nieman, *Church, Identity, and Change: Theology and Denominational Structures in Unsettled Times*.

47 Lester Ruth, “Don’t Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters,” *The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies Blog*, February 1, 2006, <http://iws.edu/2006/02/lester-ruth-dont-lose-the-trinity> (accessed January 18, 2013); Robin Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship* (UK; Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2005), 8–11; Nick Page, *And Now Let’s Move Into a Time of Nonsense: Why Worship Songs Are Failing the Church* (Franklin, TN: Authentic Publishers, 2005), 111–112.

reading.”⁴⁸ These convictions are paramount to this thesis and as a concession that meaning is not exclusively associated with the words of songs.

Thirdly, the entries in the 300,000 song CCLI registry exclude those that are in the public domain and no longer under copyright restriction. Thus, most traditional and popular hymns fall *outside* the purview of this particular study. There are indicators, however, that hymns are sung less in PAOC worship contexts today. In Lewis Massarelli’s 1998 thesis, “A study of the Music of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and how it Changes at Times of Renewal,” he polled 34 pastors, mostly from PAOC churches in Ontario, Canada. He asked these pastors to provide “the average number of hymns used in a service.” Ninety-four percent of the respondents indicated that at least one hymn was always used in their PAOC corporate worship settings.⁴⁹ Fourteen years later, Reimer and Wilkinson’s study revealed that 56% of PAOC churches “always or usually” utilize hymns in corporate worship settings. In a March 2014 study, I received responses from 40 PAOC pastors to the following two questions: “How many songs were sung in your morning worship service this past Sunday?” and “How many traditional hymns were sung in your morning worship service this past Sunday?” Responses from pastors were representative of large, medium, and small PAOC churches in both urban and rural settings. On average, 6 songs were sung in the PAOC Sunday services. 38% of pastors indicated that 0 hymns were sung in these services. 36% indicated that 1 hymn was sung. Only 26% indicated that more than 1 hymn was sung. These numbers reinforce a suspicion that hymns are being sung less in PAOC churches than in past years.⁵⁰ That said, there *are* some hymns that are still sung in PAOC

48 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 114.

49 Lewis Gary Massarelli, “A Study of the Music of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and How It Changes at Times of Renewal” (California State University Dominguez Hills, 1998), 100–101, 172–175.

50 In a 1989 thesis assessing the music in Canadian PAOC churches and Bible colleges, Lillian Hildebrandt concluded, “Many Pentecostals do not see the value of hymn singing, mostly because they are ignorant of hymn origins and because the hymn style does not appeal to them. These types of attitudes in people are often a reflection of their leaders who may ignore using hymns or use them only because they know no different.”

churches and this project misses these songs, focusing instead on the CCLI registered contemporary worship songs that are frequently sung.⁵¹

Fourthly, it can be fairly assumed that the auditing process of CCLI is not flawless. CCLI personnel work directly with church parishioners and staff members to ensure that the reports collected provide the most accurate possible data. Human error, however, in the copy data reports must be assumed, and CCLI staff members are, inevitably, forced to make subjective judgments as they seek to interpret anomalies and outliers in the church copy reports. Yet, as the largest licensing agency for global Christian music content, CCLI is recognized as the sentinel in regard to song licensing, reporting, and royalty distribution in the contemporary worship music industry. While CCLI is not an organization without flaws, it is, nonetheless, the best measure of the most popular songs used in the churches for this project.

D) Lyrical Content Analyses Using Colin Gunton's Theological Categories

Having defined, in the previous chapter, the trinitarian concepts Gunton proposed, the next step in this project is to describe an operational measure of these concepts as a framework of qualitative analysis for the PAOC song corpus.⁵² Construction of this theological framework involves gathering key theological characteristics from the literature associated with Gunton's

Lillian B. Hildebrandt, "A Study of Music Practices in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Churches and Bible Colleges" (University of British Columbia, 1989), 174–175.

51 Ruth's research in the United States has compared contemporary worship choruses with eighteenth and nineteenth century hymns. Interestingly, his findings reveal that some of the most commonly reported deficiencies related to contemporary choruses can also be leveled on the frequently sung Evangelical hymns from the past two hundred years. See: Ruth, "Public Presentations," Duke University, <http://sites.duke.edu/lruth/public-presentations/> (accessed February 28, 2015).

52 The questions in this project find similarities with those evident in the work of Lester Ruth and John Witvliet. See, for example: Lester Ruth, "How Great Is Our God: The Trinity in Contemporary Christian Worship Music," in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*, ed. Robert H. Woods and Brian D. Walrath (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007); Lester Ruth, "Lex Amandi, Lex Orandi: The Trinity in the Most-Used Contemporary Christian Worship Songs," in *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer* (Pueblo Books, 2008; Liturgical Press, 2008), 342–59; John D. Witvliet, "The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature," *Institute of Sacred Music: Colloquium Journal* 2 (2005), http://www.yale.edu/ism/colloq_journal/vol2/witvliet1.html (accessed December 9, 2013); John D. Witvliet, "The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Theology and Practice of Christian Worship in the Reformed Tradition" (University of Notre Dame, 1997).

trinitarian work. In this respect, Gunton's theology serves as the foundation for several criteria used to evaluate the trinitarian impulses within the song lyrics by employing the research questions addressed below. The organization of these questions closely follows the general outline of the previous chapter, focusing particularly in the three areas under review: a) the nature of God, b) the nature of human personhood, and c) the nature of the created order. In total, eight lyrical content analyses are completed.⁵³ The remainder of this chapter provides the rationale and particularities for the eight qualitative analyses associated with the 82 song corpus. The process of identifying, coding, categorizing, and analyzing the lyrical data (See: Appendix A) will now be thoroughly explained.

i) Lyrical Content Analyses Concerning Views about God

1) Particular Identification in Divine Naming

The first criterion of the theological framework is approached with the following question: *Do the songs, explicitly and/or implicitly, name and identify all the persons of the Trinity?*⁵⁴

As discussed in the previous chapter, Gunton was concerned with trinitarian deficiencies in modern theology that favour modalistic and neoplatonic perceptions of God and tend to “flatten out” the distinct particularities among the unique divine persons.⁵⁵ More specifically, Gunton grew increasingly troubled by the persistent downplaying of the personhood of God the

53 The data associated with each of the content analyses can be located in Appendix A at the end of this thesis.

54 In Ruth's work, he has used a similar question: “Do the songs name the Trinity or all three Persons of the Trinity?” Ruth, “How Great Is Our God: The Trinity in Contemporary Christian Worship Music,” 30-31.

55 See: Colin E. Gunton, “And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made,” in *Nicene Christianity*, ed. Christopher R. Seitz (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001), 36; Colin E. Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43, no. 1 (January 1, 1990): 38; Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, Bampton Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 51, 122; Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (London: SCM Press, 2002), 5; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 37.

Holy Spirit in Western theology.⁵⁶ Prescriptively, Gunton viewed a renewed emphasis on the distinct particularity of the particular divine persons as a theological way forward.⁵⁷ Accordingly, the divine names within the 82 songs are examined, keeping in mind that if a trinitarian doctrine of God is at the core of PAOC doctrine and, more broadly, the Christian ecumenical creeds, then it stands to reason that the concrete particularity of each divine person ought to be well-represented in the ways the triune God are named and addressed in the commonly used PAOC songs.

To assess this, the divine names from each song are organized into the following four main categories: first person (explicit and implicit),⁵⁸ second person (explicit and implicit),⁵⁹ third person (explicit and implicit),⁶⁰ and vague/undefined.⁶¹ In total, there are 1,015 divine names identified in the 82 song corpus.⁶² Once the divine names are categorized, qualitative analysis is pursued at two levels: by song total (82) and by naming total (1,015). Analysis of the data by song total indicates the number of songs that refer *at least once* to the first, second, and third person of the Trinity. It also provides an indication of how many songs contain vague or unidentifiable divine references totals in which it is not possible to determine which person of

56 See: Colin E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, Didsbury Lectures (Grand Rapids; Carlisle, England: Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992); Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, repr. (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), 48–54; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 51; Colin E. Gunton, “One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation, Mediation and Life in Community,” *Pro Ecclesia* 11, no. 2 (March 1, 2002): 157–158; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 191 n.12.

57 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 110; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 190.

58 An example of a first person (explicit) divine title is “Father.” An example of a first person (implicit) divine title is “God (sent his Son).”

59 Examples of second person (explicit) divine titles are “Jesus,” “Emmanuel,” and “Christ.” Examples of second person (implicit) divine titles are “Savior,” “Lamb,” and “You.”

60 Examples of third person (explicit) divine titles are “Holy Spirit,” “Spirit of God.” Examples of third person (implicit) divine titles are “Presence,” “Breath,” and “You.”

61 Examples of vague divine titles are “Lord,” “God,” “You,” and “King.”

62 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. This reliability check produced a consistency rating of over 95% indicating a high reliability related to the identification and categorization of the divine names in this study.

the Trinity is identified. Analysis of the data by naming total provides a cumulative sum of *all* the divine names in each of the four main categories. This is intended to offer insight regarding the overall frequency of the divine names in *all* the songs. Moreover, implicit references to the second divine person are assessed to determine the christological orientation as from below, from above, or undefinable and vague. Christological names from below (e.g. “Light of the world,” “Comforter,” and “Friend”) implicitly stress the incarnational, engaged, and human nature of Jesus Christ. Implicit names from above (e.g. “King,” “Lord,” and “Holy One”) highlight Christ’s exalted, triumphant, and transcendent nature. Additionally, vague and unclear christological references (e.g. “You,” “Name,” and “God”) in which neither an orientation from below nor from above are identified. By these measures, this analysis of divine naming seeks to explore the particular identification of the triune God as revealed in the PAOC song corpus.

2) Recognition of Divine Action in Salvation History

The second criterion concerns an understanding of God as active in salvation history. Gunton associated an attenuated view of God’s historical economy in salvation history with a deficient trinitarianism.⁶³ In this respect, he was opposed to any theological tendency that neglected the economy of God in the Old Testament and advanced the notion of a deity that “float(s) off into abstraction from the concrete history of salvation.”⁶⁴ Against this, Gunton argued for a correlation and continuity of God’s actions in creation, redemption, and eschatology.⁶⁵ This theological impulse, underscoring the actions of the triune God in salvation

63 See: Colin E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2d ed. (London: SCM Press, 2001), 47–50, 131–135; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 55.

64 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 34; See also: Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 4–5; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 55, 159.

65 Colin E. Gunton, “Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World,” in *Trinitarian Theology Today* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 110–112; Colin E. Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972–1995* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 42; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God,*

history, motivates analysis of divine actions attributed to the persons of the Trinity among the selected PAOC songs, as reflected by the second research question: *Do the songs speak of the actions of the triune God with reference to salvation history as recorded in biblical scripture?*⁶⁶

In order to evaluate this, each of the songs' verbs used in description of divine actions are organized into eight categories. Six of these categories are theological in nature and include divine actions associated with the following salvation history categories: creation (e.g. "You *spoke* the world to be"), the Fall, Israel (e.g. "these are the days of your servant, David, rebuilding a temple of praise"), incarnation (e.g. "You *stepped* down into darkness"), redemption (e.g. "He *bled* and *died*"), and eschatology (e.g. "Our God will *reign* forever"). Two other main categories classify the actions of God as either vague—abstract references to God's actions in which no clear reference is made to salvation history associated with the Christian scriptures (e.g. "Lord, *have* your way in me") or being verbs—those that provide information about God without describing a specific divine action in salvation history (e.g. "You *are* amazing, God"). A total of 698 divine verbs in the 82 songs are categorized for the purposes of this study.⁶⁷ When this categorization is completed, the divine verbs are analysed by song total (82) and by divine verb total (698). Analyzing the verbs by song total provides insight into how many of the songs refer *at least once* to a divine verb associated with the six main theological categories and the two additional vague categories. Qualitative analysis by divine verb total provides a cumulative

Creation and the Culture of Modernity, 158.

66 Ruth, in a 2012 lecture on contemporary worship music song analysis, posed a similar question: "What range of verbs are used with respect to divine activity and what numbers? How does this compare across the bodies of songs?" Lester Ruth, "Perhaps Contemporary Music is not that Contemporary: Reflections on Popular Worship Music in the Last 200 Years" (Spring Renewal Lecture, The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA, April 10-12, 2012); Similarly, John Witvliet utilized the following question in his work, "Does (a worship practice) speak of God with reference to particular actions in history recorded in Scripture?" Witvliet, "The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature."

67 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. The reliability check produced a consistency rating of 92% indicating a high reliability related to the identification and categorization of the divine actions in this study.

total of *all* the divine verbs in each of the eight distinct categories.

The procedure of organizing the verbs associated with divine activity also allows for identification of the divine verbs most commonly utilized in the song corpus. Recurring divine action verbs (e.g. “He *loves* us”) are isolated if they appear *at least once* in more than four songs.⁶⁸ Common linking verbs (e.g. “Our God *is* greater”) are, likewise ranked by virtue of their occurrence *at least once* in more than four songs associated with the PAOC corpus. This provides a way to measure emerging patterns in relation to the economy of God’s actions rooted in a concrete world and history and in abstract, contemplative divine actions.

The categorized divine verbs are also evaluated to determine if a synthesis exists within the songs in relation to the six theological categories. Song totals are tabulated to determine if a song contains divine verbs in one, two, three, four, five, or six of the salvation history categories. In addition, song totals are tabulated for songs which contain no references to any of the salvation history categories. This evaluation provides a sense of the interconnectivity of major theological doctrines in the songs.

Finally, analysis of the divine verbs is undertaken [by both song total (82) and verb total (698)] according to the following criteria: a) verbs describing the acts of God alone (e.g. “You *stepped* down into darkness”), b) verbs describing the acts of God, in association with a human object (e.g. “You *lead* me”), and c) verbs describing the acts of God, in association with an imperative (e.g. “*Give* us strength”). By these analyses of the actions attributed to God, this project seeks to determine whether the PAOC worship songs provide an appropriate picture of the triune God in association with concrete actions in salvation history.

68 The appearance of a divine verb in a minimum of 4 songs seemed like a reasonable frequency measure to evaluate commonality.

3) Acknowledgment of Inter-Trinitarian Relationality

The third criterion associated with God focuses on the relationships among the persons of the Trinity. It is attended to by this question: *Do the songs acknowledge the perichoretic relationality that exists among the persons of the immanent Trinity?*⁶⁹ As previously discussed, Gunton regularly argued that an Augustinian hesitation to expand upon the threeness of the trinitarian Godhead misdirected Western Christianity toward neoplatonic and non-relational notions of a transcendent and modalistic deity.⁷⁰ This inclined him to resist philosophical abstractions about the triune God in favour of more personal categories that described the interrelationality among the divine persons of the immanent Trinity.⁷¹ Ontologically, Gunton viewed relationality as sourced in the shared communion that exists among the members of the Godhead—a dynamic being in communion.⁷² The trinitarian portrait that emerges is a relationality within God’s inner being through which each of the divine persons are conceived of as a unity of persons in relation.⁷³ This shared being in communion, however, was not advanced by Gunton at the expense of an understanding of the distinct particularity of the Father, Son, and Spirit as three unique *hypostases*.⁷⁴ Thus, Gunton seized upon a Cappadocian understanding of

69 In Ruth’s work, he uses a similar question: “Do the songs remember the activity of the divine persons among Themselves?” Ruth, “How Great is Our God: The Trinity in Contemporary Christian Worship Music,” 33.

70 Gunton, “One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation, Mediation and Life in Community,” 147; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 37; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 37; Colin E. Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41, no. 3 (January 1, 1988): 374; Colin E. Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom,” in *Theology Beyond Christendom: Essays on the Centenary of the Birth of Karl Barth*, ed. John Thompson (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1986), 285–289; Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 67–69; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 45–51.

71 Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 222.

72 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 9, 95–96; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 214.

73 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 215; Colin E. Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 101.

74 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 180–209; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 191.

perichoresis as the interpenetrational, mutual indwelling of the divine persons in which each person exists and constitutes their being in dynamic reciprocity with one another.⁷⁵

It is this relational concept of divine *perichoresis* that prompts my examination of its expression among the 82 PAOC songs. To gauge even the potential for divine *perichoresis* expression among the PAOC song list, an initial assessment is completed to identify songs that possess a combination of *at least* two divine names.⁷⁶ The songs are organized into five main categories representing the potential divine naming combinations including first + second person, first + third person, second + third person, first + second + third person, and no combination of persons. Once the songs with divine naming combinations are isolated, a careful examination of the particular phrases in which two or more divine names are correlated with one another is undertaken. This entails an assessment of divine naming totals (1,015) in which perichoretic relationality may implicitly be assumed (e.g. “the *Father’s* only *Son*). It also includes an investigation of divine action totals (698) in which divine relationality is detected (e.g. “God *sent* his Son”). This provides a sense of the existence of perichoretic relationality among the particular divine persons as depicted within the PAOC song set.

ii) Lyrical Content Analyses Concerning Views about Human Personhood

4) Singularity/Plurality of Human Self-Identification

After exploring the nature of God in the first three questions of this project’s framework, additional questions are constructed to address theological issues relating to the nature of human personhood. The first anthropomorphic matter to be assessed is whether song lyrics encourage

75 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 94-95; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 163–164; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 169; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 186.

76 I am cognizant of the fact that even if a combination of this nature exists among the songs, it does not necessarily indicate that divine relationality is expressed in the songs. It may, for example, simply indicate that two divine persons are identified independently in a song. I deduce, however, that if there is no combination of divine persons in the songs, then divine relationality can not explicitly be expressed.

worshippers to self-identify as single individuals or as a corporate body. Therefore, the fourth question of the analytical framework asks this: *Is human self-identification in the songs depicted as singular, plural, or neutral?* Gunton decried a narrow view of the human person described exclusively as an introspective, inward-turned soul in opposition to the material realm.⁷⁷ He associated this neoplatonic view of human personhood with a pervasive confusion related to what it means to be human.⁷⁸ Against modern views of individualism, Gunton correlated ontological notions of God's triunity as being in communion to an understanding of the sociality of human personhood. Gunton held that this is reinforced by virtue of the image of God upon humanity as beings in relation.⁷⁹ This aspect of my project framework, therefore, seeks to illuminate whether an orientation of *me-centredness* or *we-centredness* is evident in the PAOC song corpus.

To achieve this, each of the pronouns associated with human self-identification are sorted into three categories: singular, plural, and neutral. In total, there are 981 pronouns attributed to human subjects or objects in the 82 song corpus.⁸⁰ For all of the songs, study of the pronouns associated with humans by song total includes another level of investigation by the following song orientations: singular (exclusive), singular + plural (singular predominant), singular + neutral (singular predominant), plural (exclusive), plural + singular (plural predominant), plural + neutral (plural predominant), neutral (exclusive), singular + plural (even) and plural + neutral

77 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 86, 100–101; Colin E. Gunton, “The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework,” in *Faithfulness and Fortitude* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 211.

78 Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (London; New York: Continuum, 2003), 13, 34–35.

79 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 96; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 41; Colin E. Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” in *Persons, Divine and Human* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 84–87.

80 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. The reliability check produced a consistency rate of 95% indicating high reliability in the identification and categorization of the human pronouns in this study. Pronouns in the singular category include: *Me, I, I'm, I've, Mine, I'll, and I'd*. Pronouns in the plural category include: *We Our, We'll Us, and We're*. Pronouns in the Neutral category include: *Your, You're, You, and Ye*.

(even). Qualitative analysis of the data by song total indicates the dominant pronoun constitution among the 82 song corpus. The human pronouns are also analysed by pronoun total (981). This provides a cumulative sum total of the pronouns in singular, plural, and neutral categories for all the songs and indicates, at a more specific level, the frequency in which the various human pronouns are used throughout the song corpus. In this way, this criterion sets out to ascertain the way in which worshippers are prone to either self-identify within a worshipping community or as individuals.

5) Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality

Another criterion associated with views of personhood addresses the issue of human relationality. Gunton understood that the anthropological inward turn predisposes people to relinquish their social responsibility as affected persons rooted in a world in relation to one another.⁸¹ With this in mind, Gunton tended to view contemporary views of human freedom as non-relational and those which skewed the human responsibility of people *away* from their neighbour.⁸² Instead, Gunton upheld the importance of horizontally-oriented human relationality.⁸³ This approach avoids the abdication of human responsibility toward each other and upholds the idea that people are relational image bearers of God in communion with one another. Gunton wrote, “We are in the image of God when, like God but in dependence on his giving, we find our reality in what we give to and receive from others in human community.”⁸⁴ In order to determine how this idea is reflected within the PAOC song list, a fifth analysis is undertaken to answer the question: *Do the actions of the worshipper in the songs acknowledge*

81 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 48; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 13–14, 30–34, 103, 106, 203–204; Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 15; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 84, 86, 119–136.

82 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 84, 119–136; Gunton, “The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework,” 212.

83 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 113–114.

84 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 59.

*the horizontal-orientation of human relationality?*⁸⁵

In order to gauge whether the lyrics of the 82 songs possess a measure of horizontal relationality, a qualitative analysis of the verbs (775) associated with the worshipper is completed.⁸⁶ Firstly, the human verbs expressed in the imperative mood are identified in an attempt to clearly understand what PAOC worshippers are calling one another to *do* as they sing from the song list. Song totals are processed to determine how many of the songs contain these imperative verbs (e.g. “*Come, let us sing*”) associated with human activity. This provides a general assessment of the frequency in which worshippers are conceivably exhorting one another to do something within the context of the song. A more detailed cumulative sum total of the human imperative verbs provides a more specific indicator of the frequency in which these instructive commands are expressed throughout the 82 song corpus. This also allows formulation of a list of the most common imperatives worshippers express to one another. Secondly, imperative human verbs directly connected to a plural human pronoun (e.g. “*We turn to You*”) are isolated. An analysis by song and cumulative sum total of these verbs provides an indication of the actions that collective worshippers proclaim as they worship together. Finally, a tabulation of the number of verb phrases in which human to human interaction is actually and explicitly expressed (e.g. “*shine your light and let the whole world see*”) is completed. Together, these analyses represent attempts to evaluate and better understand the expressions of human to human activity in the song corpus.

85 Similarly, in a 2012 lecture, Ruth asked, “What range of verbs are used with respect to human activity and in what numbers? How does this compare across the bodies of songs?” Lester Ruth, “Perhaps Contemporary Music is not that Contemporary: Reflections on Popular Worship Music in the Last 200 Years” (Spring Renewal Lecture, The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA, April 10-12, 2012).

86 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. This reliability check produced a consistency rating of over 95% indicating a high reliability related to the identification and categorization of the human verbs in this study.

6) Expressions of Mediatorial Worship

The final criterion relating to an understanding of human personhood seeks to measure the degree of correspondence within the worship song lyrics to traditional mediatorial worship formulas by asking the question: *Do the songs reinforce the mediatorial worship of the worshipper as to, in, and through the different persons of the Trinity?*⁸⁷ This sixth question of my project's research framework is significant in that it highlights the idea that human worship is relational participation in divine activity. For Gunton, the trinitarian concept of divine mediation, specifically the Irenaean idea of God's two hands, provided an approach for him to accentuate divine relationality oriented *toward* humanity and creation without undermining the divine particularity intrinsic to each of the three divine persons.⁸⁸ Gunton retained that a neoplatonic modalism overemphasizing divine oneness, and specifically proliferated by an underdeveloped christology and a downplayed pneumatology, could be overcome by espousing the mediatorial nature associated with the Godhead. The relational idea of God's two hands, for example, reinforces the hypostatic distinctiveness of Jesus Christ as high priest and the Holy Spirit as perfecting cause, thereby avoiding the flattening out of the distinctions between the unique divine persons.⁸⁹

87 Ruth has asked, "Do the songs see Christian worship as participation of believers in inter-trinitarian dynamics or activity?" Ruth, "How Great is our God: the Trinity in Contemporary Worship Music," 35–36; Similarly, Witvliet has inquired, "Does the (worship practice) acknowledge the example and mediation of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? Witvliet, "The Trinitarian DNA of Christian Worship: Perennial Themes in Recent Theological Literature."

88 Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 77; Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2003), 80; Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology (Edinburgh; Grand Rapids: Edinburgh University Press; Eerdmans, 1998), 41–64; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 3–19; Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 164–180; Colin E. Gunton, "Creation and Mediation in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson: An Encounter and a Convergence," in *Trinity, Time, and Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 80–93.

89 Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 199; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 81; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 187; Gunton, "And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made," 36; Gunton, "Augustine, the

By extension and in Gunton's view, worship is a covenantal practice that humans participate in by virtue of God's gracious two hands. That is, worship is sourced, primarily, in the personal, loving character of a relational trinitarian God.⁹⁰ Accordingly, human worship is *not* exclusively the product of the worshippers' individual efforts to achieve it. The underlying idea is that the doxological structure of *all* Christian praise includes relational participation in trinitarian activity *to* God the Father, *with* God the Son, and *by* the God the Spirit.⁹¹

Following this logic, a qualitative analysis of prepositions affixed to divine naming is executed in an effort to assess how the mediatorial essence of worship acts is expressed in the PAOC songs. More specifically, evidence of the longstanding mediatorial doxology that addresses worship *to* (or *for*) the Father, *in* (or *with*) Jesus Christ, and *through* (or *by*) the Holy Spirit is sought.⁹² Of course, it is recognized that, in the strictest sense, this mediatorial approach is not the *only* appropriate formula for human worship. In the broader context of this study, however, this evaluation seems to be a complementary analysis, informing some of this project's general research questions with respect to views on the particularity of the divine persons and perceptions about the role of the human worshipper.

Thus, to appraise whether this form of divine mediation worship expression is evident, prepositions associated with a divine object from each song are arranged into the following prepositional categories: *to* (e.g. "Draw me close *to* You"), *for* (e.g. "I'm desperate *for* You"),

Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 38.

90 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 133–134; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 222; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 113. Gunton's views on worship also coincided with his notions of what it means to be human. He wrote, "To be a human being is to be related to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit, and it is the character of Christian experience to realise that relationship." Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 6.

91 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 222; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 113.

92 The mediatorial doxology is more specific than the coordinated doxology: *to* the Father, *to* (or *with*) the Son, and *to* (or *with*) the Spirit. For a thorough expression of the differences between the mediatorial and coordinated doxology, see: Stephen R. Holmes and Murray Rae, *The Person of Christ* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2005), 155ff; Josef Andreas Jungmann, *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer*, 2nd ed (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1989).

with (e.g. “The earth is filled *with* His glory”), in (e.g. “*In* Christ alone, my hope is found”), by (e.g. “We will overcome *by* the blood of the Lamb”), and through (e.g. “Through you the blind will see”). In total, there are 193 prepositions associated with the divine names identified in the 82 song PAOC corpus.⁹³ Following this categorization, analysis of these divine prepositions by cumulative sum total provides insight into the ways in which the most predominant prepositions are utilized in the songs. More specifically, cumulative sum totals of the prepositions in each category are evaluated to determine if they reinforce or refute the mediatorial formula: *to* the Father, *in* (or *with*) Jesus Christ, and *through* (or *by*) the Holy Spirit.

iii) Lyrical Content Analyses Concerning Views about Cosmology

7) Cosmological Correspondence between Time and Timelessness

The last two criteria of this project’s theological framework address the nature of the created order. The first of these deals with the concept of time and is approached with the following question: *What is the perception of time in relation to the action of the worshipper in the songs?* As was discussed earlier, Gunton contended that a problematic dualism exists today in regard to the ways in which humanity engages with and conceives of time and timelessness.⁹⁴ As a result of this, he interpreted modernity as a context in which we struggle to conceptualize eternity and overcompensate by accentuating the present, this-worldly realm as the most important reality.⁹⁵ Yet, this overemphasis on the time-bound here and now yields unsettling results. Gunton argued that we exhibit a general unease and anxiety with the present, while,

93 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. This reliability check produced a consistency rating of over 95% indicating a high reliability related to the identification and categorization of the divine names in this study.

94 Colin E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 110; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 97, 105.

95 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 74–75, 78–79.

ironically, lacking an ability to live anywhere but in the present.⁹⁶ Against this, Gunton argued for a more balanced cosmological view of time in which we embrace the temporality of the created order with a balanced appreciation for the past, the present, and the future.⁹⁷ It is this desire for an equitable cosmological perception of time and timelessness that leads to consideration of the tenses of verbs associated with the self-expression of human activity in the PAOC songs.

In total, there are 775 verbs associated with the human worshipper in the 82 songs analysed for this project.⁹⁸ For the purposes of analysis, these human verbs are organized into categories of three basic verb tenses corresponding with their location in time: past (e.g. “*I’ve tasted and I’ve seen*”), present (e.g. “*I trust in you*”), and future (e.g. “*I will bring praise*”). These categorized verbs are then analysed by song total (82) and cumulative verb total (775). Analysis of the human verbs by song total provides insight not only into the principal verb tense used in each song, but also a general understanding of the principle verb tense used in the entire song corpus. Indication of the principle tense of the songs is organized by the following categories: past tense (exclusive), past tense (predominant), present tense (exclusive), present tense (predominant), future tense (exclusive), future tense (predominant), even (past/present), even (present/future), and no tenses. Moreover, verbs analysed by cumulative verb total provides a particular sense of the tense emphasized in the cumulative sum of verbs associated with human activity. Further, in a supplementary analysis that considers cosmological perceptions of time in the songs, I collate a list of the most common nouns that are used in association with explicit references to time. I surmise that the findings from this ancillary investigation about references

96 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 76–77, 90–94, 99.

97 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 74–100.

98 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. The reliability check produced a consistency rating of 95% indicating a high reliability related to the identification of human verbs in this study.

to time might serve to bolster or refute the findings in the verb tense analysis. Time-oriented nouns are added to the list if they appear *at least once* in any of the 82 PAOC songs.

8) Cosmological Correspondence between Material and Immaterial

In addition to concerns identified with a dualistic understanding of time, Gunton was also quick to recognize dualistic imbalances associated with human perceptions of the material and immaterial realms. He observed a tendency in our contemporary context to offset a view of the disorderliness of the lower material realm over against a view of the orderliness of the higher transcendent realm.⁹⁹ Against neoplatonic notions of the abstract conceptualization of created objects, Gunton stressed the particularity, materiality, and diversity of created things.¹⁰⁰ *Perichoresis* provided Gunton with a concept to advance an interrelated balance of the material and immaterial order.

This theological framework provides the impetus to examine the abstract, personified, and concrete nouns in the PAOC song corpus in order to answer this question: *Is there a balance between material and immaterial objects in the songs?*¹⁰¹ In total, there are 1,289 nouns in the song corpus. These nouns are organized into three major categories: concrete nouns, personified/anthropomorphized nouns, and abstract nouns.¹⁰² Concrete nouns are identified as those that are tangible, perceivable by the senses, and those which name something we can see, hear, smell, taste, or touch (e.g. *sky, streets, friend, and feet*). Abstract nouns are identified as

99 Gunton, “Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom”; Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 50–53; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 84, 100–101; Colin E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, Contemporary Christian Studies (Grand Rapids; Basingstoke: Eerdmans; Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1985), 17–25, 83; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 34–36; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 35–43, 89–90; Colin E. Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 147–150; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 56, n.21.

100 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 70, 206.

101 This excludes nouns associated with divine names, human naming, and those associated with time.

102 A reliability check was completed by an external analyser who recoded the data from this content analysis. The reliability check produced a consistency rate of 92% indicating high reliability in the identification and categorization of the non-human and non-divine nouns in this study.

those that cannot be perceived by your senses and reflect an intangible concept that explains experiences, ideas, or feelings (e.g. *hope, mercy, providence, and grace*). Personified nouns are identified as those that give a non-human object personal and concrete human characteristics in order to create imagery (e.g. God's *heart, eyes, and shoulder*). Once the nouns are separated into these three major categories, they are assessed by song total (82) and cumulative sum total (1,289). Assessment by song total allow for a level of categorization into the following song orientations: abstract noun (exclusive), abstract noun (predominant), even (abstract/concrete), concrete noun (predominant), concrete noun (exclusive). Qualitative analysis of the data by song total provides an indication of the dominant noun constitution among the 82 PAOC songs. Assessment by cumulative sum total provides a total number of all the nouns in the abstract, personified/anthropocentric, and concrete categories. Similar to the approach taken in the seventh lyrical analysis on temporality, a supplementary analysis is completed to create a list of the most commonly used abstract, concrete, and personified/anthropomorphized nouns. I determine that an assessment of the ways in which these nouns are used provides greater insight into views about materiality and immateriality in the songs. Abstract, concrete, and personified/anthropomorphized nouns are added to the list if they appear *at least once* in any of the 82 PAOC songs. These measures reveal perceptions about materiality and immateriality that are propagated by the lyrics of the PAOC songs in this study.

This chapter has described the fundamental methodology for the lyrical analyses in this thesis in an attempt to assess a consistency between PAOC trinitarian statements of faith and the expressed worship practices associated with commonly used contemporary worship songs. At the onset, I outlined the selection and identification of the PAOC as the focus of study for this project. Further exploration included discussion of CCLI and its reporting protocols, as well as

the establishment of a six year analysis of the 82 song corpus used in this study. Finally, the project methodology applied eight theological research questions which are contingent upon Gunton's trinitarian framework. It is expected that the verifiable answers to these applied questions reveal the extent to which the most commonly used songs within PAOC churches support trinitarian theological tenets of the faith. The next chapter, then, will explore, in greater detail, the findings discovered in these eight content analyses.

CHAPTER 4: DATA FROM QUALITATIVE LYRICAL CONTENT ANALYSIS OF COMMONLY USED PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA SONGS

This chapter presents the data compiled from the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses described in the previous chapter. The first three analyses of the PAOC songs correspond with issues addressed in the previous chapters concerning specific views about God. The fourth, fifth, and sixth analyses attend to issues germane to views that affect an understanding of anthropology. The last two analyses of the lyrics apply to discussion relevant to a conceptualization of cosmology. Several summary tables and figures are presented throughout this chapter in order to clarify the presented data and reinforce the findings of this project. Numerous lyrical examples are also provided to offer clarification of the chapter analyses. As explained in the previous chapter, analysis of the data is generated at two main levels: generally, by song total and, more specifically, by cumulative sum total.

It should be noted that this chapter is limited to the careful presentation and analysis of the collected data for this study. As such, implications and proposals associated with the data observations are not drawn upon or exhaustively discussed. Furthermore, in this chapter, results are not compared to those of other researchers associated in the field of lyrical content analysis. A more complete discussion will be presented in the following chapter in which a discourse concerning the overall project findings is thoroughly addressed in relation to the PAOC and with Gunton's descriptive and prescriptive trinitarian theology in full view.

A) Lyrical Content Analyses Concerning Views about God

i) Particular Identification in Divine Naming (as measured by Question #1: *Do the songs, explicitly and/or implicitly, name and identify all the persons of the Trinity?*)

The first of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses focused on the particularity of

divine identification as revealed by naming instances. As the PAOC's trinitarian statement of faith is consistent with Gunton's concern for the expression of the distinct particularity among the unique divine persons, it was expected that the concrete particularity of each divine person would be well-represented in the lyrics of the songs under review in this study. As figure 4.1 and figure 4.2 reveal below, however, there were inconsistencies when comparisons were made of particular references to the first, second, and third person of the Trinity. This was evident at the general level when an evaluation of divine names was processed by song comparison. These results were also reinforced by the more specific cumulative sum totals associated with the entire number divine names among the 82 PAOC songs.

By song comparison, the number of reported PAOC songs with at least one reference to the first person of the Trinity (see: figure 4.1) was significantly low. In total, 9 of the 82 songs contained at least one explicit reference to the first divine person (e.g. "in the Name of the *Father*"), while 7 songs in the song corpus contained at least one reference in which the name of the first divine person was generally implied (e.g. "that *He* should give *His* only Son"). In total, 13 (or 16%)¹ of the songs contained at least one explicit or implicit reference to the first divine person.² Of course, this indicates that a large majority (84%) of the PAOC songs contained no particular reference to the first person of the Trinity.

1 Throughout this chapter, all percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number unless otherwise noted. For this reason, percentages may not always add up to precisely 100%.

2 Three of the PAOC songs contained independent explicit and implicit references to the first divine person in the same song.

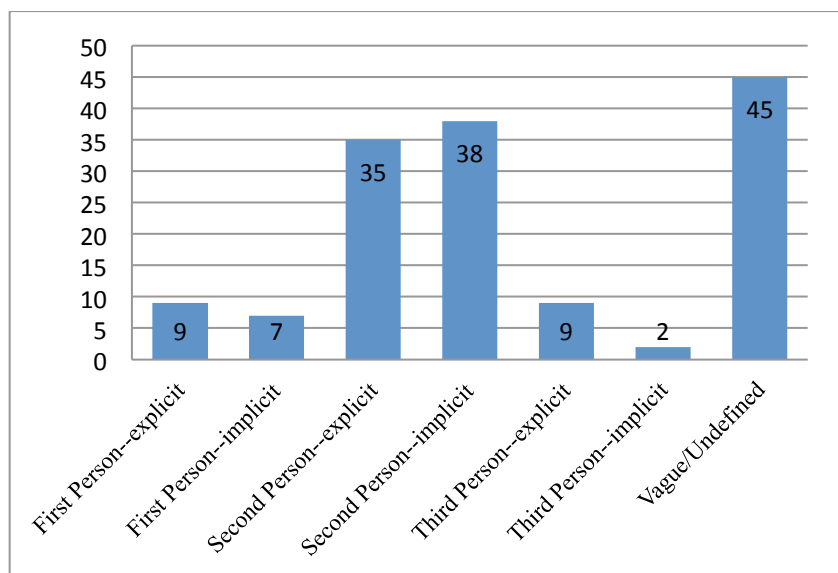


Figure 4.1. Divine naming—evaluated by song total.

Shockingly for a Pentecostal context, comparable numbers were also observed in regard to references to the third person of the Trinity among the most commonly used PAOC songs. Of the 82 songs analysed, 9 explicitly referred *at least once* to the third divine person (e.g. “*Holy Spirit* come”). In 2 of these 9 songs, implicit divine titles were identified where references to the third divine person was implied, though not explicitly named, within the lyrical context of the song [e.g. “Oh *God* how we love Your Presence *Lord*” in a song entitled, “*Holy Spirit*” (2011)]. Overall, it was observed that almost 90% of the songs contained no explicit or implicit references to the third person of the Trinity.

Concerning naming of the second divine person, higher occurrences were clearly observed. Of the 82 reported PAOC songs, a total of 35 offered at least one explicit reference to the second person of the Trinity (e.g. “sing now with voices raised to *Jesus*”). Likewise, in 38 of the songs, at least one implicit reference to the second person of the Trinity was identified (e.g. “‘cause my *Lord* has conquered the grave”). Viewed as a whole, 43 songs (or 52%) of the PAOC song corpus contained at least one explicit or implicit reference to the second person of the

Trinity.³ These numbers represent a disproportionately higher aggregate in second person divine naming practices compared to those associated with either the first or third divine persons in the songs.

A final category of songs identified those containing at least one vague/undefined divine name in which it was difficult to determine an explicit or implicit reference to either the first, second, or third divine person (e.g. “open the eyes of my heart, *Lord*”). In total, 45 (or 55%) of the 82 songs contained at least one vague divine title, making this vague/undefined category the largest of the divine name classifications. Notably, 33 (or 40%) of the songs in the PAOC corpus contained *only* vague and undefinable divine names in which no unique particularity could be distinguished among the three persons of the Trinity. Only 2 of the 82 songs in the PAOC song list contained explicit references to all three divine persons in the same song. In this respect, Chris Tomlin’s “How Great is Our God” (2004) and Brenton Brown and Paul Baloche’s “Our God Saves” (2007) represented exceptions to the norm.

Figure 4.2 reveals that corresponding results exist when a cumulative sum total comparison was made of first, second, third, and vague/undefined divine names in the PAOC songs. Among the 1,015 divine names in the song corpus, only 11 (or 1%) were explicit references to the first person of the Trinity.⁴ In 7 of the 9 songs containing these references, the first divine person reference was detected only once in the song indicating that, when a first person reference *was* made in a song, it was not a frequent occurrence. An additional 13 (or 1%) of the 1,015 divine names contained implicit references in which the first person was implied,

3 Thirty of these songs possessed *both* explicit and implicit reference to the second divine person in the same song.

4 These explicit first person references included, “*Father*” (5), “*Father’s* (love)” (2), “*Father’s* (only Son)” (1), “(God, my) *Father*” (1), “(Name of the) *Father*” (1), and “*Father’s* (plan)” (1).

though not explicitly specified.⁵ In 4 of the 7 songs containing these references, an implicit first person reference was detected only once in the song. Collectively, these numbers indicate that the first person of the Trinity was not the primary subject or object of the lyrics in the commonly used PAOC songs.

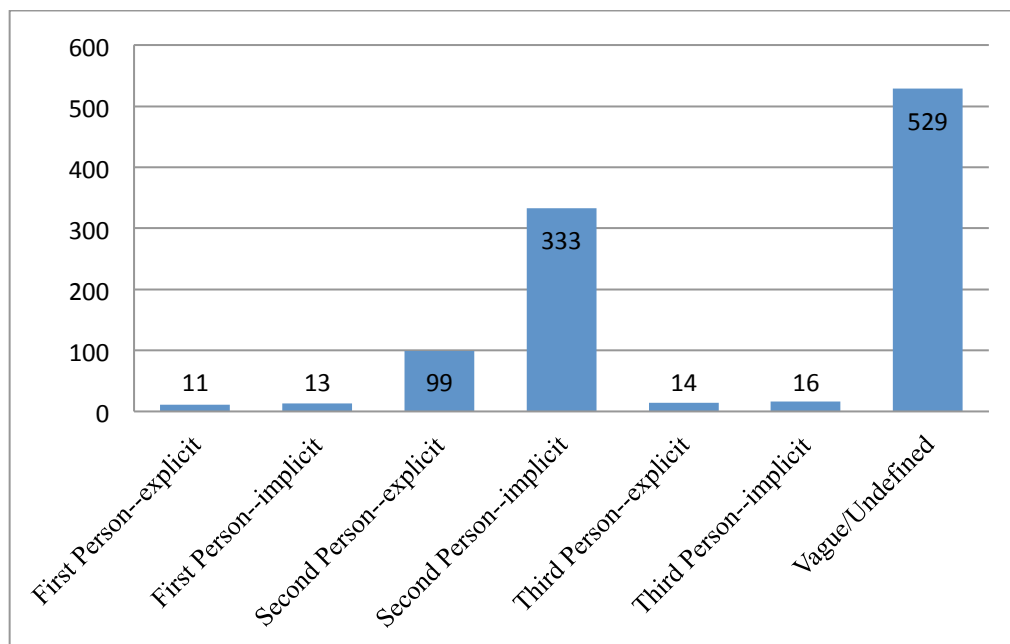


Figure 4.2. Divine naming—evaluated by cumulative sum total.

Similar patterns were also detected when cumulative sum totals were tabulated for references to the third person of the Trinity. Among the 1,015 divine names, a total of 14 (or 1%) explicitly referred to the third person of the Trinity.⁶ In 6 of the 9 songs containing explicit references to the third divine person, a reference to God the Spirit occurred only once. This reinforced the observation that, surprisingly, a limited emphasis on the third person of Trinity existed in the song list.

Likewise, only 16 (or 2%) of the 1,015 divine references implicitly referred to the third

⁵ These included references to, “(Son of) *God*” (7), “*God* (sent His Son)” (1), “*God*’s (only Son)” (1), “(Spirit of) *God*” (2), “(Breath of) *God*” (1), and “*He* (would send His only Son)” (1).

⁶ These included references to, “*Holy Spirit*” (5), “*Spirit*” (4), “*Spirit* (of God)” (2), “*Spirit* (of the Lord)” (2), and “Name of the *Spirit*” (1).

divine person.⁷ Whereas most of the references to “Lord,” “God,” and “You” in the 82 songs were grouped in the vague/undefined category, the references to “Lord” (5), “God” (2), and “You,” (2) in the song “Holy Spirit” (2011) by Bryan and Katie Torwalt were regarded as implicit references to the third divine person because the explicit and implicit subject and object of this entire song was third person in its orientation. Collectively, the data confirmed a remarkably minor emphasis in the songs on the third person of the Trinity after cumulative sum totals of all the divine naming references were tabulated.

When totals associated with the second person names were compiled, different patterns emerged. In total, 99 (or 10%) of all the 1,015 divine names were explicit references to the second divine person.⁸ Unlike frequency patterns associated with the first and third divine names, over 60% of the songs with explicit references to the second person of the Trinity (22 of 35 songs) contained *multiple* second person references. This indicated a more pronounced second person emphasis in the lyrics in comparison to that associated with the first and third divine person. Correspondingly, a considerably higher number of divine names represented implicit second person references. In total, 333 of the 1,015 (or 33%) divine references were organized into this category. A number of references⁹ that may otherwise have been classified as vague/undefined were interpreted as implicit references to the second divine person in instances where these references were contextually fixed within a song with a strongly implied second person emphasis throughout the lyrics.

The following table 4.1 shows a breakdown of these implicit second person divine names

7 Divine names in this category were, “*Presence*” (6), “*Lord*” (5), “*God*” (2), “*You*” (2), and “*Breath of God*” (1).

8 The names in this category, were “*Jesus*” (53), “*Christ*” (12), “*Son*” (12), “*He*” (9), “*Lord Jesus*” (5), “*Jesus Messiah*” (3), “*Jesus Christ*” (2), “*Him*” (2), “*Emmanuel*” (1).

9 These references included, “*You*” (164), “*Name*” (24), “*King*” (22), “*He*” (22), “*God*” (17), “*Savior*” (16), “*Lord*” (12), “*Lamb*” (6), “*One*” (5), “*Light of the World*” (3), “*Holy One*” (2), “*Lord God Almighty*” (1), “*Healer*” (1).

in relation to a specific set of christological categories that are pertinent to discussion about christology and addressed in the previous chapters. Of the 333 implicit second person names, 43 (or 13%) were distinguished as christology from below divine names. The emphasis of these divine names was clearly incarnational in nature and reiterated the humanity of Christ and his engagement within the created order. A slightly higher number of implicit second person names were identified as those associated with a christology from above orientation. In total, 51 (or 15%) of the 333 implicit second person names depicted Jesus Christ as exalted, triumphant, and transcendent.

There were, however, a large number of implicit second person divine names, 239 of 333 (or 72%), that could neither be categorized as christology from above nor christology from below in their orientation. This relatively high number of implicit references to the second person, in which it was not possible to clearly identify christological from above or below descriptors, correlates with findings in this study pertaining to the prevalence of vague and undefinable divine naming tendencies.

Table 4.1. Implicit second divine person names

From Below		From Above		Unclear	
Savior	16	King	22	You	164
Redeemer	9	Lord	12	Name	24
Lamb	6	Lord of All	4	He	22
Light of the World	3	Holy One	2	God	17
Author of Salvation	1	All in All	1	One	5
Chosen One	1	Coming King	1	Beautiful One	4
Comforter	1	Defender	1	Cornerstone	1
Friend	1	Holy and Anointed One	1	Way	1
Ground	1	King of All Days	1	Word	1
Healer	1	King of Kings	1		
Precious Lamb	1	Life Eternal	1		
Ransom	1	Lord Almighty	1		
Rescue	1	Lord God Almighty	1		
		Mighty King	1		
		Risen and Exalted One	1		

In this respect, the vast majority of the divine names in this study, 529 of the 1,015 names (or 52%), were confined to the vague/undefined category in which no particularity among the divine persons could be contextually identified (e.g. “Our *God* saves,” “I exalt *Thee*,” “Bless the *Lord*, O my soul”). Among these vague/undefined divine titles, references to “You,” “Lord,” “God,” “Name,” and “He” were most predominant. Table 4.2 provides a list of all the divine names that correspond with this category.

Table 4.2. Vague/undefined divine names

You	258	Beginning	2
Lord	94	End	2
God	58	Holy One	2
Name	23	You Lord	1
He	18	Consuming Fire	1
King	9	Your Friend	1
Thee	7	Light of the World	1
Thou	7	God Almighty	1
Love	6	Creator God	1
Hope	5	Godhead	1
Yahweh	4	Three in One	1
Lord Most High	4	Lion	1
Jehovah	4	Name Above All Names	1
Savior	3	Lamb	1
Word of the Lord	2	Healer	1
Deliverer	2	Foundation	1
Everlasting God	2	God of Jacob	1
Lord God Almighty	2	One	1

When the cumulative sum of all the divine names were taken into full account, the comparably disproportionate number of references to the first, second, third and vague/undefined divine persons was glaring. In total, 2% (24/1,015) of the divine names explicitly or implicitly referred to the first divine person, 3% (30/1,015) referred to the third divine person, 44% (432/1,015) referred to the second divine person, and 52% (529/1,015) were oriented as vague/undefined. Thus, all things considered, a flagrant disparity existed in relation to particular references to the divine persons in the PAOC song list. While there was, undeniably, explicit and implicit references to *all* the divine persons within the song corpus, an imbalance existed when

frequency was considered. A disproportionately high number of these references invoked the second person of the Trinity in comparison to the first and third person. Furthermore, a strikingly high number of the total divine names were associated with a vague and undefined Christian deity. These divine naming observations will be comprehensively addressed in the next chapter where implications and proposals will be drawn in relation to Gunton's trinitarian theology and a uniquely Pentecostal worship experience among the PAOC.

ii) Recognition of Divine Action in Salvation History (as measured by Question #2: *Do the songs speak of the actions of the triune God with reference to salvation history as recorded in biblical scripture?*)

The second of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses sought to determine whether popular PAOC lyrics made explicit reference to the concrete actions of the triune God as revealed in the salvation history narrative of Christian scriptures. For Gunton, a deficient trinitarian theology correlated with an attenuated view of the economy of God's actions. Against this, Gunton understood the triune God's saving activity within the wider context of a broad theological metanarrative associated with concrete and historical divine actions. His theological convictions led him to view a close interconnectivity of divine activity in the acts of creation, the Fall, Israel's story, redemption, the incarnation, and eschatology. In light of this, the research findings in this analysis were expected to show, not only a wide representation of the economy of God's actions in the commonly used PAOC songs, but also an assimilation of these major theological themes within the divine verbs in the lyrics of the selected songs. However, a deliberate assessment of the divine verbs in the songs revealed both a sparse representation of the triune God's actions in concrete salvation history and a limited interconnectivity associated with divine activity among several major salvation history categories. Evaluation of the divine actions

both generally, by song total, and specifically, by cumulative sum total, confirmed these statistical results. In addition, a close evaluation of the most commonly used verbs associated with divine activity also reinforced a limited and attenuated association with salvation history.

When the divine actions in the reported PAOC songs were viewed by song total and categorized into six main theological categories associated with salvation history (i.e. creation, the Fall, Israel, redemption, incarnation, and eschatology), some patterns emerged (see: figure 4.3). As shown, 11 (or 13%) of the 82 songs contained at least one reference to divine activity associated with the act of creation (e.g. “You *spoke* the world into motion”). No songs contained a reference to divine involvement in the Genesis Fall narrative. Only one song (or 1%) possessed implied references to divine action in Old Testament Israelite history (e.g. “these are the days of Ezekiel, the dry bones becoming as flesh”).¹⁰ Divine activity related to the incarnation was highlighted at least once in 10 (or 12%) of the 82 songs (e.g. “God *sent* His Son”). Fourteen songs (or 17%) contained at least one eschatological reference to divine actions in the future (e.g. “till He *returns* or calls me home”). It was observed that among the salvation history categories identified for this study, divine verbs associated with the story of redemption were clearly the most generously represented. Twenty-nine (or 35%) of the 82 songs contained at least one reference to divine action in the redemption narrative (e.g. “He *humbled* Himself and *carried* the cross”).¹¹

10 By admission, the song “Days of Elijah” (1996) does not explicitly refer to any divine action, however, it seemed that not recognizing its lyrics as a reference to divine involvement in Israel’s history would be an oversight for the purposes of this study. In this respect, a small number of the references for the second qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. assessing divine verbs) did not fit neatly into the categories selected for this study.

11 One song, “Our God” (2010) referred directly to Jesus’ miracles and healing ministry (e.g. “water You *turned* into wine, *opened* the eyes of the blind”).

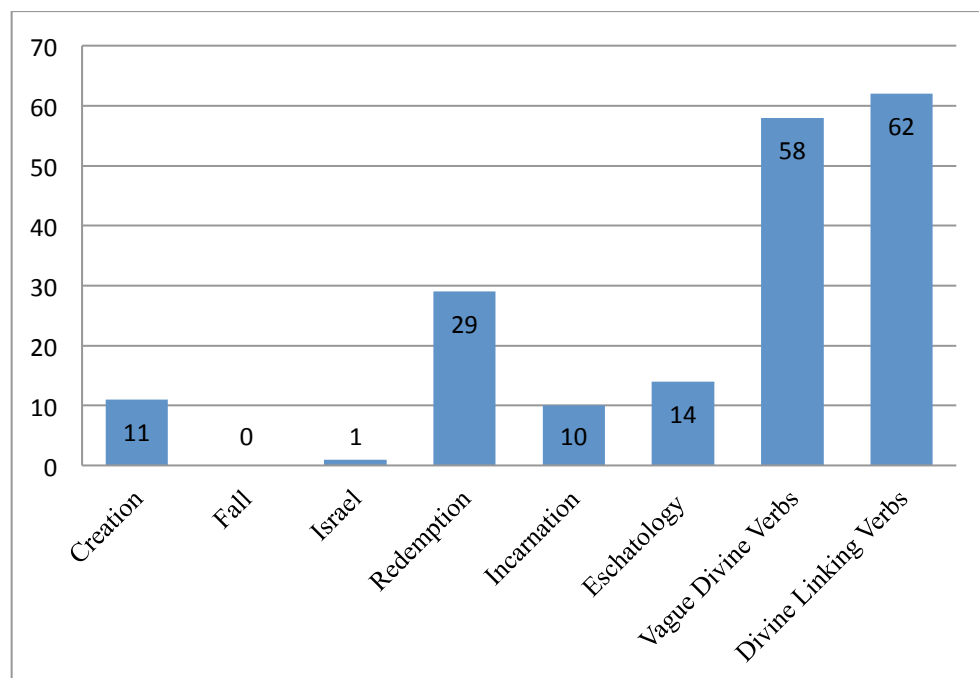


Figure 4.3. Divine action in salvation history—evaluated by song total.

Otherwise, a high number of songs contained at least one reference to a divine verb that could not be clearly organized into *any* of the six salvation history categories (e.g. “You *opened* my eyes”). In total, 58 (or 71%) of the total songs contained divine actions that could only be characterized as vague. An additional 62 (or 76%) of the songs possessed at least one reference to a vague linking verb that contributed conceptual information about God without describing a specific divine action in correlation with salvation history (e.g. “You’re my healer” and “Jesus, You *are* mine”).¹² Two of the songs [i.e. “I am Free” (2004) and “Surrender” (2000)] contained *neither* references to divine action in salvation history, vague divine action, *nor* divine linking verbs. Overall, the results associated with divine verbs in the song totals suggested that a significant number of the commonly used PAOC songs lacked significant evidence of particular divine activity corresponding to the concrete history of salvation.

12 There were, indeed, several specific linking verbs that could be associated with particular divine action in salvation history (e.g. “You *were* here before the world began” in association with the acts of creation, “*crucified, laid* behind the stone” in association with redemption, and “You *are* my coming King” in association with eschatology). In these types of instances, linking verbs that were explicitly or implicitly associated with God’s specific historical actions in salvation history were, accordingly, organized into the most appropriate salvation history categories selected for this study.

Figure 4.4 reinforces the song total results by showing the cumulative sum totals of all the divine actions in the PAOC songs. Among the 698 verbs in the songs associated with divine activity, a modest total of 26 (4%) referred to divine actions in creation (e.g. “Who *imagined* the sun or *gives* source to its life”). Again, there were no divine verbs in the PAOC song corpus that referred to God’s actions in association with the Fall narrative. A total of 4 (or 1%) of the verbs were linked to divine action in Israel’s history (e.g. “these are the days of your servant Moses, righteousness being restored”).¹³ Sixteen (or 3%) of the verbs were affiliated with the incarnation (e.g. “You *came* near from the everlasting to the world we live”). Twenty-seven (or 4%) were verbs associated with divine activity intrinsic to eschatology (e.g. “Light of the world forever *reign*”). In comparison to the results from song totals shown in figure 4.3, the cumulative sum totals in figure 4.4 indicated that references to divine activity, if divine actions were referred to *all* (particularly in creation, in Israel’s story, in the incarnation, and in eschatology), were generally utilized in very low frequencies and typically only once in a particular song.¹⁴

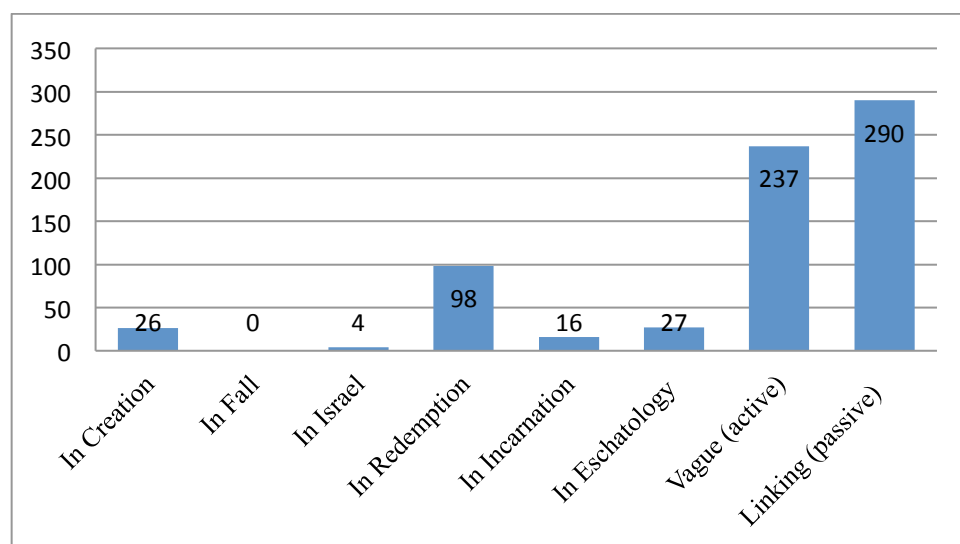


Figure 4.4. Divine action in salvation history—evaluated by cumulative sum total.

Consistent with the divine verb assessment in respect to song totals, the salvation history

¹³ See note 14 regarding the song, “Days of Elijah” (1996).

¹⁴ This, however, was not the case in the more popular categories (i.e. redemption, vague divine verbs, and divine linking verbs) where, by comparison, divine verbs appeared more frequently and repeatedly in the songs.

category containing the highest cumulative sum total of divine action verbs was redemption (e.g. “He *rose* and *conquered* the grave”). In total, 98 (14%) of the total 698 divine verbs were confined in this category. Alternatively, the remaining divine verbs were contained in the two non-historical categories defined as vague divine verbs and vague divine linking verbs. Two hundred thirty-seven (or 34%) of the acts associated with divine activity were verbs that were vague and abstract in nature with no clear reference to the concrete history of salvation (e.g. “You *lift* my burdens”). An additional 290 (or 42%) contained divine linking verbs that revealed something ontologically about the nature of God’s being, not primarily through historical or particular action, but via more abstract descriptors (e.g. “Jesus, You *are* the only way”). Viewed as a collective whole, the qualitative lyrical data associated with divine action cumulative sum totals reinforced an inclination in the lyrics of the PAOC songs to promote divine vagueness and abstraction over God’s concrete activity in salvation history.

Figure 4.5 provides a representation of the lyrical data that shows the integration of divine verbs contained in the salvation history categories associated with this study. In half of the songs, 41 in total, *no* divine verbs were applied to *any* of the six selected categories (i.e. creation, the Fall, Israel, redemption, incarnation, and eschatology). In an additional 24 (or 29% of the) songs, divine actions were affiliated with only one theological category. Among these songs with divine verbs in one category, the highest number of divine actions was located in the redemption category.¹⁵ Ten of the songs evidenced assimilation of the divine verbs into two different theological categories. Once again, divine actions associated with redemption served as the most common thematic constant in these songs.¹⁶ Seven (or 9%) of the songs contained divine action

15 As shown in figure 4.5, 12 songs profiled divine actions exclusively associated with redemption. Six songs profiled actions only associated with creation. Four songs profiled actions associated with eschatology, and one was a song profiling divine actions exclusively associated with the incarnation.

16 Four were songs with references to redemption + eschatology; three were songs with references to redemption +

references to three of the main salvation history categories. Once more, redemption served as the most common categorical element.¹⁷ None of the songs contained divine activity in more than three of the theological categories. In sum, these results suggested that only a minority of the songs, 17 (or 21%) in the entire song list, contained divine actions across more than one major salvation history category. This indicated, as will be discussed more extensively below, that expressions of God’s economic acts throughout *all* of time were under-represented in the commonly used PAOC songs for this study.

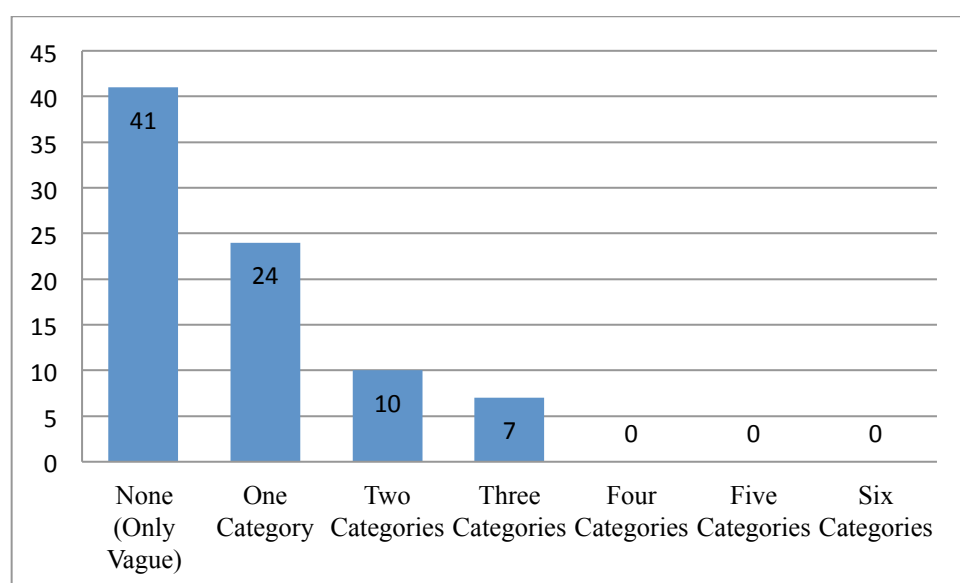


Figure 4.5. Category assessment of divine action in salvation history—evaluated by song total.

Table 4.3 presents an exhaustive list of the most frequently occurring divine action verbs and divine linking verb complements in the PAOC song corpus. As shown, the most common active divine verbs in their infinitive and related forms were, “come” (appearing *at least once* in 22 of the songs, e.g. “Holy Spirit, *come*”), “love” (in 9 songs, e.g. “You *love* me”), “reign” (in 9 songs, e.g. Jesus *reign* in this place”), “give” (in 9 songs, e.g. “You *gave* Your life away”), “die” (in 8 songs, e.g. “You lived to *die*”) and “take” (in 7 songs, e.g. “*Take* my life and let it be”). The

creation, and three were songs with references to redemption + incarnation.

¹⁷ Four were songs with references to redemption + incarnation + eschatology; one was a song with references to redemption + creation + eschatology; one was a song with references to redemption + creation + incarnation, and one was a song with reference to redemption + Israel + eschatology.

frequent occurrence of the divine infinitive “to come” outnumbered any of the other divine actions by a large margin.

Table 4.3. Active and linking verb complements—evaluated by song total

Divine Action Verbs		Divine Action Verbs		Divine Linking Verb Complements	
come/ came/	22	fill/ fills/ filled	5	God	11
love/ loved	9	hear/ heard	5	great	10
reign	9	hold/holds/held	5	holy	6
give/ gave	9	live/ lived	5	king	6
die/died	8	pour/ poured	5	strength/ strong	6
take/ took	7	call/ called	4	no one/ no other	5
save/ saved	6	know/ knew	4	mine	5
heal/ healed	6	change (never)	4	beautiful	4
lead/ led	6	fail (never)	4	exalted	4
let	6	shine	4	all	4
lift/ lifted	6	slain	4	here	4
make/ made	6	speak/ spoke	4	more	4
open/ opened	6	rise/ rose	4	worthy	4
become/ became	5	stand/ stood	4		
bring/ brought	5				

As shown in table 4.3, the most common linking verb complements, providing information without describing a particular divine action were, “God” (appearing at least once in 11 songs, e.g. “You *are* still God”), “great” (in 10 songs, e.g. “How great *is* our God”), “holy” (in 6 songs, e.g. “Holy, holy, holy *is* the Lord God Almighty”), “king” (in 6 songs, e.g. “Jesus *is* king”), and “strong” (in 6 songs, e.g. “God *is* strong”). The frequency of the most commonly used linking verb “*is/are* God” will further inform the discussion in the next chapter concerning a pervasive inclination in the PAOC songs to conceive the triune God in abstract terms rather than in trinitarian particularities and concrete action. Related to this, it is worth noting that the most commonly cited divine linking verb complements (e.g. “great,” “holy,” “king,” and “strong”) accentuate the exalted, triumphant, and transcendent nature of God. This will also merit attention in the following chapter.

Finally, figure 4.6 provides an overall assessment of the divine verbs, based on

cumulative sum totals, in relation to the orientation of the acts of God either acting toward a human object or not acting toward a human object. In a majority of instances, 407 (or 58%) of the 698 verbs associated with divine activity were those depicting God as a subject with no human object (e.g. “You *stepped* down into darkness”). Notably, however, in 214 (or 31%) of the 698 divine verbs, these verbs characterized God passively as subject to the human worshipper (e.g. “He *rescued* my soul”). Furthermore, 77 (or 11%) of the divine verbs in the PAOC song list were those describing the acts of God in correspondence with an imperative human invocation (e.g. “*Heal* my heart and *make* it clean”). These results indicated that 42% of the verbs associated with divine action were, in fact, linked by association with the human worshipper as the object.

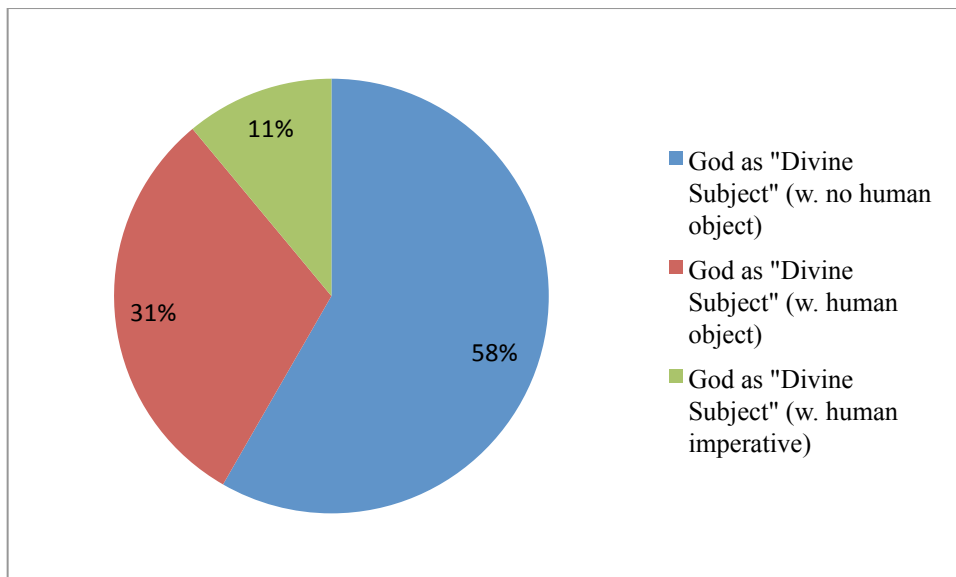


Figure 4.6. Divine action in salvation history (with or without a human object)—evaluated by cumulative sum total.

Viewed as a collective whole, a careful analysis of the verbs identified with the divine activity in the songs revealed only a modest association with the actions of God in salvation history. The fullness of the story of God was not well represented in the commonly used PAOC songs. Moreover, a close scrutiny of the actions of God suggested that the most commonly used verbs reinforced an emphasis on the triune God as transcendent and exalted. Furthermore, they

indicated that even as descriptions of divine activity, the expressions of divine verbs may, in fact, have subtly reinforced a primary emphasis on the human worshipper, not the triune God, as the focus of worship.

iii) Acknowledgment of Inter-Trinitarian Relationality (as measured by Question #3: *Do the songs acknowledge the perichoretic relationality that exists among the persons of the immanent Trinity?*)

The third of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses measured the extent to which perichoretic relationality among the divine persons of the Trinity, emphasized by Gunton as a dynamic being in communion, is observable within this project's data set. In order to promote a well-developed trinitarian understanding among the commonly used songs of the PAOC, a wide representation of perichoretic expression was expected. Given the limited particularity discovered by the analysis of divine naming in the first qualitative lyrical analysis, however, it follows that only modest and undeveloped examples of inter-trinitarian divine relationality were found within the song list.

As shown in figure 4.7, 8 (or 10%) of the songs contained explicit or implicit references to both the first and second divine person in the same song [i.e. "Because He Lives" (1971), "For All You've Done" (2004), "How Deep the Father's Love for Us" (1995), "Overcome" (2007), "Sing, Sing, Sing" (2008), "Son of God" (2006), "Still" (2002), and "You're Great Name" (2008)].¹⁸ Though modest in number, songs with both first and second divine person references represented the most common occurrence among the conceivable divine naming combinations. Four (or 5%) of the songs contained explicit or implicit references to both the second and third divine person [i.e. "All Who are Thirsty" (1998), "Holy and Anointed One" (1988), "Freedom

¹⁸ It is important to note that this did not unquestionably indicate that the songs expressed perichoretic relationality between the first and second divine persons. Rather, it merely indicated that a song contained first and second divine person references within the lyrics of the same song.

Reigns” (1998), and “You are My King—Amazing Love” (1996)]. As mentioned above, 2 (or 2%) of the songs explicitly contained references to all three divine persons in the same song [i.e. “How Great is Our God” (2004) and “Our God Saves” (2007)]. One additional song contained an implicit reference to the first divine person and an explicit reference to the third divine person [i.e. “Consuming Fire” (2002)]. Otherwise, the remaining 67 (or 82%) of the songs contained either references to only one divine person or no divine persons at all. These results indicated that a significant number of commonly used PAOC songs showed very limited potentiality for any expression of divine relationality.

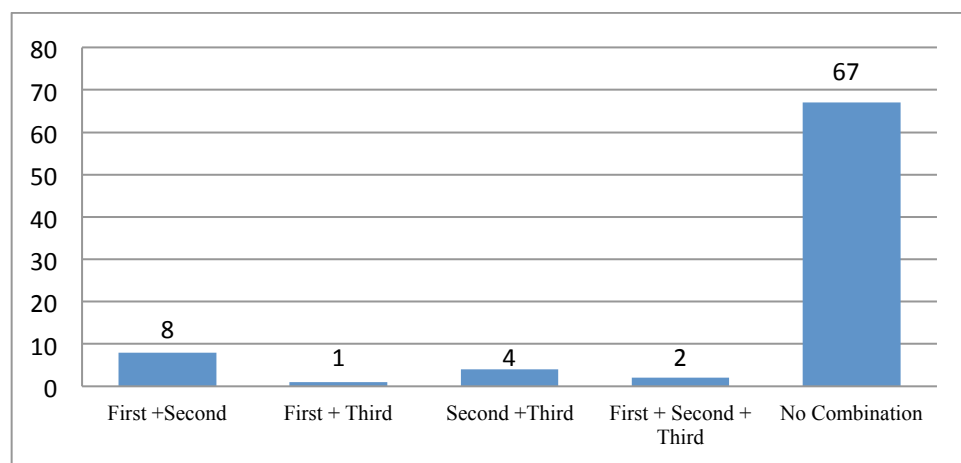


Figure 4.7. Relationality among divine persons—evaluated by song total.

The analysis of the divine naming combinations in figure 4.7 also allowed for a closer examination of the phraseology in which multiple divine names were employed. Table 4.4 indicates that, of the 1,783 total phrases in the song list, a mere 4 phrases (or 0.2%), located in three separate songs, comprised the limited evidence for *potential* perichoretic relationality among the persons of the Trinity. The song, “Because He Lives” (1971), allows for a vague reference to “God” (presumably the first divine person) as the One who “*sent* His Son.” The emphasis in this statement appears to make a brief, implied reference to God the Father’s role in the incarnation of God the Son. This phraseology, however, does not speak to the actual

characteristics of this relationality. A similar idea is communicated in the song, “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” (1995). The phrase, “that He *should give* His only Son,” implies that the first divine person, as a divine subject, willingly chose to send “His only Son” to earth, and even to death, as an atoning sacrifice for sin. The song “Overcome” (2007), though not expressed explicitly, implies that it is Jesus who is “*seated above, enthroned in* the Father’s love.” Here, this statement refers to Jesus’ exalted status as a member of the Godhead whose prominence is relationally affected by the “love” of the first divine person. One additional section in the song “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” (1995) provides a hint of the relationality that exists between the first and second divine persons. Stuart Townend lyrically has written, “How great the pain of searing loss, the Father *turns* His face away, as wounds which mar the Chosen One, bring many sons to glory.” While the contextual emphasis of this song is undeniably on the acts pertaining to the death of Jesus, Townend may very well have also taken into consideration here the dynamic relational status of the first divine person in the act of redemption. It is unclear if the reference to the “pain of searing loss” is primarily associated with the first person or second person or both. At any rate, the phrase “the Father *turns* His face away” presents an image that offers one of the very few examples in the entire PAOC song corpus of an expression that articulates perichoretic relationality among at least two persons of the Trinity. Besides these few examples, an analysis of verbs associated with divine activity shows no clear evidence of the three divine persons acting together as being in communion.

Table 4.4. Relationality in divine actions and divine titles

Relationality in Divine Action	
Because He Lives	God sent His Son
How Deep the Father's Love for Us	That He should give His only Son,
How Deep the Father's Love for Us	How great the pain of searing loss, the Father turns His face away
Overcome	Seated above enthroned in the Father's love

Relationality in Divine Titles	
Sing Sing Sing	Son of God You are the One
Son of God	Son of God shaper of the stars Son of God the Father's gift to us Son of God strength beyond compare Son of God prophecy of old
Your Great Name	The Son of God and man
Overcome	God's only Son perfect and spotless One
For All You've Done	The Father's only Son
Consuming Fire	Spirit of God fall in this place Spirit of God we wait for You
Freedom Reigns	Where the Spirit of the Lord is
Consuming Fire	O breath of God come breathe within
Holy and Anointed One	Your (Jesus') Spirit like water to my soul
You are My King (Amazing Love)	Your (Jesus') Spirit is within me
How Great is Our God	The Godhead three in one, Father Spirit Son
Our God Saves	In the Name of the Father In the Name of the Son In the Name of the Spirit

Table 4.4 shows that additional relationality might be modestly detected when an analysis is made of the interconnectivity of divine persons in naming practices among the songs. This interconnectivity, however, is represented infrequently when considered among the cumulative sum totals of all the divine names. In total, 38 (0.4%) of the 1,015 divine names were viewed as representing an association between at least two divine persons. “*Son of God*” and “*God’s Only Son*,” for example, are titles utilized in 4 songs [e.g. “*Son of God*, You are the One” in the song “Sing, Sing, Sing” (2008); “*Son of God*, shaper of the stars” in the song “Son of God” (2006); “the *Son of God* and man” in the song “Your Great Name” (2008); and “*God’s only Son* perfect and spotless One” in the song “Overcome” (2007)]. If it is assumed that the first divine person is implicitly referred to as “God,” then a loose connection between the first and second divine

persons may be weakly defended among a few of the lyrical phrases. The song “For All You’ve Done” (2004) contains a more explicit connection between the first and second divine persons in a reference to the “*Father’s only Son*.” Again, these examples, however, give no substantial indication of the nature of divine relationality.

Additionally, there were limited references in the song list to “*Spirit of God*,” “*Spirit of the Lord*,” and “*breath of God*” where a loose first and third person association might be assumed [e.g. “*Spirit of God* fall in this place” and “O *breath of God* come breathe within” in the song “Consuming Fire” (2002), and “where the *Spirit of the Lord* is” in the song “Freedom Reigns” (1998)]. Two references to “*Your Spirit*” (e.g. “*Your Spirit* like water to my soul” in the song “Holy and Anointed One” (1988); and “*Your Spirit* is within me” in the song “You are My King—Amazing Love” (1996)], may indicate a loose association between the second and third divine person.

As mentioned above, two songs, “How Great is Our God” (2004) and “Our God Saves” (2007), explicitly refer to “*Father*,” “*Son*,” and “*Spirit*,” although it is difficult to identify any explicit interrelationality in both instances. In Chris Tomlin’s song, “How Great is Our God” (2004), reference is made to “*the Godhead three in one, Father, Spirit, Son*, the Lion and the Lamb.” This phrase is exceptional among the PAOC song corpus because it is the only one that explicitly refers to the Trinity as “*the Godhead*” while also mentioning all three divine persons together. In Brenton Brown and Paul Baloche’s song, “Our God Saves” (2007), the following association is made: “In the Name of the *Father*, In the Name of the *Son*, In the Name of the *Spirit*, Lord we come.” Here, the trinitarian symmetry associated with the “Name” of the three divine persons provides the authority for the worshipper to enter into corporate worship. However, the lack of these types of trinitarian associations and the underdevelopment of the

interactivity of the three divine persons in the songs must be taken into consideration. Again, neither Tomlin nor Brown and Baloché's trinitarian references address how the three divine persons interrelate with one another. Thus, the implications of the overwhelming absence of inter-trinitarian relationality within the PAOC songs must be explored in the following chapter.

B) Lyrical Content Analyses Concerning Views about Human Personhood

iv) Singularity/Plurality of Human Self-Identification (as measured by Question #4: *Is human self-identification in the songs depicted as singular, plural, or neutral?*)

The fourth of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses moved this project's trinitarian focus toward human personhood as understood through the lyrics of the PAOC songs. In Gunton's view, the neoplatonic human impulse to look introspectively inward fuels modern conceptions of the person as isolated from and unaffected by others. Against the perceived fragmentation and alienation in our contemporary society, Gunton applied notions of God's triunity as being in communion to advance an understanding of the sociality of human personhood. Relationality associated with dynamic beings in relation, he argued, is fundamentally associated with what it means to be human. At the same time, Gunton remained aware that an emphasis on human relatedness should not undermine the universal reality of the particularity of persons who are created with unique giftedness, substance, and bodily concreteness. Following this logic, a balance in the singularity and plurality of the pronouns associated with the worshipper was expected to be evident in the PAOC song list. However, the fourth lyrical content analysis clearly exposed an imbalance in favour of singular human pronouns throughout the song list. The following table and figures show, both in general song totals and specific cumulative sum pronoun totals, that significantly higher numbers of singular human pronouns were observable when compared to both the plural and neutral pronouns

associated with the worshipper in the songs.

Table 4.5 shows a list of the total number of human pronouns identified in the song list. In all, 981 pronouns associated with the human worshipper were identified. Singular pronouns were “I” (e.g. “more than all *I* want”), “I’d” (e.g. “I never thought *I’d* reach the other side”), “I’ll” (e.g. “It is You Whom *I’ll* trust all the time”), “I’m” (e.g. “*I’m* trading my sorrows”), “I’ve” (e.g. “*I’ve* found a love greater than love itself”), “me” (e.g. “You have rescued *me*”), “mine” (e.g. “For I am His and He is *mine*”), and “my” (e.g. “You calm *my* raging seas”). The singular pronouns that appeared most often were “I” (292), “my” (223), and “me” (114).

Table 4.5. Worshipper Pronouns—evaluated by cumulative sum total

Single Pronouns		Plural Pronouns		Neutral Pronouns	
I	292	we	81	your	13
my	223	our	58	you	4
me	114	us	50	you're	2
I'm	73	we're	9	ye	1
I'll	31	we'll	3		
I've	15				
mine	11				
I'd	1				

The human pronouns categorized as plural were “our” (e.g. “*Our* God You reign forever”), “us” (e.g. “You are the God who saves *us*”), “we” (e.g. “*we* will rise with you”), “we’ll” (e.g. “*we’ll* join in singing”), and “we’re” (e.g. “You are the One *we’re* living for”). As shown, the plural pronouns that appeared most often were “we” (81), “our” (68), and “us” (50). A small number of neutral pronouns (i.e. pronouns that could be interpreted as *either* singular or plural) included “ye” (e.g. “prepare *ye* the way of the Lord”), “you” (e.g. “come just as *you* are to worship”), “your” (e.g. “dip *your* heart in the stream of life”), and “you’re” (e.g. “if *you’re* tired and thirsty”). Among the neutral pronouns, “your” (13) appeared the most often.

Figure 4.8 provides an assessment of the 981 human pronouns in their singular, plural,

and neutral categories. In a majority of instances, 760 (or 77%) of the human pronouns were singular in composition (e.g. “*I* am a friend of God”). Conversely, 201 (or 21%) of the total 981 pronouns were plural (e.g. “*we’re* on *our* knees”). An additional 20 (or 2% of the) human pronouns were neutral in composition (e.g. “turn *your* gaze to heaven”). From this data, a strong emphasis on the singularity of the human worshipper is indisputable.

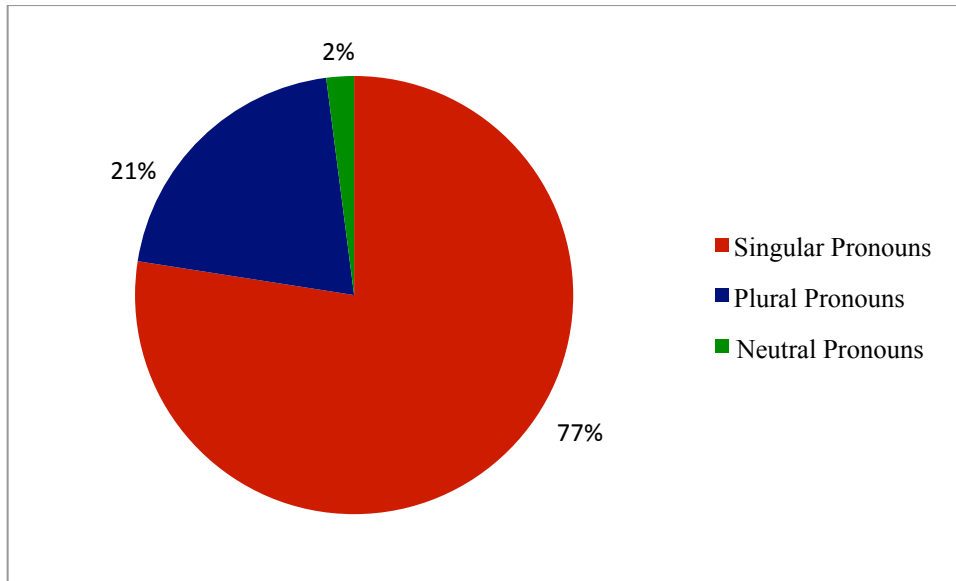


Figure 4.8. Human pronouns—evaluated by cumulative sum total.

Figure 4.9 more broadly provides an indication of the singular, plural, and neutral orientation of the human pronouns among the 82 songs in the PAOC song list. In the singular categories, 41 (or 50%) of the 82 songs contained exclusively singular human pronouns (e.g. “*I* know who *I* am”), 13 (or 16%) of the songs contained singular and plural human pronouns where singular pronouns predominated, and one song contained singular and neutral human pronouns where singular pronouns predominated. In total, 55 (or 67%) of the 82 songs possessed either a singular exclusive or singular predominant orientation among the human pronouns.

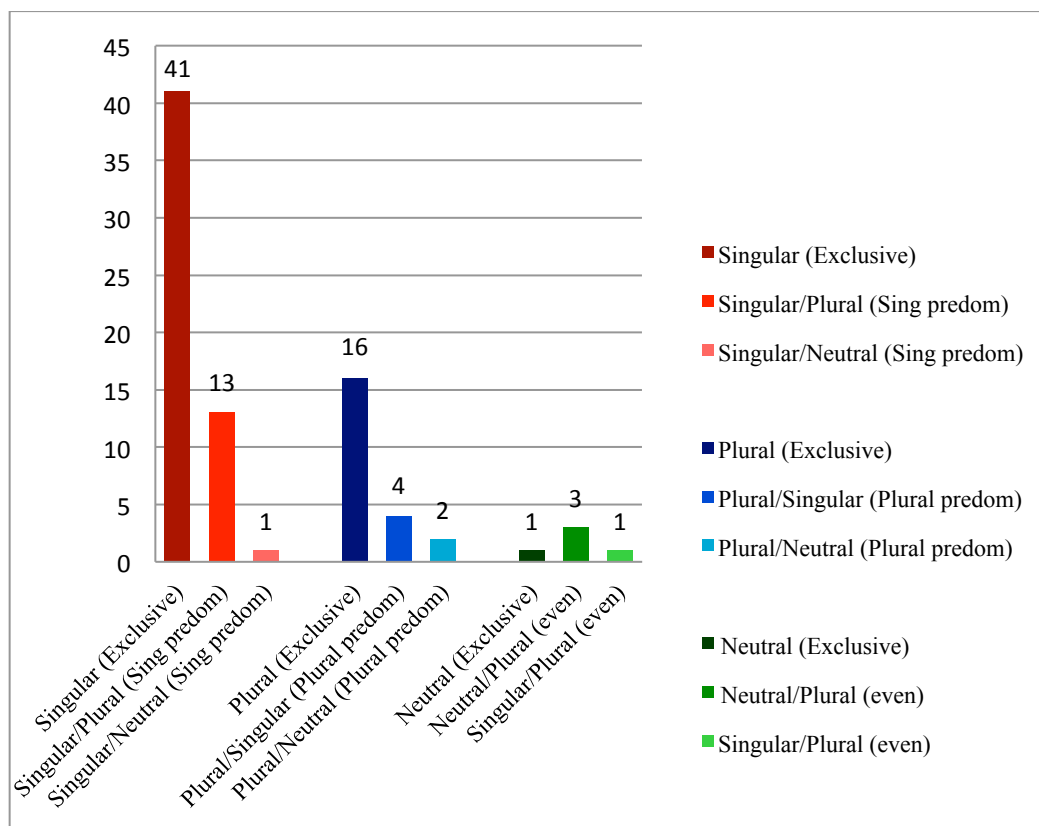


Figure 4.9. Human pronouns—evaluated by song total.

In the plural categories, 16 (or 20%) of the songs contained exclusively plural human pronouns (e.g. “we will carry on”), 4 (or 5%) of the songs contained singular and plural human pronouns where plural pronouns predominated, and 2 (or 2%) of the songs contained plural and neutral human pronouns where plural pronouns predominated. In total, 22 (or 27%) of the songs possessed either a plural exclusive or plural predominant emphasis among the human pronouns. In the neutral categories, one song contained exclusively neutral human pronouns (e.g. “if *you’re* tired and thirsty”), three songs contained an equal number of neutral and plural pronouns, and one song contained an equal number of singular and plural human pronouns. In total, 4 (or 5%) of the songs evidenced neutrality or equality among the human pronouns.

These totals clearly indicate that self-identification in the PAOC songs was more typically oriented by singular human pronouns than with either plural or neutral human

pronouns. Overall, the data found in the song and cumulative sum totals, then, reinforced a clear preference toward singularity. This merits further discussion in the next chapter particularly as it relates to Gunton's trinitarian work and the implications of this reality in accord with a contemporary PAOC ecclesial context.

v) Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality (as measured by Question #5: *Do the actions of the worshipper in the songs acknowledge the horizontal-orientation of human relationality?*)

The fifth of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses addressed relationality between humans based on Gunton's notion that people bear a relational responsibility to their neighbours. Without abandoning the notion that each person is unique and particular, Gunton extolled the virtues of a perichoretic relationality that is manifested, not only among the divine persons of the Trinity, but also in human community. One hypothesis of this thesis is that the evidence of worshippers exhorting one another to *do* things in the songs (e.g. "*come let us worship*") signifies the evidence of some measure of human relationality. Conversely, it is assumed that if there is insufficient evidence of this human to human exhortation, then the opposite may also be true. It is further presumed that an evaluation of the human verbs in their immediate proximity to human pronouns (e.g. "*we turn to You*") provides an indicator of relational human activity among those engaging the PAOC songs. Viewed together, however, these investigations yielded a low measurement of human to human activity in the song list.

Among the 775 verbs associated with the actions of the worshipper, 58 verbs (or 8%) were expressed in the imperative mood.¹⁹ As such, 23 (or 28%) of the songs in the song list contained at least one imperative command that exhorted the worshippers who engaged the song

¹⁹ Of course, it was not assumed that all the human verbs would be presented in imperative form. Further, it was imprudent to speculate on what might be an appropriate number of imperative verbs in the lyrics to indicate *ideal* human relationality.

to actively *do* something together (e.g. “sing to the King”).²⁰ Among those PAOC songs in which human imperatives were identified at least once, figure 4.10 shows the imperative commands that were expressed. The following commands appeared most commonly in the songs: “sing” in 9 songs (e.g. “sing it out, Jesus is alive”), “let” in 7 songs (e.g. “let us become more aware of Your presence”), “lift” in 4 songs (e.g. “lift up a heart of praise”), “shout” in 4 songs (e.g. “shout to the Lord, all the earth let us sing”), and “come” in 3 songs (e.g. “come now is the time to worship”).

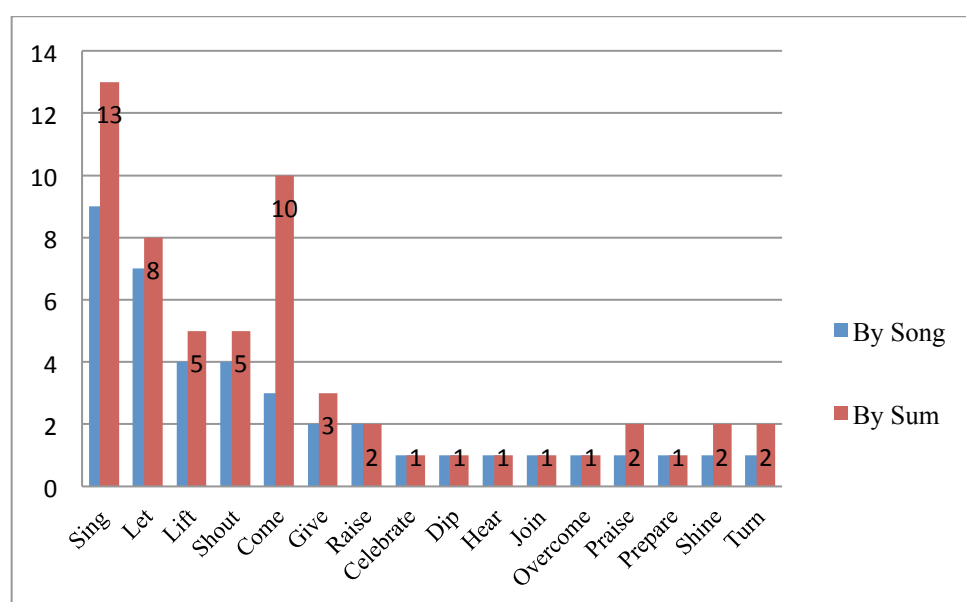


Figure 4.10. Human verb imperatives—evaluated by song and cumulative sum total.

Notably, the most common commands identified in the songs (mainly, “sing,” “lift,” “shout,” and “come”) were those which literally described the experiential act of the worshippers within a particular worship environment. On the other hand, noticeably absent were human imperatives calling worshippers to develop, for example, one another’s Christian faith, to

20 Two songs, “10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)” (2011) and “Still” (2002) also contained imperative verbs associated with the actions of the human worshipper. However, it seemed clear that the imperatives contained in these two songs, in particular, were not commands directed by one engaged human worshipper to another. Rather, they expressed an explicit *inward* dialogue processed *within* the mind of the worshipper (e.g. “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” and “Find rest my soul”). As a result, human-oriented imperatives associated with these two songs were not included in the cumulative sum total of 58 human verbs in the imperative mood.

collectively evangelize the world, to advance together in Christian discipleship, to collectively serve others (e.g. the poor, sick, hungry, and naked), or to remember what the triune God has accomplished in the past. Rather, it was observed that the most common human to human commands were predominantly focused on the worshippers' affective engagement of the lyrics and the immediate worship context in which the songs were used. This demands further discussion and will be addressed in the following chapter, particularly as it relates to a uniquely Pentecostal worship experience.

Figure 4.10 also shows the cumulative sum totals of the human to human imperatives in the songs. Virtually the same commands appeared with the highest cumulative frequency (i.e. “sing” appeared 13 times throughout the song corpus, e.g. “*Sing* a new song;” “come” appeared 10 times, e.g. “*Come* just as you are;” “let” appeared 8 times, e.g. “*Let* us experience;” “lift” appeared 5 times, e.g. “*Lift* your eyes to heaven;” and “shout” appeared 5 times, e.g. “*Shout* it out”). What the data from this cumulative sum total analysis additionally offered was an indicator that the most commonly used human commands were used infrequently. That is, in a majority of instances (81%) when human-oriented imperatives were used, they were not employed more than one time in a song.²¹

To augment these findings, an analysis of human relationality also considered the human verbs associated with plural human pronouns (i.e. verbs which directly followed a plural human pronoun). In total, there were 125 verbs that met these parameters (e.g. “for His returning *we watch* and *we pray*”).²² Figure 4.11 shows the prevalence of the most common verbs in this category both by song and cumulative sum total. Once again, by far, the most common collective

21 One of the few exceptions to this norm is Brian Doerksen’s song “Come Now is the Time to Worship” (1998) in which worshippers who were engaged with this song, conceivably, exhorted one another to “come” a total of 8 times.

22 This cumulative sum total of 125 verbs did not include linking verbs associated with human verb count (e.g. “all who *are* thirsty, all who *are* weak”).

action expressed in the lyrics of the PAOC songs was “singing,” appearing in 14 songs and, cumulatively, 22 times throughout the song list (e.g. “*we will sing, sing, sing, and make music with the heavens*”). The next most common verbs were “bow,” appearing in 4 songs and total of 5 times (e.g. “*willingly we choose to bow*”), and “pray,” appearing in 4 songs and a total of 5 times (e.g. “*Jesus in your Name we pray*”). The following actions appeared in 3 songs of the PAOC corpus: “praise,” a total of 8 times (e.g. “*We will praise you*”); “cry,” appearing a total of 6 times (e.g. “*and we cry holy, holy, holy*”); “worship,” a total of 6 times (e.g. “*We worship the name of Jesus*”); “lift,” a total of 4 times (e.g. “*We stand and lift up our hands*”); “fall,” a total of 3 times (e.g. “*awestruck we fall to our knees*”); “join,” a total of 3 times (e.g. “*we’ll join in singing*”); “overcome,” a total of 3 times (e.g. “*we will overcome by the blood of the Lamb*”); “rise,” a total of 3 times (e.g. “*out of the ashes we rise*”); and “see,” a total of 3 times (e.g. “*all will see how great, how great is our God*”). Once again, it is noteworthy that the most frequently expressed corporate actions of the worshipper were those which described the experiential act (e.g. “sing,” “praise,” “worship,” and “cry”) of the worshippers, within a corporate worship environment. Very little attention is given to collective responsibility for others or the world beyond an experiential worship condition and setting.

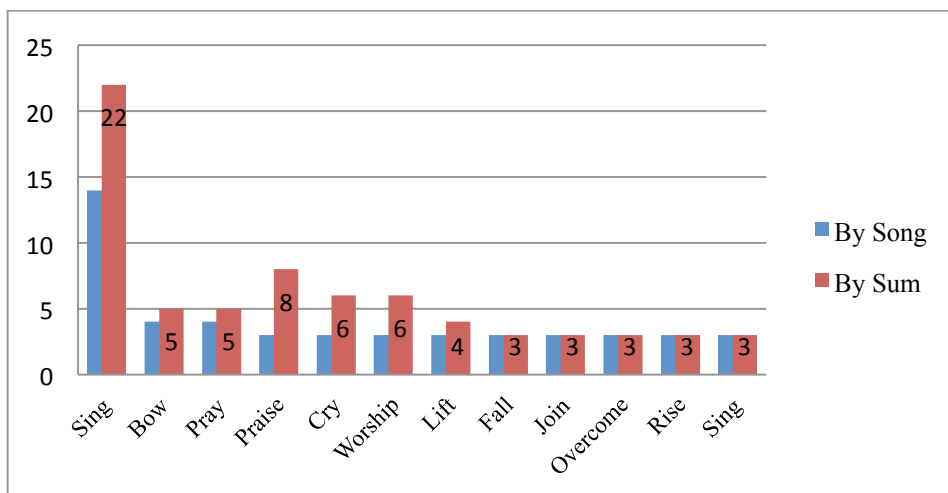


Figure 4.11. Human verbs associated with plural pronouns—evaluated by song and cumulative sum total.

Finally, as shown in table 4.6, an analysis of human verb phrases in which reciprocal human to human interaction was expressed yielded very few examples. In the song “Because He Lives” (1971), William and Gloria Gaither wrote, “How sweet to *hold* our newborn baby, and *feel* the pride and joy he *gives*.” In this instance, the worshipper is encouraged to consider the positive affective experience that, presumably, only an infant can provide. In the song “Hosanna” (2006), Brooke Ligertwood wrote, “I *see* a generation, *rising* up to take their place.” Here, the worshipper is encouraged to observe a presumably younger generation that is growing into maturity and possessing a “selfless faith.” In the song “Mighty to Save” (2006), Ben Fielding and Reuben Morgan wrote, “*Shine* your light and *let* the whole world *see*.” In this instance, worshippers are encouraged to enthusiastically proclaim the Christian message so those inhabiting the “world” can observe the light of the Gospel message.

Table 4.6. Human to human relationality

Because He Lives	How sweet to <i>hold</i> a newborn baby, and <i>feel</i> the pride and joy he <i>gives</i>
Hosanna	I <i>see</i> a generation, <i>rising</i> up to <i>take</i> their place
Mighty to Save	<i>Shine</i> your light and <i>let</i> the whole world <i>see</i>
Awesome is the Lord Most High	We will <i>praise</i> you <i>together</i> both now and forever
Holy is the Lord	And <i>together</i> we <i>sing</i>
My Savior lives	Ev'ryone <i>together</i> , <i>sing</i> the song of the redeemed
Our God Saves	We're <i>gather'd together</i> to lift up Your Name
Sing to the King	We'll <i>join</i> in <i>singing</i> with all the redeemed

Otherwise, despite five additional verb phrases in which worshippers are encouraged to “join” or perform an action “together” (again, primarily, “to sing”), there was very little evidence of expressed human to human relationality when the human actions were observed among the lyrics of the most commonly used PAOC songs.²³ This limited human relationality will be addressed further in the next chapter particularly as it relates to Gunton’s trinitarian theology and

23 In the song, “Awesome is the Lord Most High” (2006), Chris Tomlin wrote, “We will *praise* You *together* for now and forever.” In the song, “Holy is the Lord” (2003), Tomlin wrote, “and *together* we *sing*.” In the song, “My Savior Lives” (2006), Glen Packiam wrote, “Ev’ryone *together*, *sing* the song of the redeemed.” In the song, “Our God Saves” (2007), Brenton Brown and Paul Baloche wrote, “We’re *gather’d together*, to lift up Your Name.”

Pentecostal worship within PAOC churches in Canada.

vi) Expressions of Mediatorial Worship (as measured by Question #6: *Do the songs reinforce the mediatorial worship of the worshipper as to, in, and through the different persons of the Trinity?*)

The sixth of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses found its basis in Gunton's frequent use of Irenaeus' phraseology pertaining to the two hands of God. By this, Gunton sought to advance both the particularity associated with the divine persons and the relational orientation of the triune God toward humanity and the created order. The implications of this orientation for human worship are significant. Accordingly, worship is sourced in and primarily mediated by a triune God, not human effort. Furthermore, worship is a reflection of the covenantal relationality between humanity and the divine persons. Therefore, it was hypothesized that an appraisal of the prepositional phrases associated with divine names in the PAOC songs might reflect a human expression of participatory worship that followed the established mediatorial doxology of addressing worship *to* (or *for*) the Father, *in* (or *with*) Jesus Christ, and *through* (or *by*) the Holy Spirit. Yet, a thorough assessment of the prepositions *to*, *for*, *with*, *in*, *through*, and *by* associated with divine names indicated both a limited emphasis on the longstanding mediatorial role of the particular divine persons and an under-utilization of this worship model associated with the ancient doxological formula. Worship, it can be affirmed by the data in this lyrical content analysis, was predominantly conceived as a human-initiated event.

Once all of the doxological prepositions for this study were accumulated, they were organized by their association with each divine person (193 prepositions in total). This represented a preliminary attempt to assess the potentiality for an expression of the doxological

connection with the divine names.²⁴ Figure 4.12 reveals that 2 (or 1%) of these prepositions were joined with the first divine person (e.g. “*in* the Father’s love” and “*in* the Name of the Father”). Only slightly higher cumulative sum totals, 6 (or 3%) prepositions joined with the third divine person (e.g. “*in* the Name of the Spirit”).²⁵ Consistent with the findings above regarding divine naming, the second divine person was the member of the Godhead that was most commonly linked to the doxological prepositions selected for analysis of the PAOC songs. In total, 86 (or 45%) of the prepositions that were identified with divine names were explicitly or implicitly linked to the person of Jesus Christ (e.g. “we belong *to* Jesus,” and “covered *by* the blood of the Lamb”). Otherwise, 99 (or 51%) of the prepositions were linked with vague/undefined divine names in which no clear reference to any particular divine person could be identified (e.g. “Shout *to* God all creation,” and “We will rise *with* You”). The comparably high numbers in both the vague/undefined and second divine person categories and, conversely, the modest numbers in the first and third divine categories indicated that the likelihood of the songs to follow the mediatorial doxological formula would also be quite low, particularly in relation to the first and third divine persons.

24 It should be noted that the mere presence of prepositions that were directly linked with divine names did not, automatically, indicate that the songs followed the mediatorial doxological formula.

25 A decision was made to associate a total of 5 prepositional phrases with the acts of the third divine person, although “Spirit” or “Holy Spirit” was not explicitly named (e.g. “we wait *for* You,” “to be overcome *by* Your Presence”). In these few instances, the context of these prepositional phrases in the songs entitled “Holy Spirit” (2011) and “Consuming Fire” (2002) clearly implied a pneumatological emphasis throughout the lyrics.

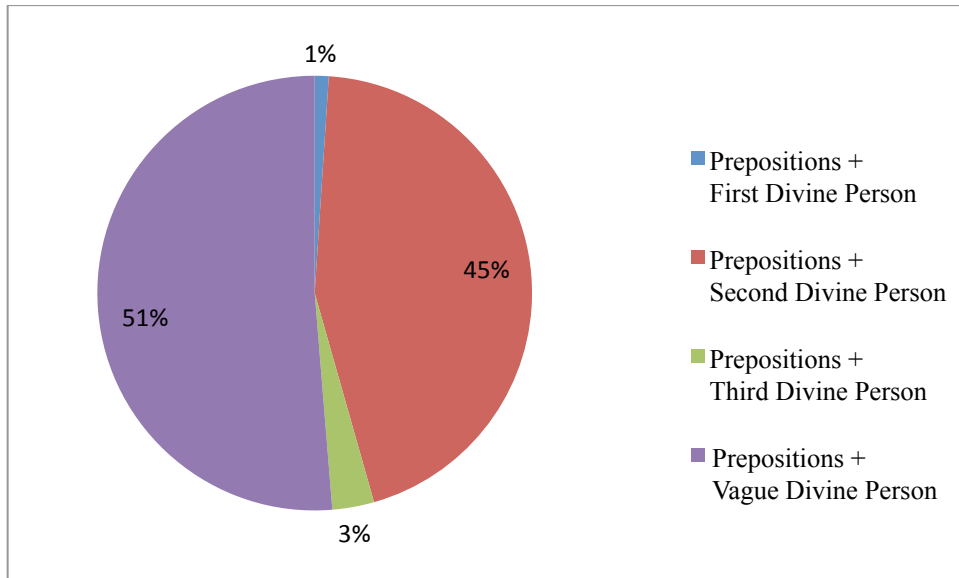


Figure 4.12. Prepositions linked to divine persons—evaluated by cumulative sum total.

Having assessed the prepositions for doxological potentiality, table 4.7 reveals the categorization of the prepositions into the six doxological categories associated with the divine persons. Following the mediatorial doxological formula, it was expected that the highest number of references to the prepositions “to” and “for” would correspond with the naming of the first person in the song list. However, while a total of 60 prepositional references to “to” and 38 prepositional references to “for” were identified with the divine names in the songs, *none* were explicitly associated with the first divine person (highlighted in yellow in table 4.7). Most of the prepositional references to “to” and “for” were compiled in the second divine person categories (33 references to “to,” e.g. “Glory *to* Jesus;” and 16 references to “for,” e.g. “All *for* Christ the King”) and vague/undefined category (26 “to” prepositions, e.g. “I am devoted *to* You;” and 20 “for” prepositions, e.g. “I will live *for* You”).²⁶ This confirmed that human worship *to* or *for* God the Father was not evident in the songs and replaced, most typically, by worship expression either *to* or *for* God the Son or *to* or *for* a vague/undefined God.

26 It is important to qualify that there remains a possibility songwriters who used the prepositions in association with vague divine names may have associated prepositional references “to” or “for” with the first divine person. For the purposes of this study, however, this cannot be assumed, nor is it, in my judgment, very likely.

Table 4.7. Prepositions, divine persons, and the mediatorial doxological formula

	To	For	With	In	By	Through	Total
First Person	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Second Person	33	16	5	22	9	1	86
Third Person	1	2	0	2	1	0	6
Vague/Undefined	26	20	14	23	10	6	99
	60	38	19	49	20	7	193

According to the mediatorial doxological formula, the highest number of references to the prepositions “with” and “in” should have corresponded with the second person divine names. Accordingly, references to “with” and “in” that were linked to the second divine person, garnered the most favourable totals as those following the mediatorial doxological formula. Among the 19 prepositional references to “with” and 49 prepositional references to “in,” 5 references to “with” (e.g. “I am a conqueror and co-heir *with* Christ”) and 22 references to “in” (“Find rest my soul *in* Christ alone”) were identified by the appropriate doxological categories (highlighted in pink in table 4.7). Most of the other prepositional references to “with” and “in” were associated with vague/undefined titles for God (14 references to “with,” e.g. “There is no shadow of turning *with* Thee;” and 23 references to “in,” e.g. “I trust *in* You”).²⁷ In contrast to the negligible evidence of prepositional references linked to God the Father, the comparably higher instances of prepositional references linked to God the Son are noteworthy. However, in the broader context of this analysis, it cannot be overlooked that, even if this *was* the case, the majority of the prepositional references to “with” and “in” were associated with a vague, abstract God. Again, these observations merit thoughtful consideration in the next chapter.

If the mediatorial doxological formula corresponded with third person divine names, it was expected that the prepositions “by” and “through” would be associated with God the Holy

27 As mentioned in note 26, there remains a possibility songwriters who used the prepositions in association with vague divine names may have presumed specific, though assumed and implicit, reference “with” or “in” with the second divine person. For the purposes of this study, however, this cannot be assumed, nor is it, in my judgment, very likely.

Spirit. However, as table 4.7 shows, of the 20 prepositional references to “by” and 7 prepositional references to “through” identified in the songs, only one preposition could *implicitly* be associated with the third divine person (highlighted in green in table 4.7).²⁸ Some of the prepositional references to “by” and “through” were identified with the second divine person (9 references to “by,” e.g. “Covered *by* the blood of the Lamb,” and 1 reference to “through,” e.g. “It’s only *through* your mercy”).²⁹ Most of the references to “by” and “through” were linked to vague/undefined divine titles (10 references to “by,” e.g. “*By* the grace of God we will carry on,” and 6 references to “through,” e.g. “*Through* You the darkness flees”).³⁰ The virtual non-existence of prepositional references to “by” and “through” in association with the third person is noteworthy. Further, the comparably high connection between references to “by” and “through” in connection to the second divine person and vague/undefined divine names is alarming. This confirms that the mediating role of the Holy Spirit was underdeveloped in the songs and was displaced by assumptions that God the Son and God, a vague/undefined deity, presumed this role. It is also worthy of mention that the comparably low number of references to “by” and “through” (compared to prepositional references to “to”/“for” and “with”/“in”) seemed to reinforce views of worship not as a mediated experience in which humans participate by virtue of divine-human mediation, but rather as an experience principally initiated by the human worshipper. As such, expressions of worship “to” and “for” God were more generously exemplified in the song list than worship experienced “by” and “through” God’s two hands. These observations will be further discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

28 “To be overcome *by Your Presence Lord*” was determined to be an implied third person prepositional phrase based on its contextual location in the song “Holy Spirit” (2011).

29 This was an implied second person prepositional phrase in the song “Offering” (2002).

30 As mentioned in note 26, songwriters who used these prepositions in association with vague divine names may have associated prepositional references “by” or “through” with the third divine person. For the purposes of this study, however, this cannot be assumed, nor is it, in my judgment, very likely.

C) Lyrical Content Analyses Concerning Views about Cosmology

vii) Cosmological Correspondence between Time and Timelessness (as measured by:

What is the perception of time in relation to the action of the worshipper in the songs?)

The seventh of the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses moved the focus from anthropology to cosmology; specifically, in relation to conceptions of time. Regarding a contemporary view of temporality, Gunton observed a tendency to draw irreconcilable differences between eternity (associated with timelessness) and the present reality (associated with time-boundedness). Even in a modern context in which partiality is given to the present this-worldly realm, Gunton suggested that people, nonetheless, experience anxiety and uneasiness with respect to a conception of time. That is, while people are restless about the here and now, we, nonetheless, lack the ability to live anywhere *but* in our time-bound present reality. Against a problematic dualism that tends to view time and timelessness as a contradiction of terms, Gunton considered how time and timelessness are related to one another. It was this ideal that prompted an analysis of verb tense in relation to the actions of the worshipper in the songs. In order for well-developed trinitarian thought on cosmology to be advanced, it was presumed that an analysis of the tenses of human verbs could provide an indication of pervasive views about the past, present, and future. After this analysis was completed, however, it was clear that the actions of the worshipper expressed in the most commonly used PAOC songs revealed an overwhelming preference for a present tense reality. As will be shown below, this was reinforced by a closer look of the most frequently utilized noun references to time.

Figure 4.13 shows how the general tense orientation of the human verbs in the songs was organized into five general categories:³¹ past tense, present tense, future tense, even tenses,³² and

³¹ Songs were further subdivided into categories entitled “exclusive” (i.e. songs containing only past, present, or future human verb tenses) or “predominant” (i.e. songs containing an assortment of human verb tenses, but

no tenses.³³

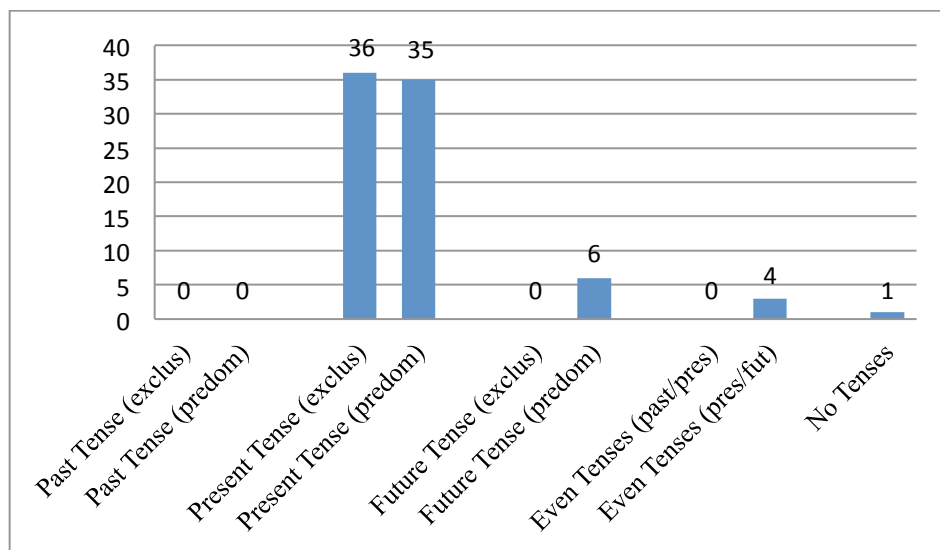


Figure 4.13. Tense emphasis in human verbs—evaluated by song total.

Notably, no songs contained human verbs that gave priority to either an exclusive or predominant past tense orientation. This clearly indicated that the past actions of the worshipper were not of greatest importance among the commonly used PAOC songs. In the present tense categories, 36 (or 44%) of the 82 songs contained only present tense human verbs in which no other tense was evident. An additional 35 (or 43%) of the songs contained past, present, and future tensed verbs associated with human activity in which present tense verbs predominated. Overwhelmingly, 71 (or 87%) of the 82 songs possessed human verbs with at least a predominant present tense emphasis. In the future tense categories, no songs contained an exclusively future tense human verb orientation. Only 6 (or 7%) of the songs contained present and future tense verbs where the future tense predominated. This suggests that only a modest number of songs were oriented toward the future actions of the worshipper. An additional 4 songs contained an even number of present and future tense verbs. One song, “Above All”

revealing a predominance of one particular type).

32 Songs that were identified with “even tenses” were those in which an even number of human verbs in more than one category was detected.

33 Songs identified with “no tenses” were those, essentially, that did not contain any human verbs.

(1999), did not contain any verbs oriented around human activity. The overwhelming emphasis on the present human experience of the worshippers engaged in the songs will be discussed in further detail in the following chapter.

Cumulative sum totals consistently reinforced what the song totals revealed. Figure 4.14 provides a collective indication of the 775 verb tense associations among all the human verbs in the songs. Thirty-seven (or 5%) of the verbs associated with human activity were expressed in the past tense (e.g. “*I’ve tasted and seen of the sweetest of loves*”). In a large majority of instances, 611 (or 79%) of the human verbs were in the present tense (e.g. “*I want to see you*”). Elsewhere, 127 (or 16%) of the human oriented verbs were those articulated in the future tense (e.g. “*we will praise you forever*”). These results reinforced that a strong orientation toward the present tense activities of the worshipper dominated the song list.

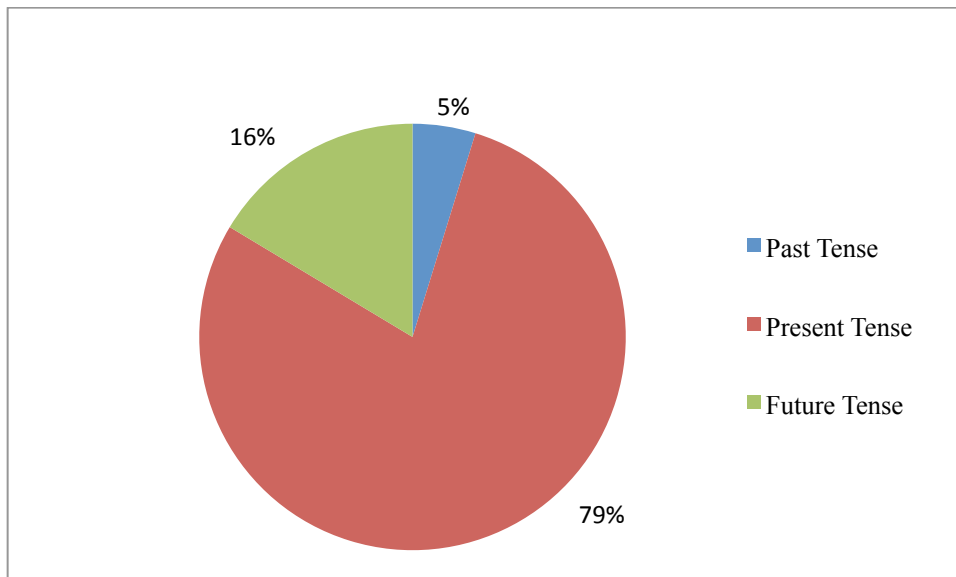


Figure 4.14. Tense emphasis in human verbs—evaluated by cumulative sum total.

Another way of analysing views about temporality involved an examination of the nouns in the song list that were explicit references to time. Certain nouns were more common than others. Figure 4.15 shows a list of the most prevalent nouns that explicitly referred to time and reveals both the song and cumulative sum totals for these time-oriented nouns. The five nouns

that appeared most often were as follows: “day(s)” (e.g. “*Today* is the *day* You have made”), appearing *at least once* in 13 (or 16%) of the songs (and 43 times in total) in the song list; “time(s)” (e.g. “I will trust Him at all *times*”), appearing *at least once* in 8 (or 10%) of the songs (and 14 times in total); “morning” (e.g. “As *morning* dawns and evening fades”), appearing *at least once* in 6 (or 7%) of the songs (and 7 times in total); “tomorrow” (e.g. “because He lives, I can face tomorrow”), appearing *at least once* in 3 (or 4%) of the songs (and 4 times in total) in the PAOC corpus, and “night” (e.g. “I will call Your name by *night*”), appearing *at least once* in 3 (or 4%) of the songs (and 3 times in total).

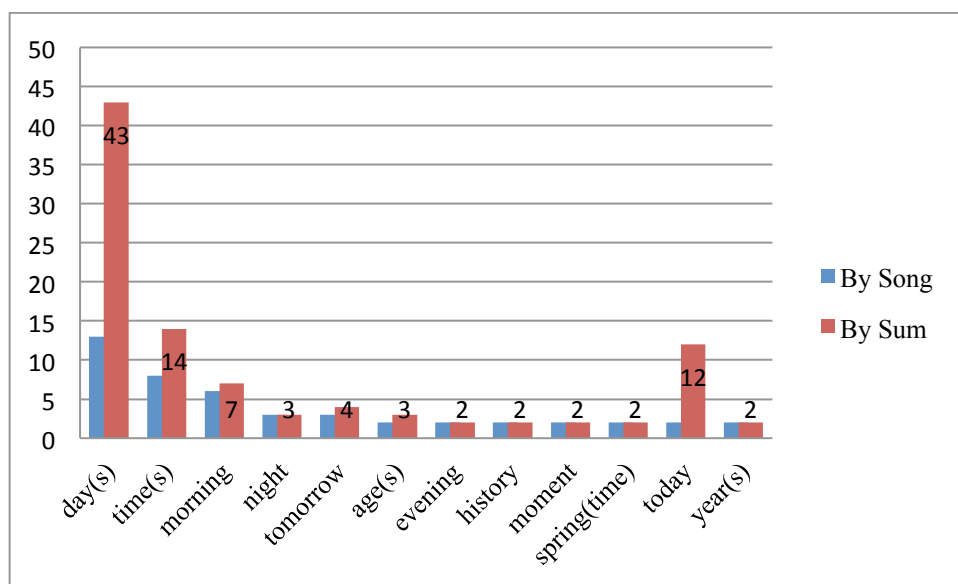


Figure 4.15. Time-reference nouns—evaluated by song and cumulative sum total.

The noun “day(s)” was used in a variety of ways from a literal reference to a quantitative, chronological time to more qualitative, kairological expressions of the same term. For example, some of the chronological references to “day(s)” explicitly referred to an interval of time between sunrise and sunset (e.g. “the sun comes up, it’s a new *day* dawning,” and “every *day* a brand new chance to say”). Elsewhere, a kairological usage of the term “day” was utilized to denote a more generic period in the present (e.g. “these are the *days* of Elijah, declaring the word of the Lord,” and “Life Eternal, You have won the *day*”).

A few references directly addressed the significance of the “day” of Christ’s resurrection (e.g. “the greatest *day* in history, death is beaten, You have rescued me,” and “bursting forth in glorious *Day*, up from the grave you rose again”). Other references to the term also described a future-oriented time in history that anticipates the eschaton (e.g. “Now you are exalted to the highest place ... where one *day* I’ll bow,” and “One *day* every tongue will confess You are God”). Finally, the noun “day” was used as an encompassing term that appeared to represent the fullness of a human life (e.g. “all my *days*, I’ll live for You,” and “We will praise you all of our *days*”). Despite these varied applications, it was observed that the term “day” as a literal, chronological period experienced in the present was, by far, the most common way of using the term in the songs.

Similarly, the noun “time(s)” was chronologically utilized with some variation. The most common use of the term was to denote a particular period or interval of temporality as distinct from another (e.g. “Come, now is the *time* to worship,” “when ... the end draws near and my *time* has come,” and “my very present help in *time* of need”). Elsewhere, the term appeared to be used as a synonym for the word “continuously” (e.g. “*all the time*, You are good,” and “I will trust Him *at all times*”). In a few instances, the word “time” was used as an unspecified, kairological interval or period (e.g. “Ev’ry *time* I see You,” and “many *times* I’ve wondered at your gift of life”). In one instance, the human worshipper was described as not “having time” (e.g. “I don’t *have time* to maintain these regrets”). In another, God is described as the possessor of temporal “time” (e.g. “age to age He stands, and *time* is in His hands, beginning and the end”).

Viewed together, an analysis of human verb tenses and the most common and explicit references to time reinforced a substantial emphasis on the present and chronologically temporal reality. A thorough expression of events in past history was virtually non-existent. Future events

were emphasized in only a few cases. This preoccupation with present, temporal time will be reviewed in greater detail in the next chapter as it applies to a Canadian Pentecostal context within the PAOC.

viii) Cosmological Correspondence between Material and Immaterial (as measured by Question #8: *Is there a balance between material and immaterial objects in the songs?*)

The final qualitative lyrical content analysis instituted comparative analysis of song references to material and immaterial objects and realities. This analysis was motivated by Gunton's concern about a perceived incompatibility between a metaphysical eternity and an observable material universe. In particular, Gunton was distressed that a lingering Gnostic influence led to a cosmological belief that the material world is subordinate to the metaphysical realm of the immaterial. Against this idea, Gunton sought to overcome a pervasive dualism that denies the compatibility between the material and non-material realms. Using the open-transcendentals of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis*, Gunton championed the triune God's loving and free relations with a material cosmos that is, in its dynamism and its distinctiveness, an image-bearer of God. Therefore, it was hypothesized that an appraisal of the abstract and concrete nouns in the PAOC song corpus might reflect this compatibility between the material and immaterial world. Overall, a preference was detected for abstract nouns in the songs, although it was observed that concrete nouns were also generously represented throughout the song list.

Regarding song totals, while 5 (or 6%) of the songs evidenced an even number of abstract and concrete nouns, a preference was observed in favour of songs with mostly abstract nouns (see: figure 4.16). Forty-eight (or 59%) of the songs possessed both abstract and concrete nouns in which the abstract nouns predominated. In 3 (or 4%) of the additional songs, only abstract

nouns were detected in the lyrics. Conversely, 22 (or 27%) of the commonly used PAOC songs possessed a combination of abstract and concrete nouns in which the concrete nouns predominated. An additional 4 (or 5%) of the songs contained only concrete nouns in the lyrics. By general comparison, this indicated that 62% (or 51) of the songs possessed nouns that bolstered cosmological views favouring metaphysical abstractness, while 32% (26) of the songs reinforced concrete places, objects, or things.

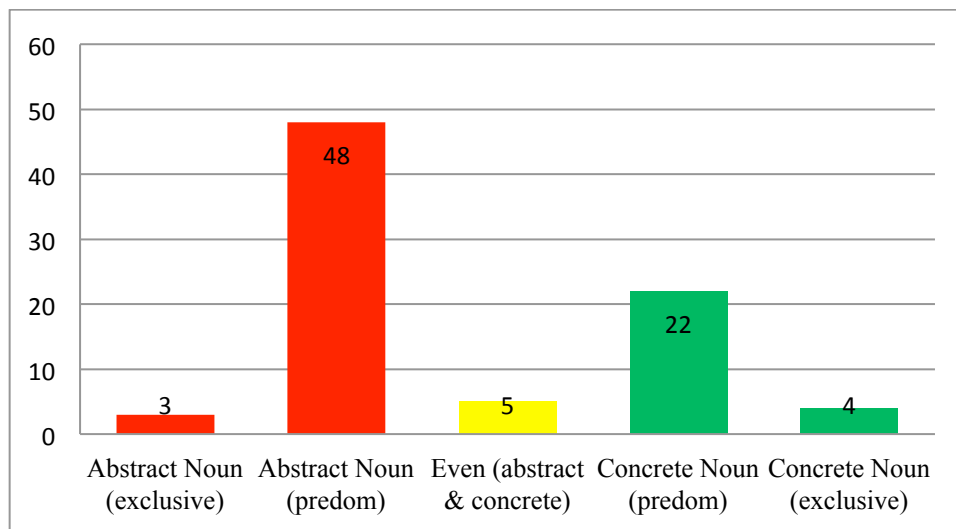


Figure 4.16. Abstract and concrete nouns—evaluated by song total.

As figure 4.17 shows below, cumulative sum totals related to abstract, personified/anthropomorphized, and concrete nouns indicated a slightly more balanced picture than the song totals. While there may have been a predominant emphasis on abstract nouns, the cumulative sum of concrete nouns was, by no means, insignificant. In total, of the 1,291 nouns in this noun analysis, 678 (or 53%) were characterized as abstract (e.g. “I’m trading my *sorrows*, for the *joy* of the Lord”), while 535 (or 41%) were assumed to be concrete in nature (e.g. “as *wounds* which mar the Chosen One”). Otherwise, a sum total of 78 (or 6%) nouns were allocated in the category identified for personified/anthropomorphized nouns (e.g. “dip your *heart* in the stream of life”).

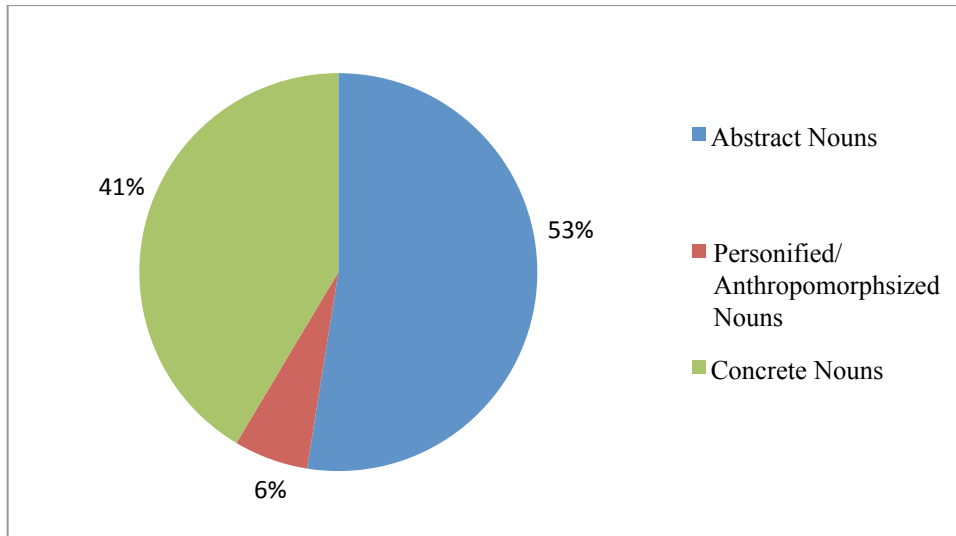


Figure 4.17. Abstract, personified/anthropomorphized, and concrete nouns—evaluated by cumulative sum total

Among the songs that reinforced abstract nouns, certain nouns were more common than others. Figure 4.18 shows a list of the most common abstract nouns and the frequency by which they appeared *at least once* in the songs. The 5 abstract nouns that appeared most commonly and *at least once* in the songs were the following: “love” (e.g. “pour out your power and *love*”), appearing *at least once* in 30 (or 37%) of the songs in the song list; “glory” (e.g. “let us experience the *glory* of Your goodness”), appearing *at least once* in 22 (or 27%) of the songs; “life” (e.g. “from *life*’s first cry to final breath”), appearing *at least once* in 22 (or 27%) of the songs; “praise(s)” (e.g. “*praise* is rising, hearts are turning to you”) appearing *at least once* in 22 (or 27%) of the songs; and “name(s)” (e.g. “at Your *name*, angels will bow”) appearing *at least once* in 15 (or 18%) of the songs in the PAOC corpus.

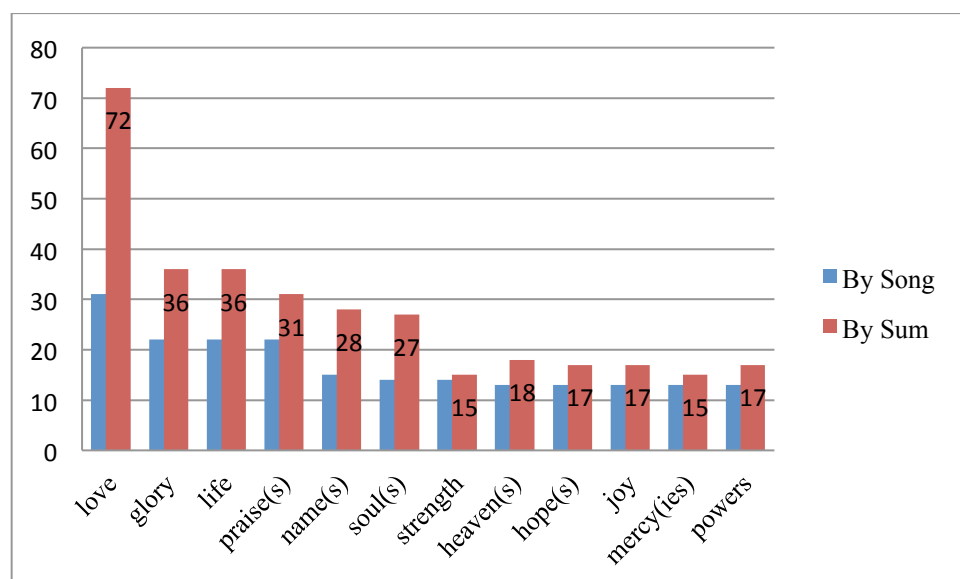


Figure 4.18. Abstract nouns—evaluated by song and cumulative sum total.

Figure 4.18 also shows a cumulative sum total of the abstract nouns in the songs. The same nouns appeared with the highest cumulative frequency. The abstract noun “love” appeared 72 times throughout the song corpus (e.g. “You satisfy me with Your *love*”), “glory” appeared 36 times (e.g. “All for You and for Your *glory*”), “life” appeared 36 times (e.g. “Dip your heart in the stream of *life*”), “praise(s)” appeared 31 times (e.g. “No one on earth deserves the *praises* that I sing”), “name(s)” appeared 28 times (e.g. “lift high the *name* of Jesus”), and “soul” appeared 27 times (e.g. “my *soul* my *soul* must sing”).

The prevalence of the abstract noun “love” was particularly noticeable. Cumulative sum total references to “love” appeared more than twice as frequently as any other abstract noun in the song list. Upon closer examination, it was discovered that the vast majority (over 85%) of the lyrical references to the term “love” referred to a *divine* love expressed *toward* humanity (e.g. “Your great love *for me*”). Only 2 of the 72 references to “love” explicitly referred to an expression of human love exerted *toward* God (e.g. “this *love* of *ours* will rise”). Otherwise, an overwhelming emphasis on divine love for humanity predominated the list of abstract nouns. This warrants further attention in the following chapter.

With reference to the common abstract noun “glory,” the prevailing emphasis of this term rested on ideas associated with the greatness of God (e.g. “Your *glory* Lord is far and wide”). God’s glory, for example, “fills the skies,” “fills the earth,” and “eclipses affliction.” Based on its use in the PAOC song corpus, this term tended to evoke a response within the human worshipper to seek God’s glory (e.g. “*let us experience the glory* of Your goodness,” and “*Your glory is what our hearts long for*” and “*Glory to God forever*”). Elsewhere, parallels were drawn between the word “glory” and the concept of eternity (e.g. “I’ll see the *lights of glory*” and “*bring many sons to glory*”). Notably, in the majority of these references, the predominant idea associated with the term “glory” is a divine and exalted manifestation of God’s greatness and transcendence.

Common references to “life” ranged significantly in their meaning. Among the 36 references to life, at least one-third referred to a human and earthly existence (e.g. “as long as *life* endures” and “from *life*’s first cry to final breath”). Life, understood this way, appeared to serve as a direct protest against the experience of death (e.g. “I was *dying* and You gave me *life*” and “His *dying* breath has brought me *life*”). In a few references (3 in total), “life,” was linked to a hope of eternal existence with God (e.g. “hope of a *life* spent with You” and “I’m giving up my pride for the promise of new *life*”). In other lyrical instances, God, it was implied, was the provider of both human and eternal life (e.g. “You’re my supply, my breath of *life*”). In one song, Jesus’ sacrificial “life” was referenced explicitly (e.g. “since You laid down Your *life*, the greatest sacrifice”). As a result of this divine provision and subsequent gift of life, a common human response in the lyrics was to give life back to God (e.g. “here at Your feet, I lay my *life*,” “take my *life* and let it be Yours,” and “I give my *life* to follow everything I believe in”). Thus, there appears to be many uses for the term “life.” What seems consistent, however, is that the abstract noun “life” was most often utilized to denote a human phenomenon experienced by the

worshipper on an earthly stage.

Regarding references to the abstract noun “praise(s),”³⁴ the overwhelming emphasis was oriented toward the acknowledgment of God as a worthy focus of human worship (e.g. “Still my soul will sing Your *praise* unending,” and “*Praise* to the King of kings”). The human worshipper, in many cases, was expressed as the one *giving* praise to God (e.g. “*I’ll give my praise* to You” and “*I give you praise*”). Granted, in a few lines of lyrical content, human praise was sourced by God (e.g. “You put a song of *praise* in me” and “I’m full of *praise* once again”). By and large, however, the term “praise” was utilized as an abstract concept which, conceptually, was derived from within the worshipper and was directed toward God. This seemed consistent with other observations in this study of commonly used PAOC songs about the human-orientation of the worship experience.

Unquestionably, the common use of these abstract terms [i.e. love, glory, life, and praise(s)], when viewed within the parameters of the larger purposes of this project, merit close attention. In the following chapter, the prevalence of these terms will be carefully considered and synthesized in view of the other seven lyrical content analyses. In the meantime, commonly used concrete nouns must also be considered.

Figure 4.19 shows a list of the most commonly used concrete nouns and the frequency by which they appeared *at least once* in the songs. Regarding song totals, the 5 concrete nouns that appeared most often were “earth” (e.g. “no one on *earth* deserves the praises that I sing”), appearing *at least once* in 18 (or 22%) of the songs in the song list; “song(s)” (e.g. “sing the *song* of the redeemed”), appearing *at least once* in 16 (or 20%) of the songs;³⁵ “world” (e.g. “when the

34 References to “praise,” as a verb, were excluded from this noun analysis.

35 After significant consideration, it was determined that nouns in connection with audio phenomena [e.g. “song(s),” “voice(s),” and “sound(s)"] should be classified as concrete nouns, not abstract nouns. Sound, it was decided, is a physical reality that is experienced directly with the human senses.

world’s all as it should be”), appearing *at least once* in 14 (or 17%) of the songs; “darkness” (e.g. “when the *darkness* closes in, Lord”), appearing *at least once* in 12 (or 15%) of the songs; and “light(s)” (e.g. “He is my *light*, my strength, my song”), appearing *at least once* in 12 (or 15%) of the songs in the PAOC corpus.

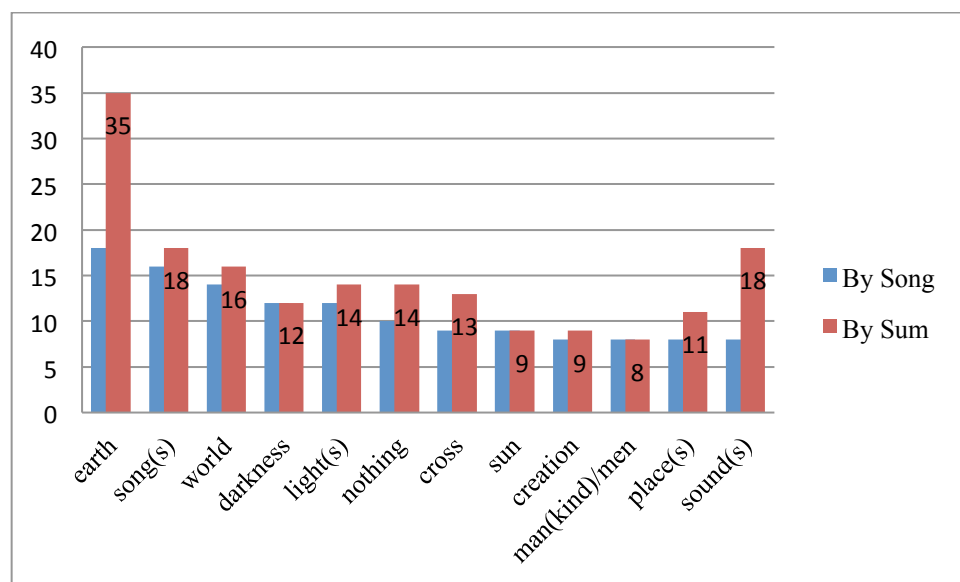


Figure 4.19. Concrete nouns—evaluated by song and cumulative sum total.

Figure 4.19 also shows cumulative sum totals of the most common concrete nouns. Unsurprisingly, the same nouns appeared with the highest frequency.³⁶ The concrete noun “earth” appeared 35 times (e.g. “the whole *earth* shakes”); “song(s)” appeared 18 times (e.g. “this *song* of ours will rise”); “world” appeared 16 times (e.g. “You’re the answer we want the *world* to know”); and “light(s)” appeared 14 times (e.g. “You are the *light* that leads us”).

Among the most common concrete nouns, the word “earth” was observed the most frequently. Approximately half of these were explicit references to cosmological phenomena associated with the earth as part of the created order (e.g. “humbly you came to the *earth* You created,” “You spoke the *earth* into motion,” and “Lord of all creation, of water, *earth*, and

³⁶ Cumulative sum totals for the concrete noun “sound” were elevated because of the song “Your Great Name” (2008) that referenced “sound” 8 times.

sky”). The other half were references that explicitly distinguished the material earth from the non-created order (e.g. “thou art high above all the *earth*,” “Lord of heaven and *earth*,” and “as I walk from *earth* into eternity”). The frequency by which the concrete noun “earth” is used in this manner is particularly relevant to the discussion that follows in relation to material and immaterial dualism.

The commonly used term “song(s)” appeared the second most frequently in the song list of concrete nouns. The most frequent usage of the term “song” appeared to be oriented toward that which was initiated by a human object (e.g. “ev’ry creature unique in the *song* that it sings,” “sing the *song* of the redeemed,” and “come let us sing a *song*”). That said, a small number (3 in total) of these references were those in which God or heavenly beings appeared to be in possession of a “song” (e.g. “I can feel this God *song*,” and “the sound of angel’s *song*,” and “it’s time to sing Your *song* again”). Correspondingly, there were a few other references implying that a human song of worship was initiated by a divine source (e.g. “You put a *song* of praise in me,” “You lead us in the *song* of Your salvation,” and “You inspire *songs* of praise”). However, consistent with other findings in this project, references to the concrete noun “song(s)” were predominantly connected with a human subject and a divine object.

Regarding references to the ubiquitous term “world,” some were clearly associated with a cosmological reality of the material earth, globe, or planet (e.g. “You were here before the *world* began,” and “before the *world* was made ... You were the King of kings”). A few references mentioned the noun “world” as a descriptor for a particular human experience (e.g. “You hold my *world* in Your hands”). However, the most common usage of the term “world” was as a synonym for the inhabitants of humankind (e.g. “You’re the answer we want the *world* to know” and “all the *world* will know His Name”). The prevalence of this usage and its correspondence to

other findings concerning the songs, general orientation upon the worshipper is worth noting.

In respect to references to the concrete noun “darkness,” it was noted that this term was often paradoxically linked to its obverse “light(s)” (e.g. “when I stumble in the *darkness*, I will celebrate the *light*,” “You are *light*, when the *darkness* closes in,” and “*Light* of the World, you stepped down into *darkness*”). In several of these cases, “darkness” served as a word to describe the oppressiveness of the human condition (e.g. “You delivered me out of *darkness*”). Elsewhere, the term was used more deviously as an implied synonym for wickedness, evil, or demonic activity (e.g. “Through You the *darkness* flees,” “*darkness* trembles at His Name,” and “You alone the *darkness* cannot bear”).

The concrete noun “light” appeared with almost identical frequency as the term “darkness” and, as mentioned, both were commonly linked together.³⁷ In some cases, references to “light” directly referred to a divine source of illumination (e.g. “He is my *light* my strength my song,” and “I will celebrate the *light*”). In other instances, references to “light” pointed to a human source of illumination (e.g. “You’re sending us out, *light* in this broken land” and “Shine your *light* and let the whole world see”). Elsewhere, a few examples referred to “light” as the radiance of a particular source (e.g. “I’ll see the *lights* of glory” and “who imagined the sun and gives source to its *light*”). The frequent utilization of these concrete nouns [i.e. earth, song(s), world, darkness, and light(s)] demand scrutiny, particularly in connection with other observations gleaned in this data chapter. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the findings pertaining to abstract and concrete nouns are distinctly relevant to trinitarian and Pentecostal views about cosmology.

Among the songs that possessed personification/anthropomorphism, certain nouns were

37 Divine references to “*Light* of the world” were identified in this study as references to a divine name, not as a concrete noun. I determined that this phrase corresponded most appropriately as a divine title, not a noun, and thus, was not included in this particular noun analysis.

also more common than others. Figure 4.20 shows a list of the personified/anthropomorphized nouns and the frequency by which they appeared in the songs. The 4 abstract nouns that appeared most commonly were (human) “heart(s)” (e.g. “‘T’was grace that taught my *heart* to fear”), appearing *at least once* in 28 (or 34%) of the songs in the song list; (divine) “hand(s)” (e.g. “and time is in His *hands*”), appearing *at least once* in 11 (or 13%) of the songs; (divine) “heart” (e.g. “Precious Lord reveal Your *heart* to me”), appearing *at least once* in 4 (or 5%) of the songs; (human) “eye(s)” (e.g. “open the *eyes* of my heart, Lord”) appearing *at least once* in 3 (or 4%) of the songs in the PAOC corpus.

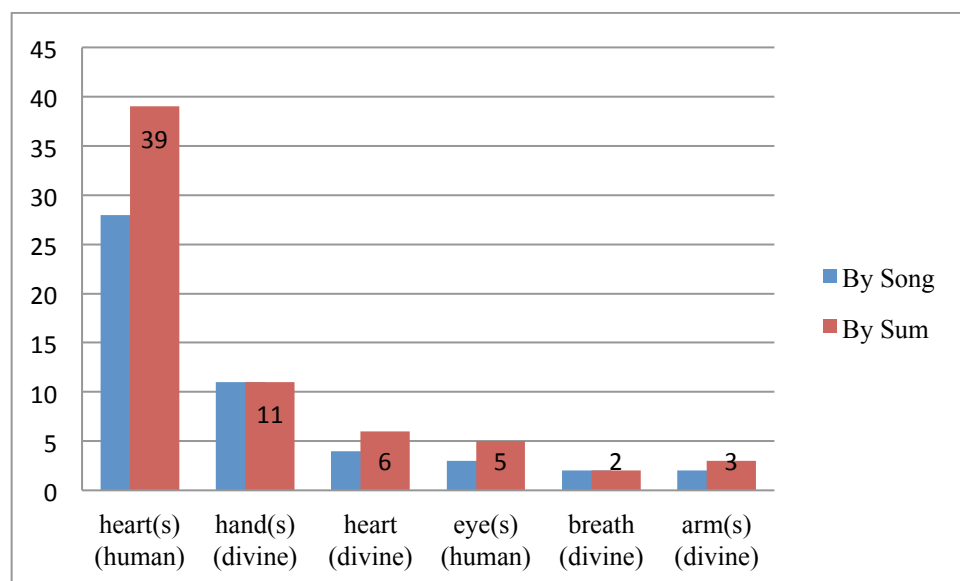


Figure 4.20. Personified/anthropomorphized nouns—evaluated by song and cumulative sum total.

Unquestionably, the most frequent example in the song list of a noun exhibiting personification was the word “heart”—particularly as a figurative expression in which the human heart was given characteristics or qualities (e.g. “the beauty of your majesty awakes my *heart* to sing”).³⁸ Consistent with other observations stated above, the human heart was most often described as engaging in the act of worship itself—particularly singing (e.g. “my *heart* will *sing*

³⁸ As seen in figure 4.20, the noun “heart” was also used 6 times to anthropomorphize the divine heart (e.g. “Your name is great and Your *heart* is kind”), although this usage was less common than approaches utilized to personify the activity of the human heart.

no other Name” and “my *heart* will *sing* how great is our God”), saying (e.g. “my *heart* will choose *to say*”), praising (e.g. “through you all *hearts* will *praise*”), and screaming (e.g. “through you my heart *screams*, I am free”). It is noteworthy that “heart,” as the most common example of personification in the songs, corresponded with analyses where “love” was the most commonly observed abstract noun in the songs (e.g. “You captured my *heart* with this *love*”).

The noun “hand(s)” was commonly anthropomorphized to offer an expression of the agency of God in the PAOC songs (e.g. “You hold my world in Your *hands*”). God’s “hands” were most often described as a source of provision (e.g. “Thy *hand* hath *provided*” and “no power of hell ... can ever pluck me from His *hand*”). Divine “hands” were also described as “mighty” (e.g. “with a mighty *hand* and an outstretched arm” and “cover me within Your mighty *hand*”). In a few instances, divine hands were connected to notions of time and timelessness (e.g. “age to age he stands and time is in His *hands*” and “You stood before creation, eternity in Your *hand*”). For the purposes of this study, the utilization and frequency of this anthropomorphized term is particularly interesting in light of Gunton’s affinity for the application of the Irenaean metaphor of God’s two hands. However, it is difficult, beyond mere conjecture, to ascertain whether this metaphor was on the mind of the songwriters when the songs were written.

In summary, and having thoroughly examined the usage of abstract, concrete, and personified/anthropomorphized nouns in the PAOC song list, there are several things that can be observed. It is clear that a preference, if even slight, for abstract nouns pervaded the songs. That said, the significant representation of concrete nouns can not be overlooked. The representation of both types may, in fact, go against argumentation of a cosmological dualism between metaphysical and observable earth phenomena. On the other hand, a more thorough lyrical investigation than this one might more clearly determine the relationality expressed between

material and non-material nouns. Based on the parameters established in this study, and while a slight preference toward the non-material may be detectable, I am reluctant to go much further beyond the rather inconclusive observations stated above. It seems most prudent to weigh the observations gained from this eighth lyrical content analysis with those gathered from the other related analyses in this study.

This chapter has provided the data associated with the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses described in the previous chapter. For each of the content analyses, several summary tables and figures were presented in order to advance the purposes of the project.

The first three analyses represented ways to determine trinitarian impulses in the PAOC songs in relation to views about the triune God. In relation to divine naming, it was corroborated that references to the first and third divine person were largely absent, while identification with a vague and undefined deity was most common. Regarding divine actions in salvation history, the grand narrative of God's activity was significantly underdeveloped in the lyrics and substituted, instead, by divine acts that were oriented toward the human worshipper. Concerning the perichoretic relationality that exists among the persons of the Trinity, an overwhelming absence of inter-trinitarian being in communion was detected.

In the fourth, fifth, and sixth lyrical analysis, a trinitarian assessment was extended to perceptions about the human person. The lyrics confirmed that human identification in the songs was predominantly singular in nature. Additionally, the corporate nature of human to human relationality was under-represented throughout the song corpus. Moreover, the songs did not reinforce a notion that worship is sourced, primarily, in a triune God. Instead, the observations from these lyrical content analyses verified a tendency to perceive worship as an experience predominantly sourced by human-initiative.

The last two analyses provided the means to assess a trinitarian conceptualization of cosmology in the songs. Concerning views about time, the seventh content analysis revealed a tendency in the lyrics to advance a dualism between present reality (i.e. time-boundedness) and eternity (i.e. timelessness). More specifically, a substantial preoccupation with present temporality was overwhelmingly detected. Finally, with respect to materiality and immateriality in the eighth lyrical content analysis, a subtle dualism was also confirmed. While this dualism was less conclusive, a preference toward abstract, non-material forms was moderately noticeable in the lyrics.

Collectively, this chapter provided the basis for the discussion that follows in the next chapter. In particular, chapter five will reincorporate the trinitarian work of Colin Gunton with the data from this chapter in an attempt to conceptually apply these results to a uniquely Canadian Pentecostal context in the PAOC. In this respect, Gunton's trinitarian theology will continue to be utilized as a descriptive and prescriptive tool in relation to theological impulses related to the PAOC, the consideration of which we now turn.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION TOWARD A MORE TRINITARIAN EXPRESSION IN THE PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA

In the preceding chapter, the presentation and analysis of data associated with the lyrics of commonly used Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) songs from April 2007 to March 2013 were reported. This chapter discusses those findings, paying particular attention to instances in which the theological work of Colin Gunton might contribute to a more thorough understanding and application of the doctrine of the Trinity within the PAOC. The discussion targets the same areas as the lyrical content analysis from the previous chapter—namely, views of God (theology proper), views of human personhood (anthropology), and views of the cosmos (cosmology). With each section, I review observations about the musical lyrics, and explore implications specific to the PAOC context. Also, each section concludes with practical recommendations and suggestions for the PAOC. These considerations are intended to outline a path toward a richer, more consistent fulfillment of trinitarian faith profession within contemporary worship practices among Canadian Pentecostals in the PAOC.

A) Views about God

In the first of these three sections, I will reflect upon the observations about the nature, character, and actions of the triune God in the PAOC songs. I will do this in relation to Gunton's trinitarian views about the Godhead considering how these observations reflect upon the unique realities of the PAOC faith community. Specifically, I will consider the correlations between tendencies in Pentecostalism and my analysis of the songs in this study. These correlations include the following: i) modalism and divine naming imbalance, ii) detached salvation history, and iii) limited interrelationality in the immanent Trinity. Through this discussion, I will show that there is an inclination among the PAOC to view the triune God as a single divine mode,

isolated from the acts of salvation history, and limited by sparse expressions of the divine relationality between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. After addressing these issues as they relate to a distinctly Pentecostal context and theology, I offer some brief considerations and questions to this faith community in response. As before, the theological work of Gunton remains at the forefront in all of this discussion.

i) Modalism and Divine Naming Imbalance

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

In the first qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. Particular Identification in Divine Naming), I analysed the explicit and implicit classifications associated with the naming of all the divine persons in the selected songs. In conjunction with Gunton's call for particularity among the persons of the Godhead, it was expected that each divine person would be well represented in the songs under review. However, this was not the case. Instead, two things became increasingly apparent as I examined divine naming trends in the songs. Firstly, I recognized a modalistic overemphasis on abstract divine oneness, and, secondly, I noticed an imbalance in naming particularity throughout the song corpus.

a) Abstract and Modalistic Divine Naming

Vague and undefined naming of the persons of the Trinity in this study is consistent with Gunton's contention that an overemphasized oneness in the Godhead remains the dominant contemporary and theological view. The lyrics in this study underscored references of a singular divine mode of being and confirmed Gunton's suggestion that there tends to be a "flattening out" of the distinctions between the unique divine persons.¹ Indeed, Gunton's apprehensions about

¹ Colin E. Gunton, "And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made," in *Nicene Christianity*, ed. Christopher R. Seitz (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001), 36; Colin E. Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43, no. 1 (January 1, 1990): 38.

hazy conceptions of an abstract God seem consistent with the findings of this research project.² Although particular references to each of the divine persons were not completely absent in the song corpus under review, a majority of the songs contained vague and undefined references to the triune God.³

Gunton was clear in his general indictment of those who undermine the particularity and threeness of the Godhead. This concern is also voiced by others who have increasingly identified this impulse in Christian worship music in recent years. Based on his research, Robin Parry, for example, has stated, “I suspect that slowly but surely there has been a shift away from full Trinitarian worship towards worship that is often in practice ‘unitarian.’ This shift is not uniform, it is not the same in all churches, it sometimes waxes and wanes, and it has hardly reached boiling point, but I want to blow the whistle and say, ‘Frogs of the world unite! We’re being boiled alive here!’”⁴ In other studies, a preference toward divine oneness has been empirically substantiated. Mark Evans, Lester Ruth, and Jenell Paris are among those who have arrived at a similar conclusion in their research of contemporary worship music and divine naming practices.⁵ These studies demonstrate that ambiguity, anonymity, and abstraction are the

2 This “flattening out” is also verified by others, such as Clark Pinnock who wrote, “In the past, under the influence of Greek thought, theology has over-emphasized transcendence at the cost of depreciating God’s personal nature and relations with creation. It gave the impression of God as remote Being, a metaphysical iceberg, alienating of human significance.” Clark H. Pinnock, “Evangelical Theologians Facing the Future: An Ancient and a Future Paradigm,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 33, no. 2 (September 1, 1998): 23.

3 Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, Bampton Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 144, n.23.

4 Robin Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship* (UK; Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2005), 2–3; In this respect, J.B. Torrance considered that contemporary worship has become the expression of “functional Unitarians.” James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster Press, 1996), 20.

5 Evans, for example, noted that a review of commonly used songs in Australian Evangelical churches in the early 2000s confirmed that the most dominant references to God in the songs were “Lord” (occurring in 49.6% of all the songs under review) and “God” (averaging 41.7%). Mark Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church* (London: Equinox, 2006), 164; Similarly, in a lyrical study of contemporary worship music songs governed by Paris, she observed that God is named in “de-gendered ways” through the most common, simplified titles “You,” “Lord,” and “God.” Jenell Paris, “I Could Sing of Your Love Forever,” in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*, ed. Robert Woods and Brian Walrath (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 48–49. To empirically validate further claims about references to a generic deity in

theological norm in the divine naming practices associated with common contemporary worship practices. More in-depth phenomenological and qualitative research that considers how the use of genericized divine titles impacts the overall theological development of a religious group such as the PAOC would be insightful.

b) Divine Naming Imbalance

When particularity in divine naming *was* evident in the songs in this study, the prevalence of references to the second divine person, to the detriment of the first and third persons was common.⁶ In several instances God the Father and God the Spirit were entirely absent from the songs under review. However, even when Jesus *was* either implicitly or explicitly named, a theological dualism was observed in this study. This finding parallels Gunton's contention that a theological rupture exists between a christology from above and a christology from below.⁷ Gunton opposed this type of christological dualism that tends to perceive the transcendent nature of Christ as incompatible with the incarnational and human components of the living Jesus.⁸ Nonetheless, this was often the way Christ was depicted in the

contemporary worship music, see also: Lester Ruth, "Don't Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters," *The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies Blog*, February 1, 2006, 3, <http://iws.edu/2006/02/lester-ruth-dont-lose-the-trinity> (accessed Jan 18, 2013).

- 6 As it relates to the neglect of God the Father, Parry wrote, "It seems to me that in contemporary Christian worship one can detect clear trends in certain sections of the church in which the Father is increasingly neglected. There have been occasions when we shy away from using the 'F-word' (Father) in worship. Sometimes the Father is not so much as mentioned, and at other times he gets in only by a passing reference." Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 105; Elsewhere, Sarah Hinlicky Wilson argued that there is virtual absence (and loss of trinitarianism) in Pentecostalism. Sarah Hinlicky Wilson, "Spiritless Lutheranism, Fatherless Pentecostalism, and a Proposed Baptismal-Christological Corrective," *Pneuma* 34, no. 3 (2012): 415–29.
- 7 Colin E. Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 95.
- 8 On christological dualism, Keith Drury has posited, "Jesus is both divine and human, fully 100% God and 100% man at the same time. While these two natures of Jesus have widely been accepted through Christian history there is often a disproportionate emphasis on one or the other: either the humanity or the divinity of Jesus. Sometimes the emphasis is to correct error, for example, when a heresy arises and teaches that Jesus was not really human but only appeared to be so. In response, the church may heavily emphasize the humanity of Jesus to correct the imbalance. Likewise, when Jesus has been humanized to the extent that He has been stripped of His divinity, the church tends to respond with an emphasis on the divine Jesus. But even without heresy, the Christian church is constantly calibrating understanding of Jesus to stay balanced and complete." Keith Drury,

song corpus. The majority of lyrical scenarios included passive and docetic categorizations which undermined the direct and human involvement of Christ.⁹ In this respect, it is conceivable that Gunton would have viewed this lyrical analysis as a reinforcement of his concern that an Augustinian and Gnostic preference for the divinity of Christ exists among us today.¹⁰

Further, when implied references to Jesus Christ *were* evident in the songs, it is noteworthy that a majority of these christological references were, in fact, contextually vague and undefined (e.g. “You,” “Name,” “He,” and “God”).¹¹ As mentioned above, this is congruous with the hazy and flattened conceptions of the unique divine persons for which Gunton voiced disdain. In other words, even when Jesus Christ *was* implicitly referenced in the songs, the lyrics tended to use generic and sweeping christological titles that expressed limited distinctions about the character of Christ.

The question of both the frequency and quality in which the second person of the Trinity is described in commonly used contemporary worship songs is a topic of interest to a growing number of scholars and liturgists.¹² Andy Goodliff and Susan White, for example, have each

“‘I’m Desperate for You’-The Message in the Music,” in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*, ed. Robert H. Woods and Brian D. Walrath (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 55.

9 Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, repr. (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2003), 33; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 36; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 104; Colin E. Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 88–89; See also: Pinnock, “Evangelical Theologians Facing the Future: An Ancient and a Future Paradigm,” 26; Andrew Gabriel wrote, “Inasmuch as the attributes which express God’s transcendence have historically been most prominent in doctrines of God, it appears that God’s immanence has been neglected.” Andrew K. Gabriel, “This Spirit Is God: A Pentecostal Perspective on the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes,” in *Defining Issues in Pentecostalism* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 86–87; See also: Jeremy Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God: Essays in Listening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 168–169.

10 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 34.

11 Parry also confirmed a christological vagueness in his study of contemporary worship music. He wrote, “It seems to me that there is a trend towards singing songs addressed to a Jesus who has been ripped of any references to the narrative that makes him who he is. Such songs speak of a ‘Lord’ called ‘Jesus’ who makes the singers feel loved and accepted, but often there is no reference to his incarnation, his teaching, his miracles, his life, his death-resurrection-ascension or his coming return.” Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 116–117; Likewise, Ruth stated, “The God in many of these songs is high and mighty, but also appears highly passive, too.” Ruth, “Don’t Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters,” 3.

12 Evans, for example, wrote, “The major, or dominant, Christian music producers today come mainly from

provided critiques similar to Gunton's about the abundant referencing of Jesus Christ in many songs and the infrequent naming of God the Father and God the Spirit. In his evaluation of contemporary worship songs, Goodliff has said, "At first glance this [christomonism] is not necessarily problematic or heretical.... However ... an overemphasis on worship to or about Jesus leads to an impoverished Christology and as a consequence worship that can become distorted and in danger of ceasing to be Christian."¹³ That is, the tendency whereby Jesus becomes the primary and exclusive focus, shed of His mediatorial role to the Father, and voided of his infilling by the Holy Spirit, is problematic.¹⁴ Similarly, White has written the following statement about musical lyrics that are overwhelmingly christocentric: "Jesus becomes the object of worship in his own right, resulting in a kind of Jesus-centered Unitarianism, shading over occasionally into what Sallie McFague first described as 'Jesus-olatry.'"¹⁵ Of course, neither Goodliff, White, McFague, nor Gunton are recommending the complete avoidance of references to Jesus Christ in contemporary worship music. Their concerns, more accurately, are attuned to an overemphasis upon Jesus Christ that undermines God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, and, ultimately, advances a view of theology proper in which Jesus assumes *all* the theological distinctions of *each* of the divine persons in the Godhead.¹⁶

strongly evangelical denominations; denominations devoted to the character and saving work of Jesus, the authority of the Bible, and personal life commitments to follow Jesus. This in part explains the dominance of Salvation song-types within contemporary congregational song. However, the Christian faith largely revolves around Jesus, the Christ, and as such he has long been a focal point for the creative adoration of Christians." Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 120.

- 13 Andrew Goodliff, "'It's All about Jesus': A Critical Analysis of the Ways in Which the Songs of Four Contemporary Worship Songwriters Can Lead to an Impoverished Christology," *Evangelical Quarterly* 81, no. 3 (July 1, 2009): 256.
- 14 Susan J. White, "What Ever Happened to the Father? The Jesus Heresy in Modern Worship," *The General Board of Discipleship, The United Methodist Church*, 3, http://www.gbod.org/content/uploads/legacy/kintera/entry_9187/19/WHITE.PDF (accessed November 26, 2012).
- 15 White, "What Ever Happened to the Father? The Jesus Heresy in Modern Worship," 6; Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 159.
- 16 Cheryl Bridges Johns wrote, "Protestant Christianity is decidedly Christ centered (when it is not anthropocentric). The Reformation brought about an explicit focus on Christ, especially in the practices of

In this respect, parallels can be drawn between this study's affirmation that references to God the Spirit were extremely sparse and Gunton's conviction that pneumatology, as a theological doctrine, is significantly devalued and misunderstood in many of our contemporary ecclesial contexts.¹⁷ Indeed, the results of this study give credence to the fact that the unique personhood of the Holy Spirit is, as Gunton put it, held in low esteem as the characteristically "silent member" of the Godhead.¹⁸ Parry has arrived at the same conclusion in his research: "It has to be said ... that the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity who has been most short-changed in the honour that is due to him. If you look through any book of Christian hymns and choruses you will find that the percentage of songs that include any direct address to the Spirit in prayer or worship is tiny. It is also the case that you may well have to attend many Christian meetings before ever encountering a prayer or song directed to the Spirit."¹⁹ As such, the research advanced in this project affirms the claims of theologians and church practitioners such as Gunton who argue that both a theological modalism, emphasizing divine oneness, and a naming imbalance, advancing christocentrism, exists today.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

Theological modalism and divine naming imbalance are both relevant issues in relation to Pentecostal theology and Pentecostal worship practices for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it is worth considering how the lyrics of PAOC songs, which clearly prioritize abstract depictions of a unitary God, might be interpreted by an Evangelical denomination that was founded in the

preaching and teaching.... But the credo 'Faith alone' came to be narrowly defined as faith in Jesus alone, and Trinitarian faith suffered loss." Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Overcoming Holy Spirit Shyness in the Life of the Church," *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology* 13, no. 1 (2012): 7.

17 See: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 48–54; Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 51; Colin E. Gunton, "One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation, Mediation and Life in Community," *Pro Ecclesia* 11, no. 2 (March 1, 2002): 157–158; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 191 n.12.

18 Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 40.

19 Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 116–117.

context of early twentieth century quarrels over oneness and trinitarian theology. Is, for example, the prevalence of abstract and modalistic lyrical references to the triune God uniquely problematic to a Canadian Evangelical group that has historically, and perhaps even reluctantly, tended to favour divine oneness over divine threeness? It is admitted by some Pentecostals themselves that an inclination toward divine oneness exists. Amos Yong has conceded, “trinitarian Pentecostal systematic theologians have approached the doctrine of God by discussing the unity of the Godhead and then emphasizing the three eternal and personal distinctions within the divine essence.”²⁰ Similarly, in his call for a more robust theology accentuating divine threeness, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen has lamented how an overemphasis on divine oneness often devolves into “vague ‘mythological’ talk” that becomes “problematic” and “too generic.”²¹ It is ironic, then, that a Canadian Evangelical denomination that has taken a doctrinal stand refuting a divine oneness theology continues to favour modalistic and unitarian expressions of God in its most commonly used music.

At this point, I must offer an important clarification. What is *not* being argued here is that the PAOC, in some covert way, is currently advancing a nontrinitarian theology in their worship practices. A claim of this nature would be unfair and unfounded. What I *am* arguing, however, is that Pentecostals, by their admission, have been slow, as a religious group, to carefully and theologically articulate what they believe about the triune God. Lyle Dabney has advanced this general argument:

Pentecostals have attempted to articulate their own theological concerns in the forms and concepts of theologies that resist and frustrate such articulation. They have failed to take themselves seriously as a movement with an implicit theological trajectory of their own, and have thus neglected to ask the hard questions of their own beliefs and practices and

20 Amos Yong, “Oneness and the Trinity: The Theological and Ecumenical Implications of Creation *Ex Nihilo* for an Intra-Pentecostal Dispute,” *Pneuma* 19, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 83.

21 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “The Uniqueness of Christ and the Trinitarian Faith,” in *Christ the One and Only* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2005), 123.

then to pursue the disciplined task of rendering an account of their faith to Christian and non-Christian alike as a witness to God in Christ.²²

In this respect, what the presence of modalistic divine naming in the Pentecostal songs under review may reflect is not anti-trinitarianism, per se, but rather a Pentecostal reluctance to do the important work of articulation concerning a thorough and trinitarian doctrine of God.²³

Within the context of PAOC churches that utilize these contemporary worship songs, then, modalistic and unitarian renderings of the triune God may more accurately be described as oversights of *omission*, not *commission*. In other words, it is most likely that divine particularity in the Godhead is not *purposely* avoided in these lyrics. Instead, trinitarian theology is simply not prioritized. Ruth has articulated this:

Songwriters, marketers, and the churches choosing these songs do not value trinitarian content, or miss it if it is not included. Neither the way of composing songs, nor their promotion by the publishers, nor the way churches use them make theology concerns a priority. Few theological expectations are placed on the songs, their composers, and church musicians. Other concerns marginalize the Trinity. Even when theological review comes into play, too often the goal is limited to avoiding obvious error or expressing a scriptural sentiment. Few composers seek to include theological contemplation of the triune God.²⁴

Thus, I argue that renderings of a modalistic and unitarian God in the lyrics of this study are not

22 D. Lyle Dabney, "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today," *Pneuma* 23, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 125.

23 In June 2002 at the PAOC general conference in Glad Tidings, BC, Robert Osborne said, "I have been mulling over a question for the past few years and it is this: where is the place for theological reflection within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada? I grant that this is a question only a few of our PAOC members are concerned about. In other words, theological reflection is not on the denominational agenda." Robert Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection* (Glad Tidings, BC: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Symposium, General Conference, April 29, 2002); Similarly, Russell Spittler wrote, "Pentecostals have made better missionaries than theologians. They write pamphlets, not books—tracts, not treatises. When a Pentecostal book is published, it will reflect more likely personal testimony than reasoned argument. Such experientialism has its strengths. But one weakness is the emergence of a significant religious tradition without, really, a literature." Russell P. Spittler, "Suggested Areas for Further Research in Pentecostal Studies.," *Pneuma* 5, no. 2 (September 1, 1983): 39; Bridges Johns has also admitted, "the Pentecostal mind is not the mind at Harvard, Tübingen or Sorbonne. It still is found most often among the uneducated." Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Partners in Scandal: Wesleyan and Pentecostal Scholarship," *Pneuma* 21, no. 2 (September 1, 1999): 195.

24 Lester Ruth, "Lex Amandi, Lex Orandi: The Trinity in the Most-Used Contemporary Christian Worship Songs," in *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer* (Pueblo Books, 2008; Liturgical Press, 2008), 351; Parry similarly has argued, "If there is a problem with Christian worship songs, it is more a failure to bring out the Trinitarian dimensions of the God we worship than a problem of violating Trinitarian faith." Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 8, 133, 141.

so much endorsements of oneness theology among the PAOC as reflections of a lack of motivation to do the significant work of theological and doctrinal articulation.

Secondly, I contend that a correlation may exist between a Pentecostal preoccupation with the Fourfold Gospel (i.e. Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier/Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King) and an overt christological preferencing when divine names are employed in musical expression. Historically, Pentecostalism, as a religious movement, has tended to centre on the person of Christ as the divine source of salvation, sanctification, healing, empowerment, and direction.²⁵ The PAOC's Van Johnson has written, "Jesus was at the centre of early Pentecostal theology and practice, particularly as one who was soon to come for them."²⁶ Steven Land has affirmed this christocentrism by stating, "The Wesleyan and Pentecostal movements have each been centered on Jesus Christ and a kind of functional Christology which emphasizes the present power of Christ to save, sanctify, heal, empower, direct, and enable the believer to participate in mission."²⁷ Thus, it is undeniable that Christ, as the centre of Pentecostal worship, remains a primary focal point.

This study raises some questions, however, about the ways in which this overemphasis in the lyrics can become problematic. Taken to its extreme, for example, David Reed has cautioned that a form of "Jesus-centricism" can emerge in Pentecostalism in which *all* of God's activities

25 Steven J. Land, "The Triune Center: Wesleyans and Pentecostals Together in Mission," *Pneuma* 21, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 201.

26 Van Johnson, *Defining Pentecostal Identity*, PAOC Commission on Identity (Mississauga, ON: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2010), 6.

27 Land, "The Triune Center: Wesleyans and Pentecostals Together in Mission," 201; Bridges Johns has said, "This focus on Christ alone and faith alone created a great imbalance in Protestant doctrine and practice. By separating Jesus from the life of the Triune God, a form of modalism developed which resulted in a view of salvation that disconnected knowing Christ from knowing the Father and the Spirit. Today many Christians believe that they can have a compartmentalized relationship with Jesus, and that this relationship does not bring them into a direct relationship with the Holy Spirit. Or, putting it another way, they fail to see that it is the Holy Spirit who brings believers into relationship with Jesus." Bridges Johns, "Overcoming Holy Spirit Shyness in the Life of the Church," 8.

are directed into and through Jesus as the ultimate “source of salvation and object of devotion.”²⁸ In this respect, I would humbly challenge the liturgical and theological gatekeepers in the PAOC to evaluate the ways in which the words of the songs used in corporate PAOC worship may overemphasize Jesus Christ and inadvertently subordinate God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.²⁹

Indeed, the most surprising observation in my entire project was that the PAOC expressed such a meager emphasis on God the Holy Spirit. I expected otherwise; yet, it is increasingly recognized that an underdeveloped pneumatology is not entirely unusual even in Pentecostal settings today.³⁰ By her own Pentecostal admission, Bridges Johns has said,

The absence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians has made our churches places where the liturgy is void of what may be called ‘real presence.’ Christians profess that Jesus is in the midst of two or three who are gathered together in his name, but in practice that presence seems more like the absence. Contemporary Christians have grown accustomed to living with the absence and fearing the presence. We suffer from a bad case of what may be called Holy Spirit Deficit Disorder.”³¹

It should be noted that Bridges Johns speaks as a respected theologian *within* the contemporary Pentecostal movement. However, she is not alone in her concerns about the surprising absence of dialogue about the Holy Spirit in corporate worship. Pentecostal theologian, Keith Warrington,

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- 28 David A. Reed, “Origins and Development of the Theology of Oneness Pentecostalism in the United States” (Unpublished Dissertation, Boston University, 1979), 32; See also: Walter J. Hollenweger, “Priorities in Pentecostal Research: Historiography, Missiology, Hermeneutics and Pneumatology,” in *Experiences of the Spirit: Conference on Pentecostal and Charismatic Research in Europe at Utrecht University 1989*, ed. J.A.B. Jongeneel, Studien zur Interkulturellen Geschichte des Christentums (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991), 16–18.
- 29 Mark J. Cartledge, “Trinitarian Theology and Spirituality: An Empirical Study of Charismatic Christians,” *Journal of Empirical Theology* 17, no. 1 (January 1, 2004): 78; Hollenweger, “Priorities in Pentecostal Research: Historiography, Missiology, Hermeneutics and Pneumatology,” 16–18.
- 30 Evans’ empirical research also confirmed a low percentage of songs that refer to the Holy Spirit. He wrote, “There has been an assumption amongst the wider church that Pentecostal churches are dominated by these categories of songs, but present research has proven that a myth.” Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 124.
- 31 Bridges Johns, “Overcoming Holy Spirit Shyness in the Life of the Church,” 6; For similar arguments, see: Keith Warrington, “Challenges Facing Pentecostals Today,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 31, no. 2 (January 1, 2011): 202; Gabriel, “This Spirit Is God: A Pentecostal Perspective on the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes,” 69; Dabney, “Saul’s Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today,” 131–132.

also shares this concern: “Pentecostals are losing their expectation of such encounters with the Spirit. The Spirit is in danger of being marginalized and his ability to change the lives of believers is being overlooked. Some are unsure as to whether he should be worshipped. Too often, he is viewed as simply ‘the third person of the trinity,’ generally mentioned after the Father and Jesus, unhelpfully suggesting a divine hierarchy.”³² In this respect, the results of this study confirm that explicit references to the Holy Spirit in the musical expression of the PAOC are rare.³³

To be fair, it is worth considering at a level deeper than explicit lyrical content analysis how prominently an address to God the Holy Spirit was assumed—though not explicitly named—in the corporate worship settings of reporting churches for this study.³⁴ Dabney, for example, has stated, “When Pentecostals stand in a worship service to pray and experience a tingle up their spines, they do not look around— as a non-Pentecostal very well might—to see who left the door open and let a draft in. Why? Because in that community such an ‘experience’ is already interpreted—as it is not in most other communities—as being associated with the presence of the Holy Spirit.”³⁵ In this respect, it may be argued that pneumatological impulses explicitly absent in the lyrical content of this study may have been implicitly evident in the *delivery* of the songs, themselves. Here, further ethnomusicological and phenotextual studies on this matter would prove beneficial.³⁶ That said, the overwhelming absence of references to God the Holy Spirit in the lyrics of the most commonly reported PAOC songs should serve as a red

32 Warrington, “Challenges Facing Pentecostals Today,” 202.

33 See also: Gabriel, “This Spirit Is God: A Pentecostal Perspective on the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes,” 81.

34 For a similar argument, see: Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 136.

35 Dabney, “Saul’s Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today,” 123; See also: Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 136.

36 As mentioned, Evans’ and Monique Ingalls’ work is particularly sensitive to multidimensional analyses of contemporary worship music. Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*; Monique M. Ingalls, “Awesome in This Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship” (University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

flag for an Evangelical denomination that has, historically, viewed the Holy Spirit as central to a distinctive soteriological understanding of justification and to those expressing a heightened concern about a loss of identity in the PAOC.³⁷ As such, I argue it is worth carefully considering the implications of the theological modalism and divine naming imbalance that is evident in the standard musical expressions of many Canadian Pentecostals today.

3) *Considerations for the PAOC*

Having observed that the commonly used songs of the PAOC evidence divine modalism and naming imbalance, I offer that this Canadian Evangelical group can call on an emerging voice among Pentecostal theologians for a more robust expression of a Pentecostal doctrine of God. Additionally, conversations with those beyond an immediate Pentecostal purview may greatly assist this religious group's theological advancement. Dabney has conceded:

"Pentecostalism has arrived at a new stage in its development. The Pentecostals are now engaging other bodies of Christians in a qualitatively new way: not as rambunctious upstarts but as acknowledged members of the Christian community. And in these encounters they are being challenged to rise to a new level of theological maturity."³⁸ More specifically, for those within the PAOC, Robert Osborne sees value in this open discussion. He has stated, "we must talk to each other on matters of substance and relevance to the mission of the Pentecostals in Canada. Creating an open dialogue within our movement on matters of mission, theology, culture, and spirituality, is not optional but vital to the future strength of our movement."³⁹ In both of these

37 Similarly, Parry wrote, "Most Christian congregations are so familiar with the allusion to the Holy Spirit suggested by the water imagery that I imagine few would miss it. Other allusions may be much more subtle, and the subtler they are the less likely it is that people will be aware of them. . . . There is nothing wrong with using subtle references that many may miss, but if we're seeking to draw attention to the Three-in-One in our worship we need to realize that songs with very subtle allusions will only do the job if we explain them or use them in combination with other, clearer songs about the Trinity." Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 136.

38 Dabney, "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today," 119.

39 Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection*.

quotations by members of the Pentecostal community, the proposed way forward is through expanded discourse with interlocutors inside and outside Pentecostal circles. Through this engagement, I argue, a more consistently creedal approach to the pursuit of a Pentecostal doctrine of God may be forged. While Pentecostals, by their admission, have a longstanding history of resistance to the ecumenical creeds, there is now a recognized need to draw from the essentials found in the creeds of the universal Church to develop a thorough doctrine of God.⁴⁰

Admittedly, and as stated earlier, Pentecostal scholars and non-Pentecostal scholars of Pentecostalism are still relatively new voices in ecumenical discussions related to trinitarian theology and theology proper. As Pentecostals increasingly discover their theological place in this discussion, they will be best served by conscientiously striving to overcome the insecurities they may have about being relatively new dialogue partners in these theological and ecumenical conversations.⁴¹ Undoubtedly, Pentecostals must rise above persistent views about their association with anti-intellectualism and a perceived alliance with twentieth and twenty-first century Fundamentalism.⁴²

40 Wolfgang Vondey, "Oneness and Trinitarian Pentecostalism: Critical Dialogue on the Ecumenical Creeds," *One in Christ* 44, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 87–88; Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement (Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 106; Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection*.

41 As Terry Cross has pointed out, "Pentecostals recognize that they have not been always welcome to the evangelical or theological game. In some ways, we feel like farmers who play hockey on our country ice ponds and today are being asked to contribute to a 'real' game with lights and padding and uniforms. I am more used to cattails and weeds sticking up through the ice than the glare of lights on the arena. What can an old pond player offer to improve the technique of city players on slick ice? Sometimes people who have played in the backwoods have something to offer the sport on smoother ice, and it is in this spirit that I approach the question today, recognizing fully that Pentecostals have not played the game of theology long nor under the best of circumstances—but we have 'played' the game." Terry L. Cross, "A Proposal to Break the Ice: What Can Pentecostal Theology Offer Evangelical Theology?," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 2002): 46; For a similar sentiment, see: Dabney, "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today," 137–138.

42 I argue that, in some instances, these associations are mischaracterized and overstretched. An example of this can be found in the work of Mark Noll. See: Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994); William Faupel has written, "With regard to Pentecostalism, [Noll] views its doctrines as superfluous, offering no real substance to the 'evangelical mind'—the latter being better characterized by C.S. Lewis, Dutch Reformed Calvinists and others." Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 1994, 115, 142, 219; For Pentecostal rebuttals against Noll, see: James K.A. Smith,

On the other hand, Pentecostals engaged in ecumenical dialogue to advance their theology of God should be careful not to lose the characteristic zeal that uniquely epitomizes the Pentecostal tradition. Bridges Johns has cautioned,

many from our movements, in order to receive a higher education, internalized the Enlightenment myth of scientific reasoning to the degree that they achieved a comfortable, critical distancing from the traditions of their origin. They became some of our more severe critics, applying with zeal the tools of analysis learned in the universities. It has been difficult to have the Enlightenment mind and the Holiness or Pentecostal faith. Like oil and water, they don't mix.⁴³

Acknowledging the same threat to those Pentecostals committed to the hard work of theological articulation, Dabney has criticized a tendency toward unchecked assimilation and warned against a loss of distinct Pentecostal identity. He said, “The confusion concerning Pentecostalism's theological identity has been compounded by this clear tendency for Pentecostals either to define themselves in terms of a kind of American Evangelical version of Reformation theology (Baptists plus spiritual gifts, or, even more narrowly, plus ‘tongues’) or to integrate themselves into the approaches of the secular university in categories of religious studies, history, sociology, anthropology, and so on.”⁴⁴ In this respect, Adam Stewart’s 2012 dissertation, “Quenching the Spirit: The Transformation of Religious Identity and Experience in Three Canadian Pentecostal Churches,” has identified an “Evangelical genericization” within the PAOC that, I propose, is just as disconcerting as the opposite extreme of theological narrow-mindedness.⁴⁵ Therefore, I

“Scandalizing Theology: A Pentecostal Response to Noll’s Scandal,” *Pneuma* 19, no. 2 (September 1, 1997): 225–38; Bridges Johns, “Partners in Scandal: Wesleyan and Pentecostal Scholarship”; In a 2006 interview, Pentecostal theologian, Russell Spittler wrote, “Abiding anti-intellectualism is one of our flaws. In the Assemblies of God, when you apply annually for credentials, you have to identify your ministry: pastor, chaplain, missionary, evangelist, other. For years, I had to check ‘other.’ I was always an ‘other’ because a teacher is not highly respected (so it’s not on the list). If the Holy Spirit is teaching you, why would you have any regard for this or that teacher? There’s a kind of theological independence that scoffs at education. Yet you can’t do theology without intellect. You can’t.” Grant McClung, “Pentecostals: The Sequel. What Will It Take for This Global Phenomenon to Stay Vibrant for Another 100 Years?,” *Christianity Today* 50, no. 4 (April 1, 2006): 41.

43 Bridges Johns, “Partners in Scandal: Wesleyan and Pentecostal Scholarship,” 186.

44 Dabney, “Saul’s Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today,” 121.

45 Adam Stewart, “Quenching the Spirit: The Transformation of Religious Identity and Experience in Three

suggest that Pentecostals continue to work toward the articulation of an invigorated Pentecostal doctrine of God through conversations with others, but to do so with a diligence that protects the characteristic zeal that is central to the Pentecostal movement.

As it pertains to a more substantial Pentecostal liturgy that correlates with this expanded doctrine of God, a practical way forward is for Pentecostals who write popular lyrics to establish robust theological lyrics that more consistently align with a creedal emphasis in which all three divine persons of the Godhead are clearly represented.⁴⁶ In response to the uncontested imbalance in songs, favouring christological expression, for example, Ruth has challenged today's Christian worship songwriters to consider the following:

while naming Jesus is wonderful, only when we name all three Persons will we establish an accurate understanding of the Christian God. I acknowledge that not every song needs to instruct in extensive ways, but that should not mean that any song should be exempted from working out of a Trinitarian perspective or syntax. Why should we be satisfied with something less than the fullness of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? Why can't our songs speak about God in the same ways and proportions as the New Testament? Not every song needs to instruct, but every song does need to form God's people rightly.⁴⁷

This means that Pentecostal songwriters who assume, for example, that worshippers will understand vague and implied references to God the Holy Spirit (e.g. as "Breath" or "Presence") would be well served by being more precise in their divine naming practices in future songs. In recent years, there have been some encouraging signs in this respect. Some songwriters with Pentecostal inclinations *do* appear to be purposefully incorporating a more creedal emphasis in

Canadian Pentecostal Churches" (University of Waterloo, 2012); See also: Clare Deeves, "The Search for Pentecostal Identity: 1980-2013" (Trinity International University, 2014).

46 R. Kendall Soulen, for example, has provided a compelling case for the advancement of a contemporary theology of the name of God that considers a trinitarian pattern of divine naming that corresponds to each of the divine persons: a "theological pattern" associated with the Tetragrammaton (e.g. YHWH), a "christological pattern" (e.g. Father, Son, and Spirit), and a "pneumatological pattern" (e.g. myriad divine names). In Soulen's view, each "pattern" of divine naming is particular, yet interrelated and can be used in a variety of contexts. R. Kendall Soulen, *The Divine Name(s) and the Holy Trinity: Distinguishing the Voices* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011).

47 Ruth, "Don't Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters," 3.

depictions of God in their songs. [e.g. “We Believe” by Newsboys (2013), “This I Believe (The Creed)” by Hillsong (2014) and “Manifesto” by City Harmonic (2014)]. I commend those who are purposefully doing this.

Furthermore and theologically speaking, I contend that Gunton’s emphasis on relationality (preserving divine oneness) and particularity (upholding divine threeness) can provide a comprehensive way forward.⁴⁸ Indeed, Pentecostal theologians, liturgists, and songwriters would be well served to follow Gunton and draw upon the work of Irenaeus and the Cappadocian Fathers for their source material toward a more substantial understanding of the particularity among the divine persons. Gunton’s use of the Irenaeus image of God the Son, and God the Spirit, as the two hands of God the Father, for example, could provide a way for Pentecostals to speak about the interrelationality of the Godhead that does not denigrate either particularity or unity in a robust description of the triune God. In this way, the following words of Pentecostal theologian, Amos Yong, are both an encouraging sign and exemplary: “without his hands, the Father is impotent and therefore neither creator nor divine; but it is precisely in and through the work of his two hands that the divinity of the Father is established as both creator and redeemer.”⁴⁹ I propose the adoption of this type of perichoretic language offers a way of depicting the concrete uniqueness of each divine person—something that appears to be generally lacking at least in the popular contemporary worship music associated with the PAOC from 2007 to 2013.

Pentecostals may also find a way forward by drawing upon recent Pentecostal research

48 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 210–231.

49 Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*, New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies Series (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2002), 52.

that focuses on Spirit-christology and a renewed emphasis on the third person of the Trinity.⁵⁰

Pentecostal theologians and practitioners would be well served to draw upon the voices within their constituency affirming the important role of the Holy Spirit in a thorough understanding of the divine and economic dimensions of Christ.⁵¹ Kärkkäinen has said:

I am drawn to the Pentecostal—Spirit-led, I am sure—focus on Jesus Christ as the center of the (fivefold or fourfold) Gospel. Even though this basic paradigm did not emerge out of conscious theological reflection, it is a precious methodological gateway to a balanced theology. Christology and pneumatology are not only related but also interwoven in that, whatever Christ is, he is in the Spirit: Jesus Christ as the Savior, Healer, Sanctifier, Baptizer, and King. And conversely, whatever the Spirit affects in the believer's life, be it salvation, healing, sanctification, baptism, or eschatological hope, it is the work of the Lord, Jesus Christ.⁵²

Against the pervasive view that the Holy Spirit is a “pit stop along the trinitarian highway,”⁵³ Pentecostal Steven Studebaker has written, “the Spirit is the divine person who constitutes the loving union of the trinitarian God. Spirit is not an impersonal unifying power, but the divine person (a subsistence of the fullness of the divine nature) whose personal identity and action assimilates the Father and the Son into interpersonal communion. The Spirit’s personal identity is the basic ontological datum that grounds all statements regarding the personal work of the Spirit.”⁵⁴ In this respect, I suggest that the very best Pentecostal theologians must continue to

50 See, for example: Wolfgang Vondey, ed., *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life: Historical, Interdisciplinary, and Renewal Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014); Lucy Peppiatt, “New Directions in Spirit Christology: A Foundation for a Charismatic Theology,” *Theology* 117, no. 1 (January 2014): 3–10.

51 Pentecostal liturgist scholar, Simon Chan has declared, “the emerging Pentecostal scholarship has helped to push the issue of doctrinal development beyond the limits that evangelical Protestants are prepared to go. This is perhaps inevitable, given the Pentecostals’ deep appreciation of the continuing work of the Spirit and the increasing sophistication with which their vibrant faith in the Spirit is articulated. First, pneumatology has developed into an important theological method, and this has produced a generally more open and dynamic view of God and of Scripture.” Simon Chan, “The Church and the Development of Doctrine,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13, no. 1 (October 1, 2004): 60; See, for example: Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*.

52 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “David’s Sling: The Promise and Problem of Pentecostal Theology Today: A Response to D. Lyle Dabney,” *Pneuma* 23, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 151–152.

53 Kilian McDonnell, *The Other Hand of God: The Holy Spirit as the Universal Touch and Goal* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 93.

54 Steven M. Studebaker and Clark H. Pinnock, *Defining Issues in Pentecostalism: Classical and Emergent*, Theological Studies Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 58.

articulate a robust pneumatology that avoids regression toward a christocentrism that is limited by a narrow view of the Pentecostal Fourfold Gospel.⁵⁵ Indeed, there remains some residual concern both within and beyond Pentecostalism that the Full Gospel doctrine tends to overemphasize christology to its detriment. Pentecostals Stanley Burgess and Eduard van der Maas join others who have warned that, “Such a framework alone is potentially christomonistic (in which devotion to Christ defines every other area of theological concern) and dominated by a concern with the way of salvation. Excluded (or reduced to subordinate status) is the fatherhood of God, election, creation, Trinity, Scripture and church.”⁵⁶ Future scholarship and worship practices that avoid this approach and, instead, advance the theological precepts of a well-developed christo-pneumatology, could prove beneficial for those in the PAOC.

Toward this end, I argue, again, that Pentecostals may unexpectedly find accessible and pragmatic insights through the work of Gunton. Clearly, Gunton was intent upon bringing God the Holy Spirit into discussion about christology. For Gunton, the Holy Spirit is both the empowerment of Christ and the perfecting cause of the Creator.⁵⁷ It is conceivable, then, that Gunton would have embraced the contemporary responsiveness today, both inside and beyond

55 Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 11–18; This is a concern also expressed by Pentecostal scholar, Frank Macchia. Cecil M. Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Ed M. Van der Maas, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1123–1124.

56 Robeck, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 1124; For more on the Full Gospel theology, see: Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 15–23; Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “‘Encountering Christ in the Full Gospel Way:’ An Incarnational Pentecostal Spirituality,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 27, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 9–23; Kenneth J. Archer, “A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 301–14.

57 Colin E. Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 199; Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2003), 81; Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, Edinburgh Studies in Constructive Theology (Edinburgh; Grand Rapids: Edinburgh University Press; Eerdmans, 1998), 187; Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 120; Colin E. Gunton, *A Brief Theology of Revelation*, Warfield Lectures (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 120; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 143; Colin E. Gunton, “Two Dogmas Revisited: Edward Irving’s Christology,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41, no. 3 (January 1, 1988): 167; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 119.

Pentecostalism, to the person of the Holy Spirit and, more generally, to the doctrine of the Trinity. As Bridges Johns has posited,

We are now in what is being called a renaissance of Trinitarian theology. What is common to these theological discussions is a rejection of the tight separation between the immanent and the economic Trinity. Such discussions exhibit more openness about the person of the Holy Spirit and more attention to how the Spirit bridges the gap between the life of God and human existence. The *perichoretic* life of God, so often seen as unknowable and distant, is now being understood as available to humanity by the power of the Holy Spirit. [italics in original]⁵⁸

Thus, while modalism and divine naming imbalance has been identified in my thesis as a persistent problem in a Pentecostal articulation of the doctrine of God, there is reason to be encouraged by some recent theological developments favouring a clearer articulation of the three divine persons. By way of contemporary worship music expression, it is hoped that this translates into the lyrical development of the most commonly used songs of the PAOC in the future.

ii) Detached Salvation History

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

The second qualitative lyrical analysis (i.e. Recognition of Divine Action in Salvation History) sought to identify explicit scriptural references to the concrete actions of the triune God. Gunton argued that the most reasonable depiction of God's saving activity is articulated via a grand metanarrative that begins at creation and advances toward a final consummation in the eschaton. However, Gunton lamented that, too often, an attenuated view of salvation history is evident in contemporary theological expression. To test this theory, I sought to determine if a form of historical attenuation existed within the lyrics of the commonly used songs of the PAOC. A careful evaluation of the divine verbs in the songs proved that imbalances, discontinuities, and inattention to important aspects of salvation history do, indeed, exist. Explicit lyrical references

58 Bridges Johns, "Overcoming Holy Spirit Shyness in the Life of the Church," 10.

to the triune God's acts in the narrative of the Old Testament, for example, were almost non-existent.⁵⁹ On the other hand, a disproportionate number of references to Christ's incarnational acts were identified in the songs. In many of these instances, the actions of Christ received only limited connection to any broader salvation history metanarrative.⁶⁰ In correlation to the vague divine naming inclinations discussed earlier, an evaluation of divine verbs also confirmed the existence of several vague divine verbs and divine linking verbs in the lyrics of these songs. Among these verbs, a tendency to favour the actions of a deistic and reigning god who is transcendent over yet disengaged from the earthly realm was noticeable. This tendency is consistent with Gunton's concerns about a contemporary depiction of God as exalted and mighty, but also passive and somewhat disengaged from the created order.⁶¹

The observations from this lyrical analysis also confirm the apprehensions of others who, like Gunton, detect imbalances, discontinuities, and abstractions in the presentation of the story of God in contemporary worship songs.⁶² Goodliff, for example, has warned of the consequences of many contemporary songs that fail to explain the full extent of the salvation drama and, in some shocking cases, are entirely void of any biblical narrative altogether. He wrote, "worship is impoverished when it is divorced from the whole drama, where the story is only partially told.

59 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 34; See also: Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (London: SCM Press, 2002), 4–5; See also: Colin E. Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*, 2d ed. (London: SCM Press, 2001); Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 55.

60 For a similar empirically-verified argument, see: Lester Ruth, "How Great Is Our God: The Trinity in Contemporary Christian Worship Music," in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*, ed. Robert H Woods and Brian D. Walrath (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 34; Elsewhere, Ruth writes, "Few songs praise God the Father for remembering what he has done through Christ as part of a big biblical story." Ruth, "Don't Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters," 3.

61 Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 65; Colin E. Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 67; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 34; See also: Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 4–5; Colin E. Gunton, "Persons and Particularity," in *Theology of John Zizioulas* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 103.

62 See, for example, Arnold Albert van Ruler, *Calvinist Trinitarianism and Theocentric Politics: Essays toward a Public Theology*, Toronto Studies in Theology (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1989), 1–3, 19, 32, 181.

Worship that is limited theologically means a people who are poorly served and this is of concern ... when ... modern Christians are illiterate about their faith and even more worryingly they have forgotten who they are.”⁶³ Witvliet has raised a similar concern, stating, “Christians have a tendency to narrow their view of God’s actions, and to separate, rank, order and pit against each other aspects of the divine economy.”⁶⁴ As such, Goodliff and Witvliet express unease with contemporary worship music’s tendency to endorse a noticeably vague, impersonal, and disconnected God who is largely set apart from historical events.⁶⁵ Similarly, Parry, Donald Bloesch, and Andrew Walker are others who have argued that an attenuated salvation history is too often depicted in the lyrics of contemporary worship music.⁶⁶

Elsewhere, I observed a significant number of divine verbs in this project’s song corpus depicting God as a divine subject who was often described in terms of service to a human object. Put another way, in both a quantitative and qualitative sense, humans, not God, actually appeared to be the primary focus of God’s divine activity in many of the lyrics (e.g. “*come to me*,” “*love me*,” “*give us*”). Indeed, the majority of expressions about God’s activity in the songs tended not to accentuate what God has done in salvation history, but rather what God does, in particular, *for*

63 Goodliff, “‘It’s All about Jesus:’ A Critical Analysis of the Ways in Which the Songs of Four Contemporary Worship Songwriters Can Lead to an Impoverished Christology,” 268.

64 John D. Witvliet, “The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Theology and Practice of Christian Worship in the Reformed Tradition” (University of Notre Dame, 1997), 8.

65 Witvliet, “The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Theology and Practice of Christian Worship in the Reformed Tradition,” 19; Subsequently, Witvliet has said, “[Christian worship music], however, features very, very few references to specific biblical stories. We would have to search long and hard for a list of CWM that included references to Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Aaron, Deborah, Daniel, and Ezekiel.” John D. Witvliet, “Discipleship and the Future of Contemporary Worship Music,” in *The Message in the Music: Studying Contemporary Praise and Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 185.

66 Ruth, “Don’t Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters,” 3; Lester Ruth, “Is God Just Hanging Out on the Sofa? (Initial Wonderings About the Inactivity of God),” *The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies Blog*, July 1, 2011, 3, <http://iws.edu/2011/07/lester-ruth-is-god-just-hanging-out-on-the-sofa-initial-wonderings-about-the-inactivity-of-god> (accessed January 19, 2013); Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 1; Donald G. Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 21, 27; Andrew Walker, *Telling the Story-Gospel, Mission and Culture* (London: SPCK Publishing, 1996), 48.

the worshipper.⁶⁷ Of course, this is not to suggest that references to God's activity in personal salvation, nor God's actions *toward* humanity ought to be entirely abandoned and removed from the song lyrics under review.⁶⁸ It does, however, illuminate a problem associated with lyrics that replace a full disclosure of God's actions in a grand narrative with the needs and wants of the individual worshipper. In her call for greater awareness of God's activity in contemporary worship music, Paris has argued,

God also created the world, formed a nation and then a church as His people, and continues to work through people to bring justice to the oppressed. These are all actions related to God's loving character that reach beyond an individual's experience of inner fulfillment or even individual salvation. As recorded in Scripture, God's intimate relationships with people, such as Jeremiah or Moses, were not primarily for the personal fulfillment of the individuals, but, rather, to empower the individuals to work for God's purposes in the world.⁶⁹

As will be discussed in greater detail below, however, the personal experience of the worshipper clearly remained in the foreground in this study's analysis of divine activity. As such, a circumscribed approach was most common when references to the triune God's acts through the life of Christ were made.

Goodliff has confirmed that even when specific references to God's incarnational and salvific historical activity in the acts of Christ *are* made in contemporary worship music, they tend to narrowly depict the actions of "a Jesus who is accommodated to culture, rather than one who confronts culture as a prophetic voice."⁷⁰ This tendency led J.B. Torrance to conclude "we

67 For similar arguments, see: Goodliff, "'It's All about Jesus': A Critical Analysis of the Ways in Which the Songs of Four Contemporary Worship Songwriters Can Lead to an Impoverished Christology," 265; Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 111; Goodliff, "'It's All about Jesus': A Critical Analysis of the Ways in Which the Songs of Four Contemporary Worship Songwriters Can Lead to an Impoverished Christology," 265; Brian McLaren, "An Open Letter to Worship Songwriters (Updated)," 2010, <http://brianmclaren.net/archives/blog/open-letter-to-worship-songwrite.html> (accessed July 5, 2012).

68 See also: Michelle K. Baker-Wright, "Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music," *Missiology* 35, no. 2 (April 1, 2007): 172.

69 Paris, "I Could Sing of Your Love Forever," 48–49.

70 Goodliff, "'It's All about Jesus': A Critical Analysis of the Ways in Which the Songs of Four Contemporary Worship Songwriters Can Lead to an Impoverished Christology," 265; Robin Parry concludes that many

are often more interested in the blessings of Christ than Jesus Christ himself.”⁷¹ Thus, based on the results from this thesis and the research of several of the above-mentioned theologians, practitioners, and liturgists, it can be said that detached, limited, and undervalued perceptions of God’s activity are evident in these songs. In this respect, Gunton’s concerns about an attenuated salvation history in contemporary theology are validated by the analysis of divine actions in the lyrics associated with this study.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

If imbalances, discontinuities, and abstractions exist in relation to this lyrical evaluation of divine actions in salvation history, how might this narrow expression of the triune God’s activity particularly affect the experience of contemporary PAOC worshippers? Briefly, I suggest two ways in which these issues may adversely and uniquely affect the worship experiences of adherents in the PAOC. Firstly, I argue that a Canadian Pentecostal tendency toward proof-texting and isolating specific theological matters believed to be most relevant to the Pentecostal experience may hinder an expansive understanding of the triune God’s actions within a grand metanarrative. PAOC leader, Robert Osborne has admitted the following: “If there is any bad habit that Pentecostals have participated in, it is the individualist reading of the text. Failure to have a proper sense of the history of interpretation can predispose us to a theology with a short shelf life. Our denominational fathers, with their restorationist and antitrationalist bent, may have predisposed us to this weakness.”⁷² While, for some, a Fundamentalist predilection toward biblicism and literalism may give rise to the impression that worshippers in Pentecostalism have

contemporary worship songs depict Jesus as a “personal-therapist” or a “mystic-girlfriend.” Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 111; For a similar argument, see: Paris, “I Could Sing of Your Love Forever,” 48–49; Baker-Wright, “Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music,” 172.

71 Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace*, 27–28.

72 Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection*.

a firm grasp of the breadth of Christian scriptures, I suggest it does not necessarily hold that this translates into a command of the comprehensive acts of God throughout all of salvation history. In fact, I would argue that a Pentecostal veracity of the biblical text, sometimes in the form of an unsystematic organization of biblical topics, mentioned previously in chapter one, may even serve as an *obstacle* to a more profound understanding of God's actions in a great, unfolding drama. In this respect, Pentecostal liturgist, Simon Chan, has confirmed a tendency to apply the "principle of *Sola Scriptura* by jumping into Scripture without considering its link to the Christian tradition."⁷³ The observations from my research analysis validate this concern and confirm a general disregard for significant aspects of the biblical narrative.

Secondly, this study raises an awareness of a potential correlation between an attenuated view of the triune God's acts in salvation history and a propensity to overemphasize the dynamic, present-day experience of the Pentecostal worshipper. Pentecostals are closely linked, by association, to a premillennial dispensationalism that urges individuals to attentively live in the present with great anticipation of God's imminent return. I suggest, then, it is worth considering how this frame of reference affects a Pentecostal understanding of God's divine activity. Yong, in my judgment, gets at this core issue by conceding "Pentecostal experience of the Spirit is oriented to the historical experience of the divine via a sort of realized eschatology, thus emphasizing 'God for us' rather than God in Godself."⁷⁴ The data gleaned from this lyrical analysis confirms a correlation between an *undervaluation* of the divine acts in the immanent Trinity and in salvation history and an *overvaluation* of those acts that, specifically, benefit the individual person.

There is some reason to believe that this narrow view of God's acts shapes a Pentecostal

⁷³ Chan, "The Church and the Development of Doctrine," 68.

⁷⁴ Yong, "Oneness and the Trinity: The Theological and Ecumenical Implications of Creation *Ex Nihilo* for an Intra-Pentecostal Dispute," 89.

approach to the Christian scriptures. Addressing this hermeneutic issue, Warrington has said:

The way that Pentecostals read the Bible has been, and still is, to a degree, unique in that they anticipate that its main values are to help them develop their experience of God. This is more important to Pentecostals than its value as a resource for the identification and elaboration of various doctrines. Although they would state that they hold to an orthodox theology, few would see the establishment of that as the main purpose of the Bible. Instead, the Bible is viewed primarily as a place of encounter; an encounter with the divine author. It is recognised as a collection of stories intended to lead a person to God and to be transformed as a result—rather than to be a database of dogma to be discussed. Pentecostals expect to encounter God personally as they read it. The Bible is less to be studied and more to be seen as the altar of sacrifice to which they bring their lives for renewal.⁷⁵

We can see in this quotation that the human experience remains a primary focus in the development of a Pentecostal hermeneutic. Positively, the narratives associated with the biblical text, then, are a source of great inspiration for Pentecostals. What may be lost in this hermeneutical approach, however, is an awareness of God's acts *beyond* the individual, human experience.

To qualify, I want to suggest here that a Pentecostal emphasis on and approach to the revealed Word of God is one from which other Christians may gain inspiration. Christians hold that the Bible, as “living and breathing” (2 Phil 3:16), should be engaged and experienced. In this respect, I suggest that a dynamic Pentecostal approach is exemplary. What is worth considering, however, is the way in which a strong emphasis on the personal experience of the *next* worship event may undermine an awareness of and sensitivity to God's actions globally, in the past, and in the anticipated future. In this respect, I contend that it is important to consider how an attenuated view of God's actions in salvation history is advanced among the PAOC through a lingering inclination toward biblicist proof-texting and a dispensational urgency oriented around the immediacy of the individual's worship experience.

⁷⁵ Warrington, “Challenges Facing Pentecostals Today,” 206.

3) Considerations for the PAOC

Given the inclination in the PAOC's songs to, if even unintentionally, undervalue the triune God's acts in salvation history, I suggest that the PAOC draw upon the theological and liturgical work of theologians, several of whom are Pentecostals themselves, to balance the imminent impulses of premillennial dispensationalism with broader theological views of divine activity.⁷⁶ Kärkkäinen is one such Pentecostal, who has increasingly called for this sort of enhanced view. He has bluntly written, "There should be attempts to ground the Trinity in salvation history rather than in abstract speculation."⁷⁷ A sense of Pentecostal end-time urgency, though waning in Pentecostalism in recent years, may still prevent rigorous systematic and theological discussion with others concerning God's actions in salvation history. Though a shift appears to be taking place, Pentecostal theologians would be well served to consider how a Pentecostal theology that has leaned toward imminence, other-worldliness, and sectarianism engages with a this-worldly, material context. Recent work by Peter Althouse and Robby Waddell, for example, holds promise for the use of the Fourfold Gospel as the basis for a nondispensational approach to Pentecostal eschatology.⁷⁸ Althouse has suggested that "an eschatological reworking of Pentecostal theology would provide Pentecostals with a more mature theology than simply taking on theology as a doctrine of last things as passive withdrawal

76 Kenneth J. Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 2; For more on dispensationalism, see: Stephen Hunt, "Dispensationalism," in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Stewart, Adam (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 195–201; D. William Faupel, "Whither Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 15, no. 1 (March 1, 1993): 9–27; Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*; Mark S. Sweetnam, "Tensions in Dispensational Eschatology," in *Expecting the End* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 173–92; Gerald T. Sheppard, "Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship," *Pneuma* 6, no. 2 (September 1, 1984): 5–33; Mark Patterson and Andrew Walker, "'Our Unspeakable Comfort': Irving, Albury, and Origins of the Pretribulation Rapture," *Fides et Historia* 31, no. 1 (December 1, 1999): 66–81; Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 18.

77 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Trajectories of the Contemporary 'Trinitarian Renaissance' in Different Contexts," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 3 (2009): 10.

78 Peter Althouse, "Pentecostal Eschatology in Context: The Eschatological Orientation of the Full Gospel," in *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies: World without End*, ed. Robby Waddell and Peter Althouse (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2010), 205–231.

in a questionable doctrine of the rapture, and bring Pentecostalism closer to its original.”⁷⁹ I contend that a theological approach like this has the potential to lead Pentecostals toward a deeper appreciation of God’s redemptive and historical actions.

At a more rudimentary level, I suggest that, beyond merely identifying the three divine persons in commonly used musical lyrics, Pentecostal songwriters and worship leaders should write and utilize songs that more specifically reference a wide variety of biblical stories, pictures, and narratives.⁸⁰ Witvliet has stated, “We need to sing the whole gospel, the message of the whole Bible, the experience of every dimension of Christian living, not just the parts that most resonate with our own particular subculture.”⁸¹ Furthermore, songs referencing biblical stories that weave otherwise disparate and commonly disconnected narratives and themes together would be a welcomed advancement.⁸² David Pass has urged,

It may not be that a single service “out of balance” has a negative impact, but over the long-term our corporate worship should reflect a healthy mix of *leitourgia*, *kerygma*, and *koinonia*. Over a cycle of months and years our worship should rehearse the story of God in Christ. Sometimes we will be declaring who God is and what He desires of us. At other times we will be celebrating His presence with and within us and drawing near to Him as He draws near to us. And occasionally we will be speaking and singing to one another of His goodness and faithfulness and calling each other into accountability. These characteristics of holistic worship demonstrate the health of the church.⁸³

Pentecostal songwriters would do well to follow Pass’ suggestions and write songs that incorporate various aspects of the triune God’s grand metanarrative in the historical economy of salvation.

79 Peter Althouse, “Pentecostal Eschatology in Context: The Eschatological Orientation of the Full Gospel,” in *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 230.

80 Witvliet has argued, for example, that improvements of this nature to the lyrics of many children’s ministry songs could prove especially forming and beneficial. Witvliet, “Discipleship and the Future of Contemporary Worship Music,” 185.

81 Witvliet, “Discipleship and the Future of Contemporary Worship Music,” 171.

82 Song lyrics, for example that incorporate the stories of creation, fall, Israel, cross, Advent, and Easter might prove to be a step toward greater integration of a biblical metanarrative.

83 David Pass, “The Heart of Worship: The Leitourgic Mode and Christian Sanctification in Contemporary Worship Music,” ed. Brian D. Walwrath and Robert H. Woods (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 104.

Once again, I suggest that the theological work of Gunton is helpful in this discussion. His view of creation as an ever-expanding project, for example, helps to avoid attenuation and discontinuities in the story of God's economic actions from creation and redemption through to consummation. In Gunton's view, *all* the various aspects of the divine story are brought to their intended destiny through God's forward-moving and teleological project.⁸⁴ As mentioned earlier, Gunton relied heavily on Irenaeus to advance this idea of divine progression. It was Irenaeus' theological vision that informed his contention that creation, fall, redemption, and eschatology should be comprehended together.⁸⁵ Accordingly, if the created world has a beginning and an end, then the triune God's economic action throughout all of time ought not to be perceived in isolation.

While my lyrical analysis did not often observe this type of "project language" in the PAOC lyrics in this study, nonetheless, it is increasingly being applied in other Pentecostal expressions. Notice how it is reflected, for example, in Land's comments about Pentecostal mission and purpose: "It means that in the progressive revelation of God revealed in the economy of salvation from Genesis to Revelation, there is a developmental, pedagogical process. The purpose of this process is not only individual salvation but the formation of a people who can participate in the salvation history of God as witnesses in word, character, and deed to the mysterious reality of a gracious God."⁸⁶ Elsewhere, Kenneth Archer has appropriately said, "The biblical story is the triune God's story."⁸⁷ In both of these quotations the triune God's economic actions remain the primary focal point, not the actions of the individual worshipper. Thus, while

84 Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 199; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 12; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 230–231; Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 42.

85 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 158.

86 Land, "The Triune Center: Wesleyans and Pentecostals Together in Mission," 206.

87 Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*, 56.

my research project exposed imbalances and discontinuities in relation to divine activity, there are those within and beyond Pentecostal circles who increasingly see the need to reverse these trends. Whether or not this translates into the theology of commonly used lyrics in Pentecostalism remains to be seen.

iii) Limited Interrelationality in the Immanent Trinity

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

The third qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. Acknowledgment of Inter-Trinitarian Relationality) provided a way to search for evidence of perichoretic relationality among the three divine persons of the Trinity in the songs under review. Following Gunton's inclination to identify the nature of God as being in communion, I expected to find expression of lyrical phraseology in this study describing a relationality between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. However, based on the results of the previous chapter, in relation to the ways in which the triune God was addressed and the ways God's actions were articulated, it was evident there was very little articulation of a dynamic interrelationality among the persons of the Godhead.⁸⁸ Indeed, expressions of interrelationality in the immanent Trinity were rare. Yet, a similar study by Ruth confirmed the rarity of these expressions in contemporary worship music. Writing about this oversight in the lyrics of contemporary worship songs, he wrote, "The striking thing about that omission is how out of sync it is with the New Testament, where the interactions of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit are reported quite frequently. Indeed, what the Three do to, with, and through each other seems to be the heart of the apostolic Gospel."⁸⁹

Since there were very few songs and instances in this study that contained explicit or

88 Ruth, makes a comparable observation. See: Ruth, "Is God Just Hanging Out on the Sofa? (Initial Wonderings About the Inactivity of God)," 3.

89 Ruth, "Is God Just Hanging Out on the Sofa? (Initial Wonderings About the Inactivity of God)," 3.

even implicit references to more than one divine person, it followed that the potentiality for expressions of divine relationality must also have been modest in the lyrics of these songs. As discussed in the previous chapter, an evaluation of divine naming also offered only a trace of an implied perichoretic relationality (e.g. “*Son of God*” and “*Spirit of God*”) in the songs. Similarly, an evaluation of divine actions revealed very few examples of the three divine persons engaging with one another. In fact, it bears repeating that, remarkably, no more than four lyrical references among the 1,783 lines of lyrical text provided any attention whatsoever to the ways in which one of the divine persons dynamically and ontologically interrelates with one of the other two divine persons. Together, these results showed that the Son’s relationship to the Father and the Spirit was regularly minimized in the song lyrics of contemporary worship songs. Meanwhile, interrelationality with the Father and the Holy Spirit was negligible. The Holy Spirit’s role, for example, as the perfecting cause of the created order was virtually non-existent. Likewise, the Father’s role as the sender was insignificant throughout the lyrical corpus.

These observations verify Gunton’s conclusions about the contemporary hesitation to acknowledge the interrelationality that exists among the dynamic persons of the immanent Trinity and the communion that is intrinsic to the very nature of the triune Godhead.⁹⁰ Indeed, the findings advanced in this study reinforce Gunton’s concerns about a modalistic and Augustinian tendency to reinforce an understanding of God as an abstract, single mode of being to the detriment of an understanding of the relationality by which the divine persons of the Trinity exist as being in communion.⁹¹ In this respect, the theological content in the lyrics under review validated Gunton’s claim that contemporary theology tends to flatten out the distinctions

90 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 134.

91 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 30–55; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 42; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 10.

among the three divine persons.⁹² The lyrics failed to adequately distinguish the relational distinctiveness of each divine person, reinforcing the notion of God that Gunton described as a “blank unity.”⁹³ On the other hand, when distinctions *were* made in references to the divine persons and divine actions in the songs, the findings in this study underline the contemporary predilection to overlook the ways in which the divine persons rely on and impact each other.⁹⁴

Admittedly, my analysis of inter-trinitarian relationality in the lyrics of contemporary worship music provided only a provisional assessment of the ways in which the three divine persons dynamically interrelate. The paucity of examples of divine interrelationality made a thorough assessment of them quite challenging. Future studies of a more qualitative nature might evaluate the theological impulses and motivations of contemporary songwriters and worship leaders to determine, at a more fundamental level, why a hesitation seems to exist to articulate the interrelationality of the divine members of the Trinity. To date, no such investigation exists. However, as advancements in worship studies are made and research of contemporary worship music moves forward, it is conceivable that more substantial studies of this kind may be initiated.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

An underdeveloped representation in the PAOC songs of the interrelationality within the immanent Trinity merits some attention. Again, Pentecostals should be encouraged that scholars like Yong and Kärkkäinen are actively working to develop a more robust Pentecostal theology of God. Nonetheless, it remains entirely possible that the almost century old default in the PAOC to avoid theological controversy around the doctrine of the Trinity may continue to advance a

92 Gunton, “And in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Begotten, Not Made,” 36; Gunton, “Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West,” 38.

93 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 214.

94 Najeeb G. Awad, “Personhood as Particularity: John Zizioulas, Colin Gunton, and the Trinitarian Theology of Personhood,” *Journal of Reformed Theology* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 21.

diminished understanding of the way the three divine persons dynamically interrelate with one another. In other words, though it is undeniably true that theological study of christology, pneumatology, and the doctrine of God have been, and will continue to be addressed in the theological texts and classrooms of the PAOC, a thorough evaluation of how God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit exist as being in communion may remain significantly underdeveloped in Pentecostalism today. That is, this reluctance to consider the dynamics of the immanent Trinity may be perpetrated by the Pentecostal hesitancy to consider the intricacies of a relational Godhead. As has already been discussed, a characteristic emphasis on the affective experience of the worshipper and a hermeneutic propensity to approach the biblical text from a non-integrated perspective may stifle discussion about divine interrelationality. The inclination toward pragmatism may also compel those within the PAOC to avoid discussion of what cannot be known about God. Time and energy, in other words, may be perceived by Pentecostals as better utilized through the discernment of what we *can* know about the divine persons rather than prognosticating about what we *cannot* know about the immanent Trinity and eternal God. Though beyond the scope of this project, it is worth considering in future studies whether the overwhelming absence of divine interrelationality in the lyrics of the commonly used PAOC songs may correspond with the Pentecostal reluctances associated with the trinitarian history of this Canadian religious group in the early twentieth century.

3) *Considerations for the PAOC*

At a practical level, I am convinced there is room for improvement as it relates to expressions of divine interrelationality in the lyrics of these songs. In this respect, I follow Gunton in his argument that, although the inexhaustible nature of the immanent Trinity obviously exists beyond the full capacity of finite, human comprehension, nonetheless, there are

aspects of God's character that can, indeed, be known.⁹⁵ Gunton stated, "the question to be asked concerns the kind of talk of an immanent Trinity—if any—that is licensed by our knowledge of God in the economy of salvation. Is there no alternative to a God of timeless eternity reached by negative abstraction from the action in time? It may be—and here we can only be speculative—that what is needed is the holding in tension of concepts developed with the help of both temporal and spatial phenomena."⁹⁶ By extension, Gunton held that the triune God, who is unbounded in eternity, is, nonetheless, the same God made known in the Christian scriptures. He wrote, "We do not see God, but we are given to know his essence, who and what he is."⁹⁷ Therefore, I share Gunton's confidence about the nature of the triune God as revealed by the Holy Spirit and made known to creation.

Most obviously, I suggest a way forward is for Pentecostal songwriters to write lyrics that speak more confidently of the kind of divine interrelationality that seems quite evident, for example, in the Johannine biblical texts. In these lyrical expressions, attention could be drawn to the ways in which *all* the divine persons interrelate and facilitate the worship experience. Here, again, Parry's words are instructive. He said, "it is precisely in the story of Jesus that the Father and the Spirit are revealed, and so worship that pivots around this narrative and yet is not fully Trinitarian has actually failed to understand the very tale it aims to make central. Sensitive worship that is Jesus-centred will be the worship of a Jesus who cannot be understood apart from his relationship with the Father and the Spirit—it will be Trinitarian worship."⁹⁸

I also suggest that Gunton's attentiveness to the *perichoresis* of the three divine persons

95 Gunton wrote, "Although we cannot know God's naked—unmediated—self-presentation, we can know him by knowing the Son, as the Fourth Gospel repeatedly insists. And we know the Son because the Father sends the Spirit in order that we should be able to do so. And those who know the Son know the Father." Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 38.

96 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 134.

97 Gunton, *Act and Being: Toward a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 37.

98 Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 110.

can serve as an inspiration to the PAOC. Gunton wrote, “God *is* no more than that what Father, Son and Spirit give to and receive from each other in the inseparable communion that is the outcome of their love. Communion is the *meaning* of the word: there is no ‘being’ of God other than this dynamic of persons in relation.” [italics in original]⁹⁹ In this way, the divine persons of the Trinity experience being in communion and, as Gunton put it, “are eternally what they are by virtue of what they are from and to one another.”¹⁰⁰

Again, if Pentecostals are seeking ways to articulate this divine interrelationality, they can also draw upon the emerging voices in their theological contexts. Kärkkäinen has written, “It is not possible to speak of the Father as ‘God,’ as if Son and Spirit were not needed to consider God. The Father’s relation to the Son and the Spirit is foundational for the identity of the Father. The very understanding of God thus becomes relational, as contemporary Trinitarian theology rightly asserts.”¹⁰¹ Leading scholars, such as Kärkkäinen, who are particularly attentive to Spirit-christology may be uniquely poised to expand upon notions of divine interrelationality. To be sure, a more thorough approach may help the PAOC articulate a type of divine interrelationality in their worship environments that more accurately expresses those found in the biblical text.

In this section, I showed how observations gleaned from the first three lyrical content analyses in this study correlated with trinitarian views about the doctrine of God. Specifically, these three studies revealed inclinations in the lyrics toward the following: a) modalistic and divine naming imbalances, b) expressions of an attenuated salvation history, and c) limited divine interrelationality. I argued that these inclinations have a direct effect on the development of a theology of God. Further, I sought to show the ways in which these inclinations directly

99 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 10.

100 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 214.

101 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “How to Speak of the Spirit among Religions: Trinitarian ‘Rules’ for a Pneumatological Theology of Religions,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30, no. 3 (July 1, 2006): 122–123.

relate to the reality and context of Canadian Pentecostals in the PAOC. Finally, I proposed various ways forward, using the work of Gunton and Pentecostal interlocutors. In the next section, I will consider how anthropological inferences are most commonly expressed in the popular contemporary worship music of the PAOC. The work of Gunton remains a central part of this discussion, both in its diagnostic and prescriptive forms.

B) Views about Human Personhood

In this second of three chapter sections, I take the observations from the previous chapter's lyrical content analysis and consider the implications of these observations for the PAOC community. Two major anthropological issues, stemming from the lyrical study, are discussed: i) the autonomous person in relation to other, and ii) human instrumentalism and the affective experience. My aim is to confirm a pervasive tendency in the lyrics to view the human person as isolated, detached, and self-determined. Following discussion about the implications of these issues upon the Canadian Pentecostal population, I propose changes for the advancement of Pentecostal practice and theology. Throughout this section, I will draw from the trinitarian theological work of Gunton and others in order to integrate it into my observations, implications, and considerations.

i) The Autonomous Person in Relation to Other

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

The fourth qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. Singularity/Plurality of Human Self-Identification) evaluated human-oriented pronouns within the song lyrics to decipher whether the self-recognition of the worshipper was expressed in singular, plural, or neutral form. Following Gunton's affirmation of the way humans are affected by one another and in light of the perceived communal dimension of Christian worship, I expected a proportionate balance of singular and

plural human pronouns in the songs. From the data collected and analysed, however, it was clear that the primary orientation of the pronouns in the songs in this study was singular in nature.

Related to this finding, the fifth qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality) evaluated human-oriented verbs to assess the prevalence of human to human relationality in the songs. Given the communal nature of congregational worship, I expected to find a generous representation of verbs that reflect a sense of corporate identity or awareness of human to human communication within the contemporary worship songs. Yet, there was only a modest representation of corporate human interaction in the lyrics. Instead, most of the human verbs reflected the isolated behaviour of the solitary and independent worshipping individual.

Together, these outcomes serve to reinforce concerns that a general preoccupation with individualized human interiority pervades our modern culture and ecclesial contexts.¹⁰² Gunton's misgivings about an overemphasis on the individual soul turned inward, to the detriment of social responsibility toward others, are reinforced by the overall findings of these two lyrical content analyses. Indeed, these results reflect current perceptions of the person as an isolated, "naked, choosing will ... the rootless I of existentialism and consumerism" and reinforce a Western preoccupation with notions of human autonomy and freedom.¹⁰³ While I must acknowledge that a plural orientation, advancing social and corporate human awareness, was not entirely absent in the song corpus, there was ample evidence to suggest that a tendency to view persons "as a collection of isolated atomic individuals" exists in the most common PAOC

102 Elsewhere, Joel Shuman and Keith Meador lamented that "the dominant religion of contemporary North America is radically individualized, radically self-interested, and radically therapeutic." Joel J. Shuman and Keith G. Meador, *Heal Thyself: Spirituality, Medicine, and the Distortion of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 73.

103 Colin E. Gunton, "The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework," in *Faithfulness and Fortitude* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 211.

songs.¹⁰⁴

Likewise, I argue that a limited representation of horizontal, person to person engagement, though not entirely absent from the lyrics, reinforces the conventional modern view of people as “unaffected or relatively unaffected by relation to others.”¹⁰⁵ If, as Gunton surmised, it is common today to relinquish our social responsibility toward others, then the majority of the songs in this study appeared to legitimize this claim.¹⁰⁶ Gunton argued that relationality is fundamentally associated with what it means to be human. Yet, I did not observe this reality as widely reflected in the most commonly used songs of the PAOC. Instead, the results of this study indicated that what is more prevalent in the songs is a “theologically legitimated version of the tendency to individualism.”¹⁰⁷

These findings reinforce what others have discovered in lyrical content evaluations of contemporary worship songs utilized in many Evangelical contemporary churches today. Michelle Baker-Wright has expressed concern that many contemporary worship songs display an overwhelmingly individualistic, first-person-singular viewpoint. She lamented “the paucity of music that describes worshippers as a collective body rather than simply as individuals.... In a congregational worship service, each person is in their own ‘phone booth with God,’ engaged in a personal, isolated dialogue.”¹⁰⁸ Similarly, Brian McLaren has candidly said,

104 Colin E. Gunton, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, Contemporary Christian Studies (Grand Rapids; Basingstoke: Eerdmans; Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1985), 107.

105 Gunton, “The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework,” 213; See also: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 214; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 83.

106 Gunton, “The Church as a School of Virtue? Human Formation in Trinitarian Framework,” 213.

107 Colin E. Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” in *Persons, Divine and Human* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 49.

108 Baker-Wright, “Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music,” 169, 173; Along similar lines, Leander Keck has argued, “the object of worship, God, has been replaced by Christian self-preoccupation, a mirroring of the self-interest and individualism of contemporary culture: If praise extols the excellence of another, and if praise is the heart of Christian worship, then worship is secularised when the focus shifts from the character of God to the enhancement of ourselves, when theocentrism is replaced by anthropocentrism, however much talk of God remains.” Leander E. Keck, “Caught in the Act: Praise and

Listen next time you're singing worship. It's about how Jesus forgives me, embraces me, makes me feel his presence, strengthens me, forgives me, holds me close, touches me, revives me ... [If] an extraterrestrial outsider from Mars were to observe us, I think he would say ... that these people are all mildly dysfunctional and need a lot of hug therapy (which is ironic, because they are among the most affluent in the world having been blessed in every way more than any group in history).¹⁰⁹

More empirically, Evans, Parry, and Ruth have completed lyrical content analyses of various contemporary worship songs and have arrived at similar conclusions.¹¹⁰ Based on the evidence of this study and the work of other liturgical scholars, it is clear that views about human personhood and Christian self-identity are overwhelmingly *me-centred* in many contemporary worship songs.

Granted, this study, examining, among other things, the singularity and plurality of human-oriented pronouns and verbs, may not capture the intentional nuances of the songwriters who wrote the songs under review.¹¹¹ In the future, for example, it would be worth examining in more detail whether or not explicitly singular pronouns in contemporary worship songs (e.g. “me” or “I”) were intended by songwriters to convey a sense of corporate identity (i.e. the “royal we,” in reverse) in the written songs. Without this sort of qualitative evaluation, it is plausible that some of the first-person human pronouns in the songs under review were, in fact, intended to convey an expression of corporate relationality and collective human association with others. A study like this, thoroughly assessing the songwriter’s motivations for their use of singular pronouns and verbs in contemporary worship songs, goes beyond the parameters of my thesis.

Renewal in the Church,” *Christian Century* 109, no. 37 (December 16, 1992): 1169.

109 McLaren, “An Open Letter to Worship Songwriters (Updated)”;

Kenneth Hull has stated, “worship that is shaped around my feelings ... and seeing God not as truly other than me, but as providing me with experiences I want to have, is not really being in relationship.... [G]enuine relationship, genuine intimacy, requires the presence of two people.” Kenneth Hull, “The Challenge of the Praise Chorus,” *Hymn* 55, no. 3 (July 1, 2004): 21.

110 Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*, 136–138; Ruth, “How Great Is Our God: The Trinity in Contemporary Christian Worship Music,” 29–42; Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*.

111 Here, as before, it is worth noting the limitations of my research on lyrical content that does not, for example, consider ethnomusicological dynamics.

Still, even if studies of this nature were completed, it is difficult to disregard the obvious and explicit preference for singularity in this thesis' human-oriented pronoun and verb analyses. This is even more challenging to overlook within the context of a modern culture, reflecting an acute propensity toward anthropocentric narcissism and a tendency to absolve oneself of substantial and social responsibility to and for others in the world.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

An awareness of the inclination in the songs toward singularity in human-oriented pronouns and an undervaluing of responsibility to others revealed in the analysis of human-oriented verbs could prompt the PAOC to consider how these observations are contextually interpreted, reinforced, and perpetuated within their ecclesial contexts. In other words, if there is a deficiency in commonly used lyrics, advancing a notion of the isolated PAOC worshipper who is unaffected by a collective whole, then it is worth considering the theological implications of this view in relation to the advancement of Pentecostal theology. In the following paragraphs, I will reflect on two of the repercussions of this dynamic. Firstly, I will discuss an individualistic orientation advanced by unique Pentecostal conceptualizations of human salvation. Secondly, I will examine patterns of thought and behaviour associated with a Pentecostal tendency toward separateness.

Firstly, within the context of Canadian Pentecostalism, it is important to consider how an overemphasis on the individualized, private worshipper theologically affects a Pentecostal understanding of human salvation. Historically, Pentecostals have placed a magnified soteriological emphasis on personal, individualized salvation over an understanding of corporate salvation.¹¹² While this emphasis may be a concern raised by those *outside* Pentecostal circles,¹¹³

¹¹² Elsie Lewison, for example, wrote "it is important to highlight the strongly individualistic character of Pentecostalism's message of empowerment and equality, which tend[s] to preclude social or political

it is, nonetheless, also an apprehension cited *within* the Pentecostal faith. Expressing concerns observed from within his North American Pentecostalism, Kenneth Archer has warned that “personal salvation cannot be separated from community or creation and must not be reduced to the interior salvation of the human soul.”¹¹⁴ Similarly, Pentecostal Alliance to the World Missions Commission of the Pentecostal Worship Fellowship adviser, Grant McClung has expressed the following concern: “One thing that drew me to [charismatic Christianity] was finding out that Jesus really cared about me and had solutions for me. But at the same time, in our movement, I see a lot of self-centered gospel, rather than ‘I’m getting healed so that I can become whole and help heal others.’ The ultimate goal should be to become ministers, to become givers and servers of the community and the lost.”¹¹⁵ Critiquing the PAOC, Pentecostal leader, Irving Whitt, has also written, “a [Pentecostal] theology of experience needs to be articulated that does not flounder on the rocks of existential subjectivism or hedonistic individualism.”¹¹⁶ Each of these statements, made by North American Pentecostal leaders, raises a similar concern—mainly, that there is a tendency to narrowly perceive salvation as, first and foremost, a privatized and individualistic endeavour with limited corporate relevance. The findings of this lyrical content study certainly serve to bolster these concerns and verify the pervasiveness of this viewpoint in a significant PAOC worship practice.

Secondly, this study raises awareness about a potential correlation between an individualistic impulse in contemporary worship music and a tendency among Pentecostals to

engagement.” Elsie Lewison, “Pentecostal Power and the Holy Spirit of Capitalism: Re-Imagining Modernity in the Charismatic Cosmology,” *Symposia* 3, no. 1 (2009): 34, 45.

113 See, for example: Harold Bloom, *The American Religion* (New York: Chu Hartley Publishers, 1992), 27–32, 48–49.

114 Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*, 55–56.

115 McClung, “Pentecostals: The Sequel. What Will It Take for This Global Phenomenon to Stay Vibrant for Another 100 Years?,” 41.

116 Irving Whitt, *Pentecostals and the Canadian Mission: Engaging Canadian Culture(s) Meaningfully* (Glad Tidings, BC: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Symposium, General Conference, June 12, 2002).

perceive themselves as a “separated people,” influenced, perhaps, by twentieth century Fundamentalism.¹¹⁷ In chapter one, I discussed how the emergence of a small group of Pentecostal scholars into ecumenical dialogue in the 1970s and 1980s went against the flow of a deep-rooted Pentecostal tendency to resist theological identification with other Christians and non-Christians. Given this observation and those associated with the lyrical content in this study, I maintain that the most commonly used PAOC worship songs may drive a Pentecostal inclination to sequester.

In relation to this, Bridges Johns has described how a persistent sense of being an outsider has fostered a deep-rooted, shame-based identity in Pentecostalism that perpetuates “an acute self-consciousness ... in which a constant fear of rejection has marked the actors.”¹¹⁸ More coarsely, Pentecostal Terry Cross has suggested, “Pentecostals have been the backwoods cousins to the evangelical movement—cousins one hates to have to show up at fancy weddings or reunions (or conferences?)! [*sic*]”¹¹⁹ If, on the one hand, a tendency to separate has fostered Pentecostal insecurity and shame, a sense of proud separateness is also manifested in an alienating Pentecostal triumphalism.¹²⁰ Whether in the form of Pentecostal shame or triumphalism, a sense of isolation and separation appears to be the net result. It is worth considering, then, how this inclination is both personified and fostered, albeit perhaps in an unconscious way, through the lyrics of commonly used PAOC songs today.

117 For an extensive study identifying the links between Fundamentalism and the PAOC, see: C. Mark Schinkel, “The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada: The Influence of Fundamentalism on Articles Appearing in the *Pentecostal Testimony*” (Wycliffe College, 1990), 86–105.

118 Cheryl Bridges Johns, “The Adolescence of Pentecostalism: In Search of a Legitimate Sectarian Identity,” *Pneuma* 17, no. 1 (March 1, 1995): 9.

119 Cross, “A Proposal to Break the Ice: What Can Pentecostal Theology Offer Evangelical Theology?,” 46.

120 On Pentecostal triumphalism, see: Wolfgang Vondey, “Social Engagement and Triumphalism,” in *Pentecostalism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2013), 96–103; David Courey, *What Has Wittenberg to Do with Azusa?: Luther’s Theology of the Cross and Pentecostal Triumphalism* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2015); Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 4.

3) *Considerations for the PAOC*

In order to curtail the disadvantageous effects of Pentecostal individualism and the inclination to separate, I propose a shift toward Pentecostal self-expression, both in corporate worship and theological advancement that evidences a more balanced approach expressing both the experiences of the individual PAOC worshipper and the corporate identity of the global Christian community. Although there may be several suggestions for changes along these lines, I will propose two of them.

a) A Trinitarian Understanding of Corporate, Human Salvation

The PAOC would be well-served to consider a more corporate and trinitarian perspective on human salvation. In this respect, I suggest Gunton's awareness that redemption is not, first and foremost, an individualized affair offers an appropriate corrective to the PAOC. Against notions of an individualized faith, Gunton reminded his readers: "Redemption means the completion of the whole project of creation, not the saving of a few souls from hell."¹²¹ Though a devoted Reformed theologian, Gunton also purposefully acknowledged that his understanding of the doctrine of election was not exclusively restricted to matters related to the eternal fate of human individuals. As such, Gunton was opposed to the tendency "to treat election as more concerned with the other-worldly destiny of a limited number of human beings than with the destiny, in and through time, of the whole world."¹²² In these statements, we can identify the corporate nature of redemption in Gunton's theology. A renewed corporate orientation could be prescriptive for a Canadian religious group that is prone to view salvation in predominantly individualistic terms.

There are indications that certain members within the North American Pentecostal

¹²¹ Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 171.

¹²² Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 31.

community are growing increasingly passionate about advancing the types of soteriological convictions that Gunton advocated. Examples include Pentecostal scholars, Kärkkäinen and Yong. Kärkkäinen has written, “Relationality, being in relationship, is the proper mode of viewing not only the divine life but also the essence of personhood. Persons exist in communion, in relationships, rather than as mere ‘individuals.’”¹²³ Similarly, speaking of the value of viewing human personhood from a perichoretic perspective, Yong has described how it “frees up space to reconsider the notion of personhood from a trinitarian and perichoretic starting point rather than from a Cartesian one.”¹²⁴ The trinitarian language in Yong’s statement as a corrective to individualized perceptions of personhood is unmistakable. More particular to a Canadian Pentecostal context, the words of PAOC general superintendent, David Wells are well worth noting:

As I review my approach to ministry, I recognize that I became convinced very early on that ministry which honours the Trinity must be relational. With that conviction comes the understanding that we need to honour one another and value our relationships more highly than the actual tasks we are doing or the philosophical and strategic approaches we are following. As we are in deep relationship with our Lord, and with His Spirit working in our hearts, our love for one another becomes evident for the world to see.¹²⁵

Thus, the PAOC may find inspiration in an awareness that there are those *within* their ranks who are increasingly recognizing the importance of a corporate and trinitarian understanding of personhood. I am convinced that a greater emphasis on corporate salvation, while not denying or losing focus of God’s saving grace toward individuals, would surely bring enrichment to the soteriology advanced by the PAOC.

b) Engagement with the Universal Church

Another practical way forward for the PAOC may be to consider more explicitly how

¹²³ Kärkkäinen, “The Uniqueness of Christ and the Trinitarian Faith,” 116.

¹²⁴ Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*, 56.

¹²⁵ David Wells, *What I See* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, 2008), 18.

Canadian Pentecostals are integrated into the universal Church. This proposal is consistent with the recommendation of others in the PAOC who have offered similar prescriptions. Osborne, for example, has stated, “the first movement must be to see ourselves as full participants in the greater church.... [W]ill we find that the very idea of ecumenism tests our reflective skills?... The question that will push us towards more substantive reflection may well be this: how is Pentecostalism related to world Christianity?”¹²⁶ I propose that the ability of the PAOC to wrestle with and respond to Osborne’s challenge will determine their level of future ecumenical engagement. A similar sentiment has been expressed by Chan, who has said, “if the Church is more than the sum total of individuals, then ecclesial experience is more than the sum total of individual experiences with God and each other. What is the ‘more than’ of ecclesial experience? It is the experience of being the Body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, the divine humanity or, to use an earlier phrase, the Church as *totus Christus*.”¹²⁷ In this respect and as discussed in chapter one, the integration of Pentecostal scholars into the realm of ecumenical dialogue is one step toward this goal. Scholars such as Kärkkäinen, Robert Menzies, Yong, Ronald Kydd, and Cecil Robeck are charting new ground for Pentecostals through their participation and engagement in ecumenical dialogue.¹²⁸

While there is evidence of a few within the PAOC denomination championing this ecumenical cause, I suggest that a sense of broader ecclesial corporate identity has not yet substantially extended beyond the halls of academia (and, perhaps, PAOC general headquarters)

¹²⁶ Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection*.

¹²⁷ Chan, “The Church and the Development of Doctrine,” 66; Johnathan Alvarado, too, has expressed the importance of advancing a relational corporate identity in Pentecostal circles asserting that the work of the Holy Spirit, ultimately, is located within the Church and not the individual where, “There is a mutuality of sharing and exchange that takes place in this type of setting and atmosphere.” Johnathan E. Alvarado, “Worship in the Spirit: Pentecostal Perspectives on Liturgical Theology and Praxis,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 21, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 148.

¹²⁸ See, for example: Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Revelation: A Constructive Theology for the Pluralistic World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014).

and into the pews of PAOC churches. If a reluctance to engage in grassroots ecumenical and sociological dialogue exists, then I contend it is worth considering why this is the case. As Robeck wrote, “The current ecclesial climate, as well as the incredibly changing world political situation demands that Pentecostals take on a new commitment to understanding and participating in the globalization process. This is a particularly difficult challenge to North American Pentecostals who are used to seeing themselves as the navel of the universe.”¹²⁹ The PAOC, then, would be well served to draw, for example, on the work of Canadian sociologist, Michael Wilkinson, a respected religious studies scholar active both inside and outside the PAOC, who is committed to research that considers the effect of globalization on religious groups, especially Canadian Pentecostals, over and against views of an individualized, privatized, and ethnocentric Christian faith.¹³⁰ In this respect, the PAOC would be well-served to follow Wilkinson’s lead into a discussion that places them in broader theological and sociological dialogue. The data from this project’s content analysis indicate that more progress may be necessary.

Again, Gunton’s perichoretic outlook on human personhood is worthy of mention as a way of maintaining a balance between notions of human relationality and particularity. Indeed, Gunton’s utilization of the biblical notion of covenant could help to overcome a proclivity in Pentecostal theology toward individualism and recalibrate a genuine concern and responsibility for others.¹³¹ Indeed, Gunton’s advocacy of the social and communal experience of shared, relational human beings could provide a necessary antidote for an isolating tendency in the

129 Cecil M. Robeck, “Taking Stock of Pentecostalism: The Personal Reflections of a Retiring Editor,” *Pneuma* 15, no. 1 (March 1, 1993): 59.

130 Wilkinson has defined globalization as “a historical process by which the people of the world have become globally conscious of living in an interconnected world.” Michael Wilkinson, “Pentecostals in Canada: Rethinking Mission in the Context of Global Change,” General Conference Theological Symposium (Glad Tidings, BC, June 12, 2002).

131 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 96; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 222; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 113.

PAOC. As Gunton wrote, “we find our reality in what we give to and receive from others in human community.”¹³²

Of course, I am *not* suggesting here that Pentecostal worship and theological expression should, altogether, avoid individual human experience and singularity. Here, Gunton’s perichoretic emphasis on particularity is also instructive. Accordingly, individuals maintain a unique sense of temporality and distinctiveness in the world without falling into a modern trap of perceiving human freedom and autonomy in isolation and disconnection from others.¹³³ In this respect, Gunton appropriately said, “a satisfactory conception of human particularity depends upon an acceptance of the fact that persons also are constituted in their particularity both by their being created such by God and by the network of human and cosmic relatedness in which they find their being.”¹³⁴ It is my view, then, that this balanced sense of relationality and particularity may assist the PAOC in developing a more thorough commitment to an understanding of themselves as uniquely placed to fully give to, receive from, and become the Church.

ii) Human Instrumentalism and the Affective Experience

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

The fifth qualitative lyrical analysis (i.e. Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality), through an assessment of human-oriented verbs, identified the most prevalent types of behaviour attributed to the human worshippers in the song. Notably, the most common verbs associated with the PAOC worshippers in the songs (i.e. *sing*, *stand*, *worship*, and *see*) were those that excluded any sense of the initiating function that the triune God plays in worship and, instead, emphasized the role of the worshippers as the sole agents of worship itself. This

132 Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 59.

133 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 196, 203; Gunton, “Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*,” 60; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 114.

134 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 202.

was consistent with other observations in this thesis pertaining to human personhood, mainly a tendency toward isolation and absolving oneself of corporate responsibility to others. In this respect, I drew a correlation between this observation and the results from the sixth qualitative lyrical analysis (i.e. Expressions of Mediatorial Worship).¹³⁵ The sixth qualitative lyrical study, analyzing the prepositions in the song corpus, sought to determine whether the traditional doxological worship formula [i.e. *to* (or *for*) the Father, *in* (or *with*) Jesus Christ, and *through* (or *by*) the Holy Spirit] was evident in relation to God-human engagement, thereby providing an indicator of the mediatorial and doxological essence of worship in the songs.¹³⁶ The overwhelming absence of prepositional phrases of this nature in the lyrics infers that worship is predominantly conceived as a human-generated activity. Together, the results from these two lyrical analyses provide strong indicators favouring human instrumentality and the self-induced, affective experience of the worshipper in the context of the worship event.

A question raised from these observations and other independent studies is whether or not the primary reference point in many of these songs is the somatic and privatized experience of the worshipper, to the detriment of the One to whom Christian worship is directed.¹³⁷ Baker-Wright has described this inclination as “looking into a funhouse mirror and reflecting upon reflecting about God.... The end result is that there is both an individualistic focus upon one’s

135 There may also be a link here between the lyrics’ propensity toward an individualized personhood and the pervasive use of the abstract nouns “praise” and “song” in the eighth qualitative lyrical analysis. In several instances throughout the song corpus, “praise” and “song” were used as expressions of worship that, conceptually, were sourced in the worshipper and offered, directionally, *toward* God.

136 In his research, Ruth has suggested that the absence of this traditional worship formula also reflects a tendency toward abstract modalism. He wrote, “These trends contrast with how Christians in the Early Church onward have worshipped: worship directed toward God the Father through Jesus Christ in or by the power of the Holy Spirit. Instead, what I observe from the repertoire is that most of these songs either worship Jesus Christ or worship a generic deity.” Ruth, “Don’t Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters,” 3.

137 Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 77; Similarly, Evans has posited, “More often than not critics point to the dominance of personal intimacy present in the lyrics of modern songs; the focus on the individual, on the participant singing rather than the subject of their worship—God.” Evans, *Open up the Doors: Music in the Modern Church*.

own failure to worship God and one's personal resolve to improve the sincerity of worship.

Ultimately, the concentration articulated by the song is upon self-improvement in worship; it does not direct the congregation's worship out of themselves to God."¹³⁸ Ruth, in his empirical study on human worship in contemporary worship music, has raised similar concerns. He said, "Almost all the language of relationship and activity in these songs describes dynamics between human worshippers and the divine recipient, not the relationship among the Persons of the Trinity. The songs put more emphasis on worshippers' activities than on divine activity."¹³⁹

Further, Marva Dawn has lamented the prevalence of contemporary worship songs "characterised by disinformation ... songs that reiterate the call to praise God but never actually do."¹⁴⁰

The work of theologian J.B. Torrance has chastised this theological propensity to understand Christian worship as something Christians *do*, irrespective of Christian notions of mediation and divine means of grace. Torrance implored that Christian worship not, inadvertently, devolve into an exclusively anthropocentric experience. In fact, he advances an indictment that could, I argue, be leveled upon the lyrics of the PAOC songs associated with this

138 Baker-Wright, "Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music," 175; See also: James H.S. Steven, "Charismatic Hymnody in the Light of Early Methodist Hymnody," *Studia Liturgica* 27, no. 2 (January 1, 1997): 222; Nick Page, *And Now Let's Move Into a Time of Nonsense: Why Worship Songs Are Failing the Church* (Franklin, TN: Authentic Publishers, 2005), 42–43.

139 Ruth, "Lex Amandi, Lex Orandi: The Trinity in the Most-Used Contemporary Christian Worship Songs," 349–350.

140 Dawn, *Reaching out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture*, 1172; Parry, similarly, has affirmed, "worship is not, first and foremost, something that we do. Our worship is no more and no less than participation in *Christ's own* perfect worship of the Father. Our worship is joined to his and is made acceptable. We share in his own relationship of open communion with the Father, and thus it is that we even share in Jesus' own sonship and are ourselves adopted as sons of God. We are accepted by the Father 'in Christ', the beloved, and 'in Christ' we are 'holy and blameless in his sight' (Eph. 1:4). In this way we can draw near before heaven's throne of grace with confidence. We know that our worship will be acceptable because Christ's worship is acceptable, and it is his worship in which we are sharing. Christ is the chief worshipper and is our worship leader. He proclaims the praises of God in the midst of the Christian congregation (Heb. 2:12)." [italics in original] Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 95; Elsewhere, Ruth has written, "These trends contrast with how Christians in the Early Church onward have worshipped: worship directed toward God the Father through Jesus Christ in or by the power of the Holy Spirit. Instead, what I observe from the repertoire is that most of these songs either worship Jesus Christ or worship a generic deity." Ruth, "Don't Lose the Trinity! A Plea to Songwriters," 3.

study:

Probably the most common and widespread view is that worship is something which we, religious people, do—mainly in church on Sunday. We go to church, we sing our psalms and hymns to God, we intercede for the world, we listen to the sermon (too often simply an exhortation), we offer our money, time and talents to God. No doubt we need God's grace to help us do it. We do it because Jesus taught us to do it and left us an example of how to do it. But worship is what we do before God. In theological language, this means that the only priesthood is our priesthood, the only offering our offering, the only intercessions our intercessions.... This kind of do-it-yourself-with-the-help-of-the-minister worship is what our forefathers would have called "legal worship" and not "evangelical worship"—what the ancient church would have called Arian or Pelagian and not truly Catholic. It is not trinitarian.¹⁴¹

Some scholars have noted that this idea of human instrumentality extends beyond worship and even to salvation. I have already discussed how some Pentecostals may be in danger of endorsing an unbalanced view of salvation, favouring individual relationality above corporate understandings. In this case, distorted views of salvation focus predominantly on human endeavours rather than divine action. It implies that people, in some sense, are intrinsically able to save themselves without the help of God.¹⁴² Parry has said,

some people think that worship and prayer is something we offer to God in order to earn some merit with him and perhaps even to build up a surplus of credit to earn salvation. This is not a Christian view of worship and it is a terrible burden to bear—indeed, it is an impossible one. Other people think that although God has offered us salvation free of charge through grace, worship is still primarily *our* response. This DIY view of worship is common among Christians, but it is also rather hard work. Although it stresses the God-humanward movement in Christ, the human-Godward movement is still ours! It emphasises *our* faith, *our* decision, *our* response in an event theology which short-circuits the vicarious humanity of Christ and belittles union with Christ.... [It implies] that God throws us back on ourselves to make our response. [*italics in original*]¹⁴³

Interpreted within the context of these arguments, the evidence from the fifth and sixth content analyses suggest that the lyrics of the contemporary worship music under review serve to

141 Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace*, 20; For similar observations about an overemphasis on human instrumentality in worship, see also: Witvliet, "Discipleship and the Future of Contemporary Worship Music," 176–177; Ian Nell and Neil Meyer, "Invited by God onto the Worship Stage: Developing Missional Communities through Participation in Theo-Drama: Original Research," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34, no. 1 (2013): 1–8.

142 Dawn, *Reaching out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture*, 171.

143 Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 100–101.

advance theological misconceptions about worship as a predominantly human-generated event. Particularly, there is evidence to suggest that an overemphasis on human instrumentality in the worship event persists in the PAOC songs.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

How does this overemphasis on human instrumentality in worship affect the PAOC specifically? In chapter one, I described the Pentecostal tendency to emphasize the immediate, experiential character of Christian worship.¹⁴⁴ The existential human experience is a central component of Pentecostal self-identification. Unapologetically, some Pentecostal scholars acknowledge this as a defining characteristic of what makes Pentecostals *pentecostal*.¹⁴⁵ Osborne has declared, “When we are most characteristically Pentecostal (if I may put it this way), we tend to assume, for instance, that spiritual knowledge is immediate and personal, and that concrete experience is the validation of true knowledge.”¹⁴⁶ In a similar fashion, Warrington has described the essential core of Pentecostalism as “a personal, experiential encounter of the Spirit of God” that is “immediate,” “dynamic,” and “experiential.” He goes on to say, “Pentecostals embrace a spirituality that expects to touch God and to be touched by him. For Pentecostals, to know God is to experience him, not just intellectualize him.”¹⁴⁷

From the findings of my research, I suggest that there may be a connection between an emphasis on the immediacy of concrete Pentecostal experience and a propensity, expressed in the lyrics of the songs under review, toward human instrumentality. In other words, worship in PAOC contexts has a tendency to advance a theological view of worship as a human-generated

144 Douglas Petersen, “Pentecostals: Who Are They?,” in *Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel*, ed. Samuel Vinay and Chris Sugden (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999), 77.

145 PAOC leader, Van Johnson has said it this way, “The experiential nature of Pentecostal worship is one of our trademarks.” Johnson, *Defining Pentecostal Identity*.

146 Osborne, *Pentecostals and Reflection*.

147 Warrington, “Challenges Facing Pentecostals Today,” 201.

endeavour, undervaluing the mediatorial role that the triune God serves in worship. That is, a fervent Pentecostal expectancy of an immediate religious experience in corporate worship may put the PAOC worshipper at risk of undermining the awareness that worship, after all, is a participatory, dynamic, and active event *with* the triune God. On the contrary, with Christ as high priest (Heb 9) and mediator (1 Tim 2:5), Christian praise and worship ought to be more accurately viewed as participation in the Spirit's gracious gift of love to humanity (Rom 8).¹⁴⁸

3) *Considerations for the PAOC*

Against trends that overemphasize human instrumentality in worship, Pentecostals should go beyond worship and theological expressions that stress the immediacy of the worship experience and strive to develop a more comprehensive theology of experience based on the reality of a mediatorial doxology. Here, again, Gunton provides an instructive insight. He wrote,

to worship God the Father through the Son and in the Spirit reminds us that our worship is not an ordinary activity, something that we simply decide to do like taking up painting or watching cricket. It is, first of all, something God does in, with and for us. Worship is the gift of God the Spirit, who, through his Son, enables us to come before the Father's throne as his people.... Worship is a gift: we come to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit because they enable us to do what otherwise would be impossible for sinful human beings.¹⁴⁹

These words sound remarkably similar to those articulated by British theologian and liturgist, Geoffrey Wainwright. In his book, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life*, Wainwright has stated "our offering of praise and life can only be a response to God's gift."¹⁵⁰

148 Johnathan Alvarado wrote, "Much conversation about contemporary worship and even language used in the facilitation of contemporary worship does not lend itself to this understanding. There are many who purport worship to 'an audience of one', notwithstanding the implications of such an approach to the objectives of corporate worship. This mindset impoverishes the worship experience and is objectionable because it sees God in the static light of an observer rather than as a participant in the worship encounter. Those who espouse this approach often fail to see that God is encountering the community in acts of love as the community encounters him in acts of worship." Alvarado, "Worship in the Spirit: Pentecostal Perspectives on Liturgical Theology and Praxis," 142.

149 Sarah J. Gunton and John E. Colwell, eds., *The Theologian as Preacher: Further Sermons from Colin E. Gunton* (London: T & T Clark/Continuum, 2007), 127–128.

150 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life*, repr. (Oxford: Oxford

Indeed, statements of this nature serve as a worthy corrective against views of worship as primarily a human-centred event.

If Pentecostals are seeking ways to make connections between a robust theology of experience and a theology of mediation, they need not look beyond Pentecostal circles. PAOC leader, Irving Whitt, has sounded the call for greater attention to the correlation between a theology of experience and worship practice. He stated, “Pentecostals ... need to ... work toward developing an adequate theology of experience. A theology of religious experience is desperately needed today that will give guidelines to religious worship.”¹⁵¹ Specifically, the way forward, for example, may be to find more robust worship and theological expressions that consider worship, mediatorally, *to* the Father, *through* Jesus Christ, and *by* the Spirit. This may also come in the form of lyrics of contemporary worship music that more accurately reflect biblical texts and themes. Consider, for example, the words of Witvliet: “a biblical theology of worship might speak of worship as the renewal of promises that we make before God; as a means of grace through which God nourishes, challenges, and comforts us; and as a token or symbol of lifelong obedience, to work with only a few relevant biblical concepts.”¹⁵² Here, too, Parry’s words are instructive:

The place to begin is with the ancient Christian doxology “Glory be to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.” The roots of this doxology are found in the deep structures of New Testament thought that bubble up in Ephesians 2:18: “Through him [the Son] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.” There it is in black and white. As Christians, we come first and foremost to the Father. We come to him through the work of the Son, enabled by the Holy Spirit. This insight is the key to a Christian understanding of worship.¹⁵³

The ability of PAOC members to recognize that worship is not exclusively a human-generated

University Press, 1995), 242.

151 Whitt, *Pentecostals and the Canadian Mission: Engaging Canadian Culture(s) Meaningfully*.

152 Witvliet, “Discipleship and the Future of Contemporary Worship Music,” 176–177.

153 Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 88.

experience, but, rather, participation in and response to God's grace will determine much about their worship practice and also the depth of their overall trinitarian theology.¹⁵⁴

Additionally, the intrinsic Pentecostal inclination toward experience has the potential to release broader trinitarian theological analysis from a purely abstract conversation into the realm of an articulation of substantial perichoretic experience. If a part of the motivation behind the study of trinitarian theology is to participate in the relationality associated with the Godhead, then the Pentecostal emphasis on experience has something valuable to offer. Yong has said,

recent scholarship about Pentecostalism's holistic spirituality, affective and embodied epistemology, and non-reductionistic worldview represents the best of Pentecostal thinking in search of a way beyond the impasse of (in no particular order) materialism versus spiritualism, rationalism versus empiricism, intellectualism versus emotionalism, individualism versus communalism, this-worldliness versus otherworldliness, naturalism versus supernaturalism, modernism versus postmodernism, absolutism versus relativism, positivism versus fideism, etc. Hence, Pentecostals are spiritually and, in some respects, supernaturalistically oriented, but they are engaged with these dimensions of reality through the concreteness of their embodiment, the sensitivities of their affections and emotions, and the rationality (not rationalism) of their experiential, empirical, and pragmatic orientation. [italics in original]¹⁵⁵

Along similar lines, Kärkkäinen has argued, "the most important thing for Pentecostals is not the doctrine of the Trinity *per se*, but the experience of the Trinity." [italics in original]¹⁵⁶ The ease with which Pentecostals engage in discussion about experiential pneumatology may well determine the advancement of a Pentecostal contribution to trinitarian theology in the future.¹⁵⁷

In this section, I articulated key observations from the data provided in the previous chapter in relation to trinitarian views about personhood. In particular, the data showed a

154 Elsewhere, Parry has written, "The Trinitarian view of worship presented by the Bible ... does not call people to whip themselves up into a worship frenzy but simply points people to the worship that Christ is currently offering and invites them to join him in it. And even our response to God's grace is a response that God has provided us with himself as a gift." Parry, *Worshipping Trinity: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*, 101.

155 Amos Yong, *The Spirit of Creation: Modern Science and Divine Action in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Imagination* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011).

156 Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions: A Pentecostal-Charismatic Inquiry," *International Review of Mission* 91, no. 361 (April 1, 2002): 97,103; As cited in: Steven M. Studebaker, *From Pentecost to the Triune God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013), 188.

157 Cross, "A Proposal to Break the Ice: What Can Pentecostal Theology Offer Evangelical Theology?," 73.

propensity in the lyrics toward personal isolation, relinquishing of social responsibility to others, and a human-centred instrumentality in relation to the worship event. I discussed several implications of these anthropological observations as they relate to the PAOC. I suggested that these lyrical messages, presented in Pentecostal contexts where people tend to view their faith in individualistic terms as separated people and in ways that emphasize the immediacy of an experiential worship event, are problematic. I also proposed that the way forward is to consider the voices within and beyond the Canadian Pentecostal world championing the perichoretic relationality and particularity about the human person. Gunton, I argued, is one of those voices. I showed that theological articulation of a Pentecostal corporate identity with other Christians, a more trinitarian and corporate perspective in Pentecostal soteriology, and a mediatorial theology of Pentecostal worship could serve the PAOC community well in the future. In the next section, I will discuss views concerning cosmology in the most commonly used PAOC contemporary worship songs and their implications for PAOC theology. Once again, the diagnostic and prescriptive theological work of Gunton is paramount.

C) Views about Cosmology

This third and final section brings together the observations from the seventh and eighth lyrical content analyses regarding views about cosmology. Specifically, two leading cosmological issues are at hand. Firstly, I consider the observation gleaned from this study that there is a temporal preoccupation in the selected lyrics with the present, anticipatory experience of the PAOC worshipper. Secondly, a dualism in the PAOC songs between the material realm over against the non-material world is addressed. In both instances, the theological implications of these observations for the PAOC are considered. Likewise, some considerations for the PAOC are presented that draw on the trinitarian theology of Gunton.

i) Temporality as a Present, Anticipatory, Here and Now Experience

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

In the seventh qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. Cosmological Correspondence between Time and Timelessness), a careful assessment of the general tense orientation of human verbs was employed. This provided a way of gaining an awareness of whether a particular emphasis on the activities of the worshipper favoured a past, present, or future orientation of the temporal world. Conceivably, a relatively balanced representation of human verbs, reflecting past, present, and future tenses, would attest to a thoroughgoing understanding of the complexity of chronological and kairological time. What this study revealed, however, was an overwhelming emphasis on the present, temporal experiences of the worshipper in the PAOC song corpus. Actions depicting future human behaviour and activity were only modestly represented among the songs. Furthermore, actions expressing the activities of the worshipper in the past tense were almost non-existent in the 82 song corpus.

Thus, this seventh lyrical analysis indicated an overwhelming preoccupation in the songs with the present, anticipatory, here and now experience of the worshipper. This observation is consistent with Gunton's estimation of a modern restlessness with time, expressed most often in a nervous captivation with the temporal present. Here, Gunton's words bear repeating: "Modern culture is marked by a pathological inability to live in the present, while at the same time, as in the consumer culture, it is unable to live anywhere but in the present."¹⁵⁸ This fixation with the chronological present, as Gunton surmised, could very well represent an insidious Gnosticism in the PAOC music that perceives present time as the only substantial reality of significance—the past and future as mere afterthoughts. Accordingly, what *has happened* in the past is perceived as irrelevant and what *will happen* in the future is often viewed as inconceivable. The results of

¹⁵⁸ Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 99.

this study may verify this; the present becomes overemphasized to the detriment of a more thorough understanding of time.¹⁵⁹

The findings in this study on temporality were also consistent with Gunton's observations about a harsh dualism depicting a contradistinction between present time and eternity. The results from this seventh lyrical analysis on time, augmented with the observations from the second content analysis (concerning views about the actions of God in the song corpus) confirm this condition. A dualism between time and timelessness, evident in the lyrics of the songs, if even developed inadvertently, creates separation between the triune God and creation. Accordingly, the worshipper is bound by a present, chronological time-boundedness while God, in contrast, is perceived as existing well beyond the bounds of time in the eternal realm.¹⁶⁰

By these standards, I argue that a strong dichotomy was advanced in these lyrics, reinforcing a chasm between that which is perfect and timeless (i.e. God and eternity) and that which is inferior and time-bound (i.e. humanity and creation).¹⁶¹ As was already discussed in chapter two, Gunton perceived that one of the most significant problems with this view is that it becomes increasingly challenging to perceive God as involved in time, while persons, on the other hand, are limited by their own capacities to labour in "a disappearing present."¹⁶² As such, Gunton was opposed to this sort of pessimistic view of time and the unfortunate dualism that emerges between a common understanding of time and timelessness. While I am careful not to draw premature deductions about what a symptomatic preoccupation with the present in this

159 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 76–77, 90.

160 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 109–110; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 83; See also: Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 120–122; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 82–83; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 110.

161 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 74–75, 78–79; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 110.

162 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 82; For Gunton's thorough assessment of the contemporary "tyranny of time," see: Gunton, *Theology through the Theologians: Selected Essays, 1972-1995*, 43–45.

project's song lyrics means,¹⁶³ this finding is consistent with several other indicators that Gunton considered as the consequences of an underdeveloped trinitarianism in contemporary Christianity.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

A preoccupation with the present, anticipatory experience of the worshipper in the PAOC songs is particularly relevant for a Pentecostal community that has, historically and as already been mentioned, tended to orient themselves around notions of theological imminence and immediacy. It is worth considering, for example, if an overemphasis on the immediate experience of the worshipper in the most commonly used songs of the PAOC serves to advance a Pentecostal theology preoccupied with the imminent fulfillment of biblical prophecies. It is also widely held that Pentecostals, historically, are predisposed to a premillennial dispensationalism and futurist eschatology that conceives the imminent return of Jesus Christ with paramount importance.¹⁶⁴ This view has created challenges for Pentecostal attempts to develop a robust theology that advances a theological understanding of time either in the past or the distant future.¹⁶⁵ Evidencing a preoccupation in early Pentecostalism that is still sometimes conspicuous in Pentecostal ecclesial circles today, Vinson Synan has described Pentecostal preachers and teachers as “missionaries of the one-way ticket.” In this respect, a fascination with the imminent return of Jesus not only creates a sense of urgency and anticipation among Pentecostals, it also,

¹⁶³ Further study that considers the verb tense of divine actions in the songs might serve to bolster or refute the findings in this study.

¹⁶⁴ D.J. Wilson wrote, “A variant on the futurist position, known as dispensationalism, was developed by English-born John Nelson Darby (1800-1882). He believed that history could be divided into seven eras or dispensations, in each of which God related to humanity in a different way. The era of the church is parenthetical; prophecy is silent about it. The church and Israel are viewed as two separate people of God, each with a specific role. This view was popularized in the U.S. especially by the Scofield Reference Bible (1909) and became the view that has dominated Pentecostalism.... Most pentecostals have followed the prevailing view of the late-19th-century prophetic conference movement, expecting the rapture, or removal, of the church prior to a time of tribulation.” D.J. Wilson, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Ed M. Van der Maas, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 601; See also: Howard A. Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 34.

¹⁶⁵ Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 33.

inevitably, has wide-reaching impact on views about temporality here on earth.¹⁶⁶ For example, Howard Snyder has said that this perspective can “make Christians indifferent to or fatalistic about social problems that could be changed. It makes it possible for Christians to ignore or even oppose efforts to assist the poor and oppressed, for such efforts may be seen as distractions from central kingdom concerns.”¹⁶⁷

A preoccupation with the present experience of the worshipper in the songs under review also seemed to be consistent with the historical impulse in Pentecostalism, as was discussed earlier in chapter two, toward pragmatism. Johnson has related this pragmatism to “a belief in the urgency of the hour ... [and] apocalyptic sense of the end.”¹⁶⁸ Evidently, Pentecostals do not wish to get bogged down by the perceived limits of the past, nor the uncertainty of a distant future. Warrington has described this motivation, stating, “The sense of the immediate, the God of the now, not the distant past, are characteristics that underlie how [Pentecostals] do theology.”¹⁶⁹

If a dualism exposed in the lyrics between time and eternity was evident in the songs, this also reinforces concerns that some Pentecostals, themselves, have about their own religious movement. In this respect, the following statement by Yong could well describe a shortcoming observed in this lyrical content study: “dualism of time and eternity underlies ... trinitarian Pentecostal understandings of creation. God’s eternity is defined in terms of immortality and everlastingness, and suggestive of infinite temporal extension to the past and future. This divine eternity, of course, contrasts with the finite created order, considered both cosmogonically and

166 Vinson Synan, *The Spirit Said “Grow”: The Astounding Worldwide Expansion of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1992), 39–48.

167 Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 38.

168 Johnson, *Defining Pentecostal Identity*, 6.

169 Warrington, “Challenges Facing Pentecostals Today,” 201; See also: Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10–11.

eschatologically in temporal terms.”¹⁷⁰ Consider, for example, how this eschatological expectancy has pervaded the history of Pentecostalism, in various forms of revivalism, movements toward restoration, and, more specifically, in the case of Canadian Pentecostals in the Latter Rain, New Latter Rain, and Third Wave movements of the twentieth and twenty-first century.¹⁷¹ As already mentioned, it is this preoccupation that draws the ire of people like Noll in their perception of the legacies associated with Pentecostalism.¹⁷²

In this respect, the dispensationalism that has historically characterized Pentecostalism reflects an anticipatory and experiential perception of the Kingdom of God. Here, the words of the PAOC’s Van Johnson are descriptive of the Pentecostal reality. He has written,

early pentecostals experienced the already of the Kingdom in vivid and concrete fashion. This is indicative of an experiential approach to spirituality, that is, as a spirituality that invites the believer to participate in the things of the Spirit. A gathering of Pentecostals is an opportunity to encounter God with life-transforming results. The Kingdom is already breaking in as the Spirit reveals the power of God in individual lives. And this sense of nearness of God’s presence only intensified their belief in the imminent return of Jesus. As they sensed the presence of God among them, it only reinforced what they fervently believed.... How easy it was, then, for them to believe and act as if Christ’s return was near. As they felt him close, it only strengthened their sense that his return was close. Their conviction about the already of God’s Kingdom, being experienced in salvation and empowerment in their gatherings, only strengthened their resolve to live in the light of his return.¹⁷³

We can see from this quotation how an understanding of the Kingdom of God as a present and imminent experience can exploit both the strengths and weaknesses of a Pentecostal theology advanced by the PAOC. In one respect, Christians may draw inspiration and hope from Pentecostals who perceive the present experience of the worshipper from an optimistic and

170 Yong, “Oneness and the Trinity: The Theological and Ecumenical Implications of Creation *Ex Nihilo* for an Intra-Pentecostal Dispute,” 89.

171 Hunt, “Dispensationalism”; Wilson, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed.: 601.

172 Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 109-148; Mark A. Noll, “The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind,” *Christianity Today* 37, no. 12 (1993): 28-32.

173 Johnson, *Defining Pentecostal Identity*; See also: David Wells and Van Johnson, eds., *Authentically Pentecostal: Here’s What We See* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, 2010), 73-81.

empowering perspective. This is particularly true among religious contexts where pain, suffering, poverty, and lostness may be prevalent.¹⁷⁴ By the same token, however, it also raises some concern that a preoccupation with Jesus Christ's imminent return may advance an inability among Pentecostals to perceive the past (e.g. God's actions in history) and the not yet potentiality of the future Kingdom. It may also contribute to a failure to understand the sometimes slow, gradual, and incremental path of the spiritual life.

Here again, Johnson has described the limitations of this Pentecostal viewpoint in relation to time and certain perceptions concerning Pentecostal revivalism:

A revival movement, by definition, is either in revival or preparing for one. Such a cyclical view is ideal for the short-term, but chaotic in the long-term. Factor in the pentecostal belief that revival prefaces the end of the world (evidenced by a decline in social conditions, the world "going to hell in a handbasket"), and there is a further complication. As one student of mine suggested, the sooner we get rid of this idea of the soon return of Jesus, the better off we will be. After all, he said, "He hasn't come yet." No argument on that last point. A movement can only cry "Jesus is coming soon," meaning soon, so often before people stop believing it. The cry recedes in the background, or is repeated liturgically, but without the passion once associated with the idea. Moreover, we have adopted eschatological systems that in the long run may be counter-productive to Kingdom economy. Our fascination with the Rapture and the prophetic charts ("when we are getting out of here?") may have moved us away from engagement with the mission we were given.¹⁷⁵

Given this Pentecostal culture with its orientation toward present experience, it is important to consider how the words of the songs used in corporate worship settings may precipitate a dichotomy of time consciousness by overemphasizing the imminent return of Christ. Frank Macchia has considered how a premillennial, dispensationalist doctrine relating to the second coming of Christ had an impact on early Pentecostalism and continues to influence the movement today. He described the urgency of this Pentecostal missional work as follows:

¹⁷⁴ Snyder has written, "[Pentecostal dispensationalism] has provided and continues to provide hope for Christians in suffering and in difficult circumstances. This element of hope will always give continuing appeal to this understanding of the kingdom—until the kingdom does in fact come in its fullness." Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 39.

¹⁷⁵ Johnson, *Defining Pentecostal Identity*.

“Though early Pentecostals were more concerned with transforming the world through witness and missions than predicting the time of Christ’s return, they shared the fervency for Christ’s soon return with their early Evangelical peers. They were convinced that the Pentecostal revival was ushering in the latter days. The urgency of missions gripped them deeply, since the gospel was to go out to all the earth before Christ returned.”¹⁷⁶

In light of these Pentecostal predispositions, it is worth considering whether a preoccupation with the present realities of the worshipper in the lyrics of the most commonly used PAOC plays into some of these notoriously narrow views about the temporal world, the Kingdom of God, and the imminent return of Christ. At the very least, the observations from this study, coupled with the influence of contemporary culture and, more broadly, the restless modern obsession with time-boundedness merits some attention.

3) *Considerations for the PAOC*

I propose that Pentecostals become increasingly aware of the ways in which the most commonly used lyrics in their contemporary worship music may continue to reinforce some of the claims from which they seem intent on distancing themselves. Consider, for example, some recent proposals by key members within the PAOC who have called for a balanced awareness of the already not yet characteristics associated with Kingdom ecclesiology. The PAOC’s Murray Cornelius, for example, has stated,

A second tension is between the “now” and the “not yet,” arising from the biblical theology of the kingdom of God. On the one hand, the kingdom of God has come and we can experience its blessings immediately. Yet, on the other hand, there is a kingdom still to come where the Lord will establish His rule and reign. It is only in the kingdom still to come that injustice, poverty, corruption, sin and everything fallen will finally be redeemed and eradicated. In the meantime, we live a world that is broken and lost.... With too much emphasis on the “not yet,” we become complacent about our current world and think only of the time when Jesus will come again. With too much emphasis on the “now,” we forget that we are living in the “in between” world of the kingdom that

¹⁷⁶ Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*, 18.

has both come and is still to come; between the first and second coming of Jesus; between what He has done and what He must still do; between present reality and future destiny.¹⁷⁷

These concerns expressed by the leaders of the PAOC sound remarkably similar to those currently presented in the broader Pentecostal community. For example, Land has posited, “The proper already not yet tension evident in a biblically responsible apocalyptic missionary movement must be maintained in order to avoid an optimism or a passively disengaged pessimism. Theology is fundamentally concerned with the relation between God and creation. That relation is a living dynamic, requiring discerning, discursive reflection that is gifted by and attuned to the things of the Spirit.”¹⁷⁸

Given these calls within Pentecostalism for a more careful handling of a theology of time and also the obvious reality of a lengthening history without Christ’s expected return,¹⁷⁹ The PAOC would be well served by drawing upon theological insights which bring together notions of time and eternity. In particular, Pentecostals may benefit from reflection on the intrinsic relationality Gunton proposed between the triune God and the created order.¹⁸⁰ Accordingly, time is not escaped, but rather something to embrace and *live in* as the triune God, likewise, lives and engages within the temporal world. A more balanced Kingdom and trinitarian theology avoids an overemphasis on a dispensationalist Pentecostal eschatology. This, it would seem, is a theological approach that some Pentecostals are increasingly embracing.¹⁸¹ James K.A. Smith,

177 Murray Cornelius and George Werner, *Recognizing Your Vantage Point* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, 2009), 4–5.

178 Land, “The Triune Center: Wesleyans and Pentecostals Together in Mission,” 202.

179 See also: Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 28.

180 See, for example: Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 171–172, 217.

181 See, as an example, the work of George Eldon Ladd: *Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959); *Jesus and the Kingdom* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964); *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974); *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974); George Eldon Ladd, Earl S. Kalland, and Wilbur M. Smith, *Crucial Questions about the Kingdom of*

for example, has called for “[a]n integral Pentecostalism ... divorced from its historical trappings in fundamentalism and dispensationalism.”¹⁸² Likewise, Althouse has stated,

Currently, a new wave of theological inquiry has called into question the role of dispensational premillennialism in Pentecostal theology and has suggested a proleptic or inaugural eschatology that sees the eschatological kingdom as already manifest in history—through the death and resurrection of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost—but not yet here in its fullness. The already-but-not-yet tension of the coming consummation of the eschatological kingdom is more in keeping with the charismatic centre of Pentecostalism, in that it sees the baptism in the Spirit, glossolalic utterance, healing and charismatic gifting as foretastes of the eschatological kingdom, already here through Christ’s pouring out of the Spirit as depicted in Acts, but as anticipatory signs of the fullness of the kingdom that is coming. Yet at the same time, the kingdom has not yet come, and charismatic gifting enables Pentecostals to work in service to the kingdom in preparation for its final manifestation, as a sovereign act of God.¹⁸³

The ability among Pentecostals to develop a cosmological view of temporality that strikes a balance between the already not yet reality of the Kingdom may determine important steps forward that avoid common Pentecostal pitfalls.

Gunton reminded his readers that, even if people express a preoccupation with the present, here and now, this does not mean they are entirely comfortable living within this experience. The findings of this lyrical analysis may prompt Pentecostals to consider a more robust understanding of the current reality of their religious denomination *within* the space-time continuum. Again, it appears that an increasing number of Pentecostal scholars are offering fresh insight in this respect. Archer, for example, has said, “Salvation includes all the redemptive blessings of God. Salvation cannot be reduced to a static positional state of existence outside of creation, but as a reality in and for creation. Salvation must include living and moving in the Spirit—a dynamic journey with the Social Trinity in the created space-time continuum....

God: The Sixth Annual Mid-Year Lectures of 1952, Western Conservative Baptist Theological (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952).

182 Smith, “Scandalizing Theology: A Pentecostal Response to Noll’s Scandal,” 232; See also: Sheppard, “Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship,” 5–33.

183 Peter Althouse, “Eschatology,” in *A Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Adam Stewart (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 74–75.

Salvation, then, can only take place in God's created space-time continuum."¹⁸⁴ In a similar fashion, Kärkkäinen has written,

if the Christian God can only be known as Father, Son, and Spirit, it means that history counts. The biblical God cannot be understood as an abstraction apart from the events of history and time. The triune God who became one of us in the incarnation of Jesus of Nazareth and who poured out his Spirit, the Spirit who raised the Son from the dead, can only be known on the basis of his dealings in history and time. In a qualified sense, one can say that what happens here in the world and history, is "included" in the divine life, the "history of God," not only with regard to salvation history (incarnation, cross, resurrection, ascension), but also with regard to creation and perhaps the rest of history.¹⁸⁵

Elsewhere, Chan has contended,

The world may be deeply conscious of time marked by the clock and the movement of the earth (*chronos*). Within this *chronological* time frame many people aspire to fulfill their dreams—dreams that are largely fed by the consumerist culture. The people of God, however, live by a different kind of time. Through the liturgy of time, the church deepens its awareness of living in God's *kairos*. It is this awareness that gives to Christian living its distinctively eschatological orientation. [italics in original]¹⁸⁶

In this respect, we can see there is reason for some optimism as Pentecostals find new ways to overcome a sometimes nervous preoccupation with present time and, likewise, a dualism between time and eternity. The way forward might be to consider how the trinitarian work of Gunton complements the emerging work within Pentecostalism. In some ways, the song lyrics observed in this study are not inconsistent with the historical emphases of the PAOC. However, considering calls from within the PAOC for broader awareness of the limitations of premillennial dispensationalism, closer attention to the expressions of time and timelessness within popular worship music would be prudent.

184 Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*, 55–56.

185 Kärkkäinen, "The Uniqueness of Christ and the Trinitarian Faith," 116.

186 Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

ii) Non-Materiality as the Preferred Mode of Experience

1) *Observations about PAOC Music*

In the eighth qualitative lyrical content analysis (i.e. Cosmological Correspondence between Materiality and Immateriality), an analysis of all concrete, abstract, and personified/anthropomorphized nouns was completed. This represented an attempt to determine if there was a preference given in the PAOC song lyrics to material or immaterial phenomena. I also employed a closer examination of the most common nouns in each noun category. This provided a way to consider more specifically how the variously-typed nouns were used in their many lyrical contexts. Based on Gunton's aversion to a discontinuity between the material and immaterial world, it was assumed that a careful lyrical examination of the concrete and abstract nouns would reveal a relative balance in the PAOC songs. While there was data to show a modest inclination for abstract, immaterial nouns in this study, concrete, material nouns were also represented throughout the song corpus.¹⁸⁷ However, a more detailed analysis of the most common nouns utilized in the songs provided evidence of the type of dualism against which Gunton had warned. In particular, this cosmological dualism took on two main forms among the most frequently used nouns.

Firstly, in several instances, this dualism was expressed in the frequency of nouns that displayed an apparent discontinuity between often perceived opposing concepts. Common references, for example, to "earth" and "world" were regularly utilized as expressions of the created, cosmological order and subsequently contrasted over against the metaphysical world of "eternity." In relation to distinctions between the concrete and metaphysical world, the frequent evidence of a dualistic relationship between "light" and "darkness" in the songs was also

¹⁸⁷ If personified/anthropomorphic nouns (e.g. God's "hands" and human "hearts") were considered as metaphysical realities, then the totals in favour of abstractness over concreteness would have modestly increased for both the cumulative sum and song totals.

particularly noteworthy. Evidence in the song lyrics pointed to a correlation between “darkness” and the cosmological realm of the material world. Alternatively, correspondence was made between “light” and the realm of eternity. Viewed as a collective whole, the findings of this analysis of PAOC songs affirmed a dualism in the lyrics that preferenced the realities of a metaphysical eternity over against an observable material universe.

Secondly, in other instances, a dualistic preference of the metaphysical, heavenly reality was advanced when only one aspect of an otherwise two-sided or multisided concept was narrowly accentuated in the most common nouns. For example, “love,” by far the abstract noun used most often in the song list, was almost exclusively referenced in the song corpus as a divine love *from above* and directionally-oriented *toward* humanity. Surprisingly, expressions of human love *toward* God, on the other hand, were significantly less evident in the songs. Likewise, references to “glory,” as mentioned in the previous chapter, were consistently associated with God’s eternal qualities which emphasized divine transcendence. Mostly absent from the song corpus were expressions of the theological truth that the glory of God fills the earth. It is worth noting, however, that references to the commonly used nouns, “life” and “praise,” were predominantly perceived in association with physical, material experiences. Even still, the absence of references to “life” and “praise” as metaphysical, heavenly realities bolsters the contention of this study that a dualism between material and immaterial, earthly and heavenly, existed in the song corpus. The fact is that the most commonly utilized concrete and abstract nouns were either viewed solely as from above or from below—the former being the most prevalent of the two orientations.

These findings are consistent with Gunton’s contention that a dualistic, neo-Gnostic skepticism of the material realm is often developed today by a theological predisposition for the

non-material world.¹⁸⁸ Gunton's concern regarding a contrasting tendency to view a transcendent higher world over against the spatiality of a perceived and lower material world seems justified based on the findings of this lyrical analysis.¹⁸⁹ Accordingly, this qualitative content study reinforced what Gunton described as "two areas of being, each with fixed laws, neither of which can have any relation to the other."¹⁹⁰ If this is the case, then concerns that a dualism, which leads to the subordinate cosmological status of the material world to an eternal reality, may be warranted in the PAOC ecclesial context.¹⁹¹ It also raises apprehension, as was mentioned earlier, about how this material/immaterial dualism in the song lyrics has undermined an understanding of the direct involvement of God in the created order.¹⁹² Gunton asserted that strong delineations between the two realms compromise the intimate mediation between the triune God and the world.¹⁹³ Against this backdrop, the findings of this analysis affirmed many of Gunton's concerns about cosmological dualism that persists in various theological and ecclesial contexts today.

2) *Implications for the PAOC*

A discontinuity in the songs between the material and metaphysical world is consistent with an historic Pentecostal tendency to draw rather abrupt distinctions between the material and

188 Gunton, "One Mediator ... the Man Jesus Christ: Reconciliation, Mediation and Life in Community," 147; Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 100.

189 Colin E. Gunton, *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 147–150; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 35–43, 89; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 56, n.21.

190 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 90.

191 Colin E. Gunton, "Karl Barth and the Western Intellectual Tradition: Toward a Theology After Christendom," in *Theology Beyond Christendom: Essays on the Centenary of the Birth of Karl Barth*, ed. John Thompson (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1986), 284–287; Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 98; See also: Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 1–12, 43, 56–61.

192 Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, 33; Gunton, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," 36; Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 104; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 88–89.

193 Gunton, *Yesterday and Today: A Study of Continuities in Christology*, 86.

immaterial world.¹⁹⁴ This has often manifested itself in a propensity to interpret metaphysical, heavenly phenomena in direct opposition to the material realm. Pentecostals (and those with affinities to Pentecostalism) freely admit that a form of dualism exists among them. For example, James K.A. Smith, though often disagreeing with those who are prone to stereotype Pentecostals, has, nonetheless, acknowledged the Pentecostal inclination to “express a certain ‘other-worldliness’ or ‘ardent supernaturalism’ that consider[s] the salvation of souls for the Kingdom of Heaven of the utmost significance and a concern with the affairs of ‘this world’ as a distraction.”¹⁹⁵ In similar fashion, Pentecostal Stanley Burgess has conceded, “While it would not be fair to label the majority of modern pentecostals and charismatics as radical dualists, there are striking similarities. In most cases they do teach a cosmic struggle between the forces of good and evil. They stress the importance of a baptism in or with the Holy Spirit and of the exercise of supernatural gifts in order to be ‘victorious’ in this conflict.”¹⁹⁶

The dualistic language concerning good and evil, material and immaterial, and heaven and earth, often frames discussion points around which “spiritual warfare” becomes a pervasive discourse among Pentecostals.¹⁹⁷ Burgess has said, “There is a general assumption that the world is inhabited by satanic power that causes misfortunes for believers. Evil spirits are viewed as the

194 See, for example, the theological dichotomy between spirit and matter in the theology advanced by the Pentecostal minister of the largest church in the world, David Yonggi Cho. David Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension: Discovering a New World of Answered Prayer*, vol. 1 (Alachua, FL: Bridge Logos Publishing, 1979); *The Fourth Dimension: More Secrets for a Successful Faith Life*, vol. 2 (Alachua, FL: Bridge Logos Publishing, 1983).

195 Smith, “Scandalizing Theology: A Pentecostal Response to Noll’s Scandal,” 227; Smith wrote, “By devaluing research of the structures of ‘this world,’ evangelicals unwittingly disparage the goodness of a world which has its source in God and was endorsed by his own pronouncement of goodness (Gen. 1:31).” Smith, “Scandalizing Theology: A Pentecostal Response to Noll’s Scandal,” 228.

196 Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 760.

197 E. Janet Warren, “‘Spiritual Warfare’: A Dead Metaphor?,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 21, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 90–91; Daniel Silliman, “Social Justice in a Pentecostal Cosmology,” August 5, 2011, <http://danielsilliman.blogspot.ca/2011/08/social-justice-in-pentecolstal.html> (accessed June 13, 2013).

major cause of life's problems and crises."¹⁹⁸ In this context, the material realm is often viewed with skepticism and doubt and that which bears the ultimate signature of fallenness.¹⁹⁹ The eternal Kingdom, on the other hand, is generally viewed as the ultimate hope and destination for a fallen cosmos. Snyder has described this inclination in Pentecostalism as, "a sort of Platonic disdain for things material, perhaps seeing the body or matter as evil or at least imperfect and imperfectible. It is thus dualistic, viewing the 'higher' spiritual world as essentially separate from the material world."²⁰⁰

Practically speaking, we can observe how this dualistic impulse is manifested in specific ways in Pentecostalism. For example, sharp distinctions between the material and immaterial world have lead Pentecostals, historically, to question the compatibility between the Christian faith and science.²⁰¹ Following Fundamentalists in this respect, Pentecostals have been prone to regard scientific advancement with a certain measure of suspicion and hesitation. Early in Pentecostal history, for example, Pentecostals closely aligned themselves with Fundamentalists during the 1925 Scopes Trials (although they did, however, disagree with Fundamentalists over supernatural miracles such as tongues and healing).²⁰² More recently, debates on creationism (i.e. "young earth" vs. "old earth" positions) have also revealed a Pentecostal reluctance to embrace

198 Burgess and van der Maas, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 15; Elsie Lewison stated, "In neo-Pentecostalism, a discourse of demonology is used to account for economic failure and dispossession." Elsie Lewison, "Pentecostal Power and the Holy Spirit of Capitalism" (University of Toronto, 2011), 40.

199 Daniel Silliman wrote, "Pentecostals have traditionally seen the spiritual realm as the most important, considering the real conflict, in any given problem, to be one of 'principalities and powers.' This is the whole idea of 'spiritual war.' The most essential—most *real*—cause of any problem is understood to be spiritual. Not practical. Not logistical." [italics in original] Silliman, "Social Justice in a Pentecostal Cosmology."

200 Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 54; Snyder also wrote, "[Pentecostalism] sees God reigning eternally over the entire cosmos, but primarily in a spiritual sense or within a spiritual realm. At some point in the future, God's reign will be fully manifest on earth as well as in heaven." Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 27.

201 Burgess and van der Maas, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 626; Smith has argued, "[other-worldly, 'overly-supernatural' theologies] not only fail to offer guidance, they even discourage reflection in the arts and sciences. And when such theologies occupy the throne which directs the other disciplines, the result can only be an 'intellectual disaster.'" Smith, "Scandalizing Theology: A Pentecostal Response to Noll's Scandal," 229–230; See also: Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 38.

202 Hunt, "Dispensationalism," 61.

scientific advancement.²⁰³

On the other hand, within a context where a perceived cosmological struggle between good and evil exists and unlike some religious groups who tend to cloister, Pentecostals, also perceive the world as a stage for “power encounters,” signs, and wonders. Thus, while Pentecostals may undervalue the physicality of the material world, this does not appear to prevent them from engaging in a perceived cosmic battle that plays out in a real, tangible world.²⁰⁴ Subsequently, the Pentecostal hope in the imminent return of Christ compels Pentecostals to anticipate physical miracles, signs, and wonders here on earth. In some Pentecostal contexts, this has evolved into what is commonly referred to as a “prosperity gospel” message (in which direct links are made between a Christian’s financial blessing and their level of faith). Describing this phenomenon, Harry Englund has written,

For pentecostals, the world is not a compromising setting from which to shy away. Instead, the world requires action and transformation, although this is full of difficulties and dangers. In this sense, Pentecostal cosmology is strongly oriented toward world making. Consumer items, as the prosperity gospel also stimulates, are an inalienable part of it. Commodities and gifts are far from bad per se, because their positive or negative nature entirely depend on the spirit that is supposed to be behind them. In principle, anything can be imbued with the Holy Spirit, and thus be a blessing in a born-again’s life. This is what accounts for the close connection between the spread of capitalism, consumerism, and the appeal of the prosperity gospel. Pentecostalism embeds neoliberal economics.²⁰⁵

Therefore, it may be said that Pentecostalism does, indeed, perpetuate a form of dualism that interprets the material and the immaterial realm as two diametrically distinct worlds at odds with each other. It is undeniably true that Pentecostals are prone to see limited value in the material world. Yet, interestingly, Pentecostals perceive and anticipate the in-breaking of the

203 Burgess and van der Maas, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 657–658.

204 Howard A. Snyder, “Models of the Kingdom: Sorting out the Practical Meaning of God’s Reign,” *Transformation* 10 (January 1, 1993): 1–6.

205 Harri Englund, *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2011), 156; See also: Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 117.

supernatural realm *into* the natural world. Silliman, for example, has described how deliverance from physical challenges are often interpreted as spiritual victories, writing, “This is why the healing of problems that can be solved also with glasses or inhalers isn’t considered to be small—it’s not understood as a this-worldly issue at all.... For them, then, it’s not that God’s priorities are quite odd, but that these things are this-worldly out-workings of the war between God and Satan, a conflict which has many fronts.”²⁰⁶ This perspective leads Pentecostals *into* the world, yet with a general cosmological pessimism about the created order. Needless to say, a Pentecostal dualism persists, albeit in a rather unconventional way. This reality is perhaps both reflected and reinforced by the lyrical content of popular PAOC songs. Indeed, an argument can be made that the results of the lyrical content analysis in this study give evidence of a “push-pull” dualism between the material and immaterial realms.

3) *Considerations for the PAOC*

Against the tendency to overemphasize a dualism between the material and the immaterial world in the commonly used PAOC music, I call for a more balanced consideration of the way the two realms influence one another. Once again, Gunton’s perichoretic perspective on creation and cosmology can serve as a worthwhile theological interlocutor that Pentecostals may find worthy of consideration. Indeed, Pentecostals may wish to take Gunton more seriously as they reevaluate and, perhaps even modify, their theological and cosmological perspectives related to the compatibility of the material and immaterial world. In particular, Gunton’s use of two key metaphors—creation as a project and the two hands of God—may provide a valuable way forward for Pentecostal theologians and more precisely the PAOC.

Gunton’s understanding of creation as a project reinforces a cosmological relationality

206 Silliman, “Social Justice in a Pentecostal Cosmology.”

between the created order and the Creator.²⁰⁷ His notion that creation is a teleological, forward moving project is not incongruous with a Pentecostal, futurist perspective that anticipates creation's eschatological completion. Yet, the idea of creation as an ever-expanding project also provides a theological safeguard that prevents a disregard of the triune God's personal, loving engagement and concern for the cosmos. Appropriating Gunton could also challenge Pentecostals to consider the ways in which the religious history of Pentecostalism is connected to a grander cosmological metanarrative in which divine being and creative action are brought in contact with one another. That is, with Gunton's help, materiality and immateriality can be brought into correspondence with each other while each reality also retains its distinctive particularity.²⁰⁸ In short, I argue that Gunton's trinitarianism has the potential to provide some balanced theological insight to those within the PAOC who seem increasingly challenged to find the theological connectedness between creation and eschatology.

This continuity may also develop as the PAOC considers Gunton's championing of the Irenaean notion of the two hands of God.²⁰⁹ This concept reinforces the economic mediation of God toward creation and reinforces positive expressions about the goodness of the earth. Specifically, for Pentecostals who possess an affinity for a theology of the Spirit, Gunton's mediated understanding of the cosmological work in the world *through* God the Son and *by* God the Spirit would seem like a worthwhile metaphor to advance an increasingly reflective posture related to a redemption not only associated with humankind, but also the created order.

207 Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 12; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 24–25.

208 Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*, 43–44.

209 Gunton, *Act and Being: Towards a Theology of the Divine Attributes*, 77; Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology*, 79–80; Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study*, 41–64; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 3–19; Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (London; New York: Continuum, 2003), 164–180; Gunton, "Creation and Mediation in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson: An Encounter and a Convergence"; Gunton, *The Christian Faith: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 10, 13–15, 18.

However, if Pentecostals are leery about embracing the trinitarian theology of an outsider such as Gunton, they may wish to look within the Pentecostal community for examples of scholars who are increasingly embracing notions of trinitarian *perichoresis* in a quest for a robust, contemporary, and Pentecostal cosmology. For example, Land has said, “The goal of creation is not annihilation but transformation, just as the goal for humans is new creation. Care for the body and care for the earth are equally part of the proper stewardship entrusted to believers. By the Spirit the creative intention of the Father and the redeeming passion of the Son are communicated to all creation in a prevenient grace which is the source of all that is good and true and beautiful.”²¹⁰ Likewise, Alvarado has highlighted the need for bringing together tensions within theology and worship: “To be able to hold multiple ideas in tension at the same time is part of a mature understanding of worship ... for the expression of authentic, Spirit-filled worship.”²¹¹ He goes on to provide a worthy picture of such a union:

In Luke’s account, Jesus teaches the disciples to pray that God’s kingdom would be established and God’s will would be accomplished ‘on earth as it is in heaven’ (Lk 11.2). Worship in the earth joins the perpetual worship in heaven and is informed by its reality. Worship in heaven is augmented and incarnated by the worship of the church. Once again, there is a bifurcation between two distinct localities wherein worship is to be performed, yet there is one goal and important outcome. That outcome is the invocation of the presence and dominion of God everywhere the Church gathers for worship. In a broad and encompassing way, this understanding of the overlapping of worship loci informs the practice of Pentecostal worshipers and underscores the transformative and formational results of Pentecostal worship. It seems that within the context of worship heaven realizes its desire to overlay earthly conditions with supernatural realities. It is that application of the divine onto the human condition that transforms the lives of worshipers and spiritually forms them into new creatures.²¹²

In both of the above quotations made by Pentecostal scholars, practical application of an inclusive view of the material and immaterial realms is made. Undoubtedly, these statements are nuanced in such a way that is consistent with a trinitarian theology such as the one Gunton put

210 Land, “The Triune Center: Wesleyans and Pentecostals Together in Mission,” 207.

211 Alvarado, “Worship in the Spirit: Pentecostal Perspectives on Liturgical Theology and Praxis,” 145.

212 Alvarado, “Worship in the Spirit: Pentecostal Perspectives on Liturgical Theology and Praxis,” 144.

forth. The PAOC may gain deeper theological insight by continuing to explore and express such themes. In this way, the concerns brought to light by the song analysis in this study may be addressed.

Chapter five has provided a discussion of this study's findings in relation to views of God, views of human personhood, and views of the cosmos. I proposed an integration of the trinitarian thought of Gunton with data analysis related to the expressions of a trinitarian culture within the PAOC. Through this process, I identified areas in which the PAOC may be uniquely vulnerable to the weaknesses of an underdeveloped trinitarianism. Furthermore, I considered how Gunton's work may offer a potential contribution and the way forward. In so doing, this project has sought to enable Canadian Pentecostals associated with the PAOC to develop further and express a rich trinitarian understanding in accordance with their professions of faith and worship practices.

CONCLUSION

A) Project Overview

In 1948, Scottish theologian D.M. Baillie wrote, “The trinitarian approach to God must always be important for Christian worship, as a safeguard against our worshipping an idol of our imaginations instead of the true God.”¹ As such, the overarching objective of this study is to consider how, or *if*, a Christian worship practice of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) is informed by a trinitarian approach to God, personhood, and the created world. Earlier in the project, I proposed there is an historical precedence that explains why the PAOC possesses a trinitarian statement of faith in their formal articles of religion. That is, early twentieth century debates over baptismal rites led to an eventual acceptance among the PAOC of an orthodox, trinitarian affirmation of belief. Yet, while a sound trinitarian statement of this nature is clearly embedded at the forefront of formal PAOC documentation, an important question remains: Does the doctrine of the Trinity *actually form* the PAOC in substantial and meaningful ways? This is one of the overarching questions of my thesis. Incidentally, this inquiry is strikingly similar to questions recently posed by principal PAOC leaders to their own constituency. The challenge of PAOC general superintendent, David Wells, bears repeating, “Are we doers of the words as well as hearers? Are we better at ‘defining’ than ‘doing’? I am motivated to call you, as leaders and members of our family of churches, to consider afresh what we say we believe and see if it is, in fact, how we live and minister.”² I wholeheartedly affirm these questions from superintendent Wells. Similar questions have motivated me throughout this project.

Yet, beyond anecdotal evidence aided by my years of personal observation as a Canadian Evangelical practitioner and minister, my research is also driven by an awareness that there is

1 D.M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), 155.

2 David Wells and Van Johnson, eds., *Authentically Pentecostal: Here’s What We See* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, 2010), 5–6.

very little verifiable evidence to either support or refute any answers to the above-mentioned questions. This has led me to pursue the research in this thesis' pages in order to verify whether a trinitarian framework truly informs the corporate worship expression of the PAOC. A thorough assessment of the music lyrics of commonly used PAOC songs from 2007 to 2013 has provided a convincing, measurable, and relevant worship practice to evaluate. Earlier, I explained that music expression is a worship practice that is particularly formative in Pentecostal settings. In fact, I suggest in this thesis that Pentecostal worship practices, expressed by way of the most commonly used lyrical music, serve as a primary agent of theological understanding and belief within the churches of the PAOC. Furthermore, I contend that the data collected from Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) provides substantial empirical details about the most commonly used lyrics of the PAOC. Together, these realities bolster the observations and conclusions proposed in this thesis.

I am well aware that my critical engagement with Colin Gunton's trinitarian theology as a representative framework for the evaluation of lyrical content has its limitations. Throughout this thesis, I seek to carefully address several of these constraints. On the surface, my selection of Gunton as a primary interlocutor may seem awkward and incompatible to some. So, I reiterate, yet again, that what I advance in this thesis is not the most comprehensive expression of trinitarian theology. From the literature review in chapter one, I endeavour to show that a contemporary evaluation of the doctrine of the Trinity represents a colossal body of work. Of course, not every issue related to the doctrine of the Trinity is addressed in this thesis. A project of this nature would require much more time and effort than any thesis could ever encapsulate. Nonetheless, at the close of this project, I am resolved that Gunton's trinitarian theology, evaluating how perceptions of the doctrine of the Trinity can positively and negatively affect

views about God, the human person, and the world, represents a worthy foundation on which to build.

To this end, chapter two presents a description of Gunton's trinitarian theology with particular attention given to the ways in which the doctrine of the Trinity advances a thorough understanding of relationality, particularity, and *perichoresis*. In chapter three, I explain the methodology for the eight lyrical content analyses in this study. Firstly, the selections of the PAOC, its churches, and its commonly used songs are discussed. Then, using Gunton as a theological resource, each of the eight content analyses are clarified. The first three lyrical analyses [1) Particular Identification in Diving Naming, 2) Recognition of Divine Action in Salvation History, and 3) Acknowledgment of Inter-Trinitarian Relationality] seek to evaluate the views about God in the selected PAOC songs. The fourth, fifth, and sixth content analyses [4) Singularity/Plurality of Human Self-Identification, 5) Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality, and 6) Expressions of Mediatorial Worship] identify views about human personhood in the songs. The seventh and eighth analyses [7) Cosmological Correspondence between Time and Timelessness, and 8) Cosmological Correspondence between Material and Immaterial] assess views about cosmology in the PAOC songs. By far the most technical, chapter four presents the data compiled from these eight lyrical content analyses. Thirty-two summary tables and figures are displayed in an attempt to show the data as they are analysed, in various ways, by both song totals and cumulative sum totals. Chapter five serves as the penultimate chapter in thesis. In this chapter, I use the presentation and analysis of the project data as a trinitarian indicator of PAOC views about God, human personhood, and the created order. Then, drawing primarily on the trinitarian work of Gunton and other credible interlocutors from within the Pentecostal and worship studies communities, I offer practical implications and

considerations to advance a dynamic and robust practice of the trinitarian faith among the PAOC.

Ultimately, I am confident that the research presented in this study provides sufficient and verifiable evidence to support a claim that an inconsistency exists between the PAOC's trinitarian statements of faith and the lyrics of commonly used songs among a representative sample of PAOC churches. The theological claims of Gunton, verified by the eight qualitative lyrical content analyses in this study, expose this inconsistency. Regarding a trinitarian understanding of the Godhead, the lyrics consistently reveal vague and undefined naming of the divine persons (e.g. "You," "God," "Lord," and "Name"). Yet, when naming particularity *is* implicitly or explicitly expressed in the lyrics, a clear predilection to references of God the Exalted Son (e.g. Jesus, the "King," "Lord," and "Holy One") is most evident to the detriment of references to God the Father and God the Spirit. Explicit reference to the triune God's actions also confirms imbalances, discontinuities, and inattention in relation to key features of salvation history (e.g. divine activity in the Old Testament). In regard to expressions of the interrelationality among the divine persons of the Godhead, the lyrics provide virtually no evidence of the dynamism that exists in the immanent Trinity.

With respect to a trinitarian understanding of the human person, the lyrics show an overwhelming emphasis on the individual and unaffected soul to the detriment of the engagement of people in solidarity with one another. This is verified by the high volume of references to singular personal pronouns (e.g. "I," "my," "me," and "I'm") in comparison to plural personal pronouns. It is also confirmed by the surprisingly low prevalence of human to human relationality in the songs (e.g. human imperatives to collectively "sing," "let," and "lift"). Furthermore, an overwhelming absence of the doxological worship formula [i.e. *to* (or *for*) the

Father, *in* (or *with*) the Son, and *through* (or *by*) the Spirit] reinforces a tendency in the lyrics to perceive worship as, primarily, a human-generated activity.

In the matter of a trinitarian understanding of the created world, a view of temporality as a present, anticipatory phenomenon is consistently evident. Noticeably absent from the song corpus are human verbs reflecting past and future tenses. Instead, the large majority of verbs in the song corpus are depicted in the present tense [e.g. (I) “want,” “bow,” and “pray”] indicating a limited view of chronological time. Regarding materiality, nouns advancing concreteness [e.g. “earth,” “song(s),” and “world”] outnumber those which advance abstractness (e.g. “love,” “glory,” and “life”). Often these nouns are depicted in contexts where they are opposed to one another in various expressions of cosmological dualism (e.g. “light” and “darkness,” and “heaven” and “earth”). Viewed together, the results from these eight content analyses confirm that, regardless of what may be written in the PAOC’s trinitarian statement of faith, an important worship practice of the PAOC is, in fact, *not* marked by substantial expressions of trinitarian belief.

In chapter five, I suggest that the existence of this inconsistency between the PAOC’s trinitarian statement of faith and musical expression may be perpetuated in unique ways among the PAOC. As it relates to views about God, for example, I propose that a hesitancy to carefully articulate a Pentecostal doctrine of God, an overt christocentrism, and tendencies to uphold anti-intellectualism seem consistent with the findings in this thesis. How shocking it must be for a member of the PAOC to be informed of the surprising absence of references to the Holy Spirit in their commonly used songs! It is also worth considering how an attenuated view of the triune God’s activity in salvation history may correlate with a Pentecostal, dispensationalist bent toward proof-texting and, likewise, an eschatology that tends to emphasize the present

experience of the individual worshipper as the dominant reality. Furthermore, I suggest that a PAOC inclination toward pragmatism, an avoidance of theological controversy, and a hesitancy to consider the intricacies of a relational Godhead, may, in fact, stifle the development of a trinitarian understanding of the perichoretic, being in communion of the three divine persons.

An inconsistency between a stated trinitarian doctrine and a Pentecostal corporate worship practice also has implications for PAOC views about human personhood. This study affirms that it is not a stretch, for example, to draw parallels between some patterns in these songs and overemphasized expressions concerning human autonomy and individualism. At the conclusion of this study, can it not be argued that there may be connections between Fundamentalist shame-based insecurities and the Pentecostal inclination in the songs to separate and sequester? Furthermore, it bears repeating that a Pentecostal emphasis on the immediate and dynamic experience of the worshipper in these songs may undermine the ways in which worship is, in fact, a participatory, mediated event that is, ultimately, sourced in the triune God.

Furthermore, an inconsistency between a declared trinitarian statement of belief and PAOC corporate music expression has implications for views on cosmology. Regarding temporality, the aforementioned Pentecostal preoccupation with the imminent fulfillment of interpreted biblical prophecies may directly correspond with lyrical deficiencies that overemphasize the urgency of present time to the detriment of chronological conceptions of past and future time. Moreover, it is worth considering whether trinitarian inconsistencies also advance a sharp dualism in relation to the time-eternity continuum. Based on the findings of this study, a similar concern can be expressed with regard to a discontinuity between materiality and immateriality in the songs. Can a correlation be made between a form of cosmological dualism and a lingering Fundamentalist bent in Pentecostalism that perceives the material and immaterial

realms as distinct and diametrically opposed? An inclination toward “other-worldliness” and a dualistic cosmic struggle between the forces of good and evil cannot be denied in the songs.

However, the point of this thesis is not to produce a harsh and indicting denouncement upon a particular Canadian Evangelical denomination and their corporate worship practices. Although the PAOC represents a worthy case study for this project, I suspect that similar research assessing many other Canadian Evangelical religious groups would yield very similar results.³ Thus, in the end, I hope this study is viewed as a constructive criticism of the PAOC with an aim to encourage and inspire the action of leaders, songwriters, and pastors in the PAOC and throughout Canadian Evangelicalism.

In this respect, I contend that those in important leadership positions in Pentecostalism may be well poised to advance a more thoroughly trinitarian theology among Evangelicals across Canada. With respect to views about God, the renewed interest in pneumatology in global Christianity, for example, may prove to be a compelling impetus for the Pentecostal advancement of a more thoroughly trinitarian and Pentecostal theology. Fine trinitarian theologians, like Steven Studebaker, with particular affinities to the Canadian Pentecostal church, could serve as luminaries in Canada to advance perichoretic language from the academy to the seats of the local church. Elsewhere, there is reason to be optimistic about the hermeneutical development of a robust, dynamic, and thoroughly Pentecostal theology of God as significant theologians such as Amos Yong and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen gain increased prominence. While these and other worship studies scholars openly engage in ecumenical dialogue, there is also potential for a shift to occur in Pentecostal self-expression that increasingly recognizes the corporate nature of worship and redemption. Indeed, the distinctly experiential nature of Pentecostalism could release trinitarian dialogue about the human person

3 Without further research, however, my theorizing on this is only suggestive and speculative.

from potential intellectual abstractness to a truly doxological, mediatorial, and perichoretic experience. Finally, with respect to views about the cosmos, there appear to increasingly be those among the PAOC and broader Pentecostalism who are embracing an inaugural and proleptic eschatology that brings notions of time and eternity, material and immaterial together.

Collectively, these advancements ought to serve as encouraging indicators for members of the PAOC as they assess the trinitarian culture and corporate worship practices of their churches.

B) Recommendations for Further Studies

There are a number of possibilities for further research that can be suggested from this study. Firstly, a more in-depth theological exploration of each aspect of the eight questions utilized in this project could be beneficial. A thorough examination, for example, of how churches understand and communicate the idea of mediatorial worship (see: lyrical content analysis #6) would add to this project's findings. Furthermore, it is presumed that a more in-depth exegetical analysis of the ways in which the biblical text is utilized in contemporary worship music lyrics would be illuminating. As it stands, each of the eight thesis questions and lyrical content analyses are limited by the admittedly narrow trinitarian focus outlined by the selected methodology of this project. However, each one of the theological topics associated with these questions merits close attention and could be further explored in future studies.

Secondly, this thesis allows the potential for research that evaluates other aspects of lyrical content analysis of contemporary worship songs and their potential implications for worship. While this project confirms a deficiency in the area of trinitarian expression in the selected lyrics, there are certainly other theological topics that scholars have not yet exhausted such as soteriology, hamartiology, and eschatology. While this project may address some of this material at a tertiary level, a different framework of evaluation may prove useful for exploring

other theological concerns not thoroughly attended to in this thesis.

Thirdly, at the national level, a comparative study of other major Evangelical denominations may help to indicate whether certain religious groups have developed more robust or weaker trinitarian cultures than others. Comparative analysis, for example, of various denominations' utilization of their references to God the Holy Spirit may reveal that the PAOC's apparent weakness, as shown in this study's lyrical analysis, is *actually* more developed than in other denominations.

Fourthly, as has already been mentioned, future ethnomusicological analyses involving qualitative research among PAOC church adherents, songwriters, and/or music leaders, for example, would provide an increased awareness of the ways in which these people interpret the actual lyrics of the songs and what meanings they bring as they utilize them. For example, how might a Christian worshipper in the PAOC "fill in the blanks" when using divine references to "You, Lord"? Furthermore, might various songwriters and music leaders interpret the same words in different ways? This thesis stops short of this sort of evaluation. Yet, this type of analysis would provide more specific attention to the meaning *behind* the lyrical words and phrases and provide a complementary perspective to the one presented in this project.

Finally, I suggest that further research could consider how the eight questions emerging from Gunton's theology might serve as an evaluative tool for other ecclesial practices in the PAOC and beyond. There is no reason why a similar approach could not be used to analyse and critique a variety of customary forms in many ecclesial contexts. Research that considers, for instance, how trinitarian impulses are expressed in sermon content or Christian education curriculum of other Canadian Evangelical denominations might offer additional insight to the conclusions of this project. Likewise, use of the eight questions in an analysis of trinitarian

teaching and understanding in Canadian Evangelical higher educational institutions might prove particularly telling. A student in a Canadian Evangelical school recently wrote, “As far as worshipping the Trinity goes, I do not feel as though musical worship is where we need to distinguish the Trinity. I think God would rather people worship Him than get caught up in the logistics of theology. It is minutia and not important to the greater picture and task.”⁴ If this quotation by a fourth-year ministerial student in a Canadian university is any indicator of the most common trinitarian views among emerging Evangelical ministers, there may be cause for concern. Nonetheless, the above-mentioned areas of research could represent new and possibly fruitful ventures to honour and worship the triune God.

C) Concluding Remarks

In closing, general superintendent Wells has written, “Good lives and good ministry always flow from good theology.”⁵ This study has revealed a theological inconsistency. I have argued that Gunton’s trinitarian theology, viewed together with insights from contemporary Pentecostal scholars and practitioners, offers a worthy descriptive and prescriptive assessment for this current problem. I share Gunton’s hopefulness regarding the future of a well-developed trinitarian culture in the Church. As Gunton said, “Theological teaching is not an end in itself, but a means of ensuring that it is the real God we worship, the real God before whom we live. That is the point of the doctrine of the Trinity above all.”⁶

4 This quotation is used with permission received from Kingswood University professor, Betty Weatherby. The quotation was referenced in: Betty Weatherby, “Historical Development of Worship Studies,” (D.Min., The Institute for Worship Studies, 2010).

5 David Wells and Van Johnson, eds., *Authentically Pentecostal: Here’s What We See* (Mississauga, ON: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada International Office, 2010), 7.

6 Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2003), 4.

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Appendix A: Data Collected from Lyrical Content Analysis 1-8

Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 1: Particular Identification in Divine Naming							Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 3: Acknowledgment of Inter-Trinitarian Relationality			
Songs	First Person (Explicit)	First Person (Implicit)	Second Person (Explicit)	Second Person (Implicit)	Third Person (Explicit)	Third Person (Implicit)	Vague (Undefined)			
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)							Lord 2, Name 8, You 2			
Above All				You 4						
All Who Are Thirsty			Lord Jesus 4		Holy Spirit 4					
Amazed							You 12, Lord 6			
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)							My God 1, My Savior 1, The Lord 1, He 1, God 1, You 1			
At Your Name							Name 12, Lord 4, God 4, You 4, Yahweh, 4			
Awesome Is The Lord Most High							God 2, Lord Most High 4, You Lord 1, You 9			
Beautiful One				Beautiful One 4, You 6						
Because He Lives		God (sent his son) 1	Son 1, Jesus 1, Christ 1, Him 1, He 7	Savior 1						
Blessed Be Your Name							You 3, Lord 4			
Breathe							You 2			
Come Now Is The Time To Worship							You 3, God 2			
Consuming Fire		(Spirit of) God 2, (Breath of) God 1			Spirit (of God) 2	Breath (of God) 1	Consuming Fire 1, You 1, Lord 2			
Days Of Elijah				He 1			Word of the Lord 2, Lord 1, Jehovah 4			
Desert Song			Christ 1				God 4, You 1, Lord 1, He 1			
Draw Me Close							You 9, Your Friend 1			
Enough				coming King 1			You 10			
Everlasting God							God 1, You 7, Hope 1, Deliver 1, everlasting God 2, Lord 6			
Filled With Your Glory							Lord 4, You 5			
For All You've Done	Father('s only Son) 1		(Father's) only Son 1	Savior 1, Redeemer 1, You 6						
Forever							God 5, Lord 1, King 1, He 2			
Forever Reign				Name 1			You 26, Light of the World 1, Lord 2, God 2,			
Freedom Reigns				(Spirit) of the Lord 2	Spirit (of the Lord) 2					
Friend Of God							God 6, You 6, God Almighty 1, Lord 1, He 1			
Glory To God Forever							God 6, You 8, King 2, Creator God 1			
God of Wonders	Father 1						God 2, You 4, Lord 9			
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	God, my Father 1						Lord 1, Thee 1, Thou 3			

My Redeemer Lives						He 2, Lord 1, Redeemer 4, You 2						
My Savior Lives				Jesus 1		Redeemer 1, He 1, Savior 7, You 1, Way 1, God 1, King 1, Name 1						
O Praise Him				Christ 2		King 4, He 4						
Offering				Jesus 1		King 1, You 7, Holy One 1, Lord 4						
Once Again				Jesus Christ 1		You 7, King 1, Friend 1						
One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)												
Open The Eyes Of My Heart												Lord 1, You 4
Our God												
Our God Saves		Name of the Father 1		Name of the Son 1		God 10, You 7			Name of the Spirit 1			God 4, Lord 1, Name 2, Savior 1, You 1
Overcome		Father(s love) 1, Father(s plan) 1	God(s only Son) 1	Jesus 1, (God's) Only Son 1		Savior 1, You 3, Name 1, One 1, He 2, Lamb 1						
Revelation Song				Jesus 1		Lord God Almighty 1, King of Kings 1, You 3, the Lamb 1, King 1,						
Shout To The Lord				Jesus 1		my Savior 1, Lord 2, You 4, King 1						
Sing Sing Sing			(Son) of God 2	Jesus 1, Son (of God) 2		One 4, You 9						
Sing To The King				Jesus 5		King 4, Lamb 1, He 1						
Son Of God		Father 1	(Son) of God 4	Jesus 1, Son (of God) 4		Holy One 1, You 10, Savior 1, Mighty King 1, Precious Lamb 1, Redeemer 1						
Still		Father 1		Christ 1								You 2, King 1, God 1
Surrender												You 9, King 1
The Heart of Worship				Jesus 2		You 9, Lord 1, King 1						
The Stand									Your Spirit 1			God 1, One 1, You 5, Lord 1
Today is the Day				Jesus 2		You 15						Lord 11
Trading My Sorrows												You 12, God 3, Holy One 2
Unchanging				Jesus 2		Lamb 1						
We Fall Down												Lord 2, You 29
You Are Good												
You Are My King (Amazing Love)									Your Spirit 1			
Your Grace Is Enough												God 3, You 4, God of Jacob 1
Your Great Name			(Son) of God 1	Jesus 5, Son (of God) 1		Name 12, Lamb 1, You 2, Redeemer 1, Healer 1, Lord Almighty 1, Defender 1, Savior 1, King 1						
Your Love Never Fails												You 5
Your Name				Jesus 1		Name 7, You 2, Lord 1						

Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 2: Recognition of Divine Action in Salvation History

Songs	Divine Actions (In Creation)	Divine Actions (In Israel)	Divine Actions (in Redemption)	Divine Actions (in Incarnation)	Divine Actions (In Eschatology)	Divine Actions (Vague)	Divine Being Verbs
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)							you were here ¹ before the world began; you are ¹ rich in love; you re ¹ slow to anger; (your name) is ¹ great; (your heart) is ¹ kind
Above All	you were here ¹ before the world began		crucified ¹ , laid ¹ behind the stone; you lived ¹ to die ¹ , rejected ¹ and alone ¹ ; like a rose trampled ¹ on the ground, you took ¹ the fall			and thought ¹ of me	you are ¹ worth
All Who Are Thirsty						come ⁴ , Lord Jesus come ⁴ , Holy Spirit come ⁴	
Amazed	you paint ¹ the morning sky					you love ² me, you dance ¹ over me, you sing ¹ all around, you hold ¹ me in your hand,	how great is ² (your love) for me
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)			Savior has ransomed ¹ me; (amazing grace) saved ¹ a wretch like me			the Lord has promised ¹ good to me; but God who called ¹ me; (grace) taught ¹ my heart; (grace) my fear relieved ¹ ; (his mercy) reigns ¹ ; (his word) secures ¹ my hope	will be ² forever mine, you are ¹ forever mine. He will be ¹ my shield and portion
At Your Name							There is ⁴ no one like our God
Awesome Is The Lord Most High						where you send ¹ us; when you call ¹ our name, where you lead ¹ us	you will ever be ¹ ; how awesome is ⁴ the Lord, great are ¹ you Lord, you are ¹ faithful; you are ¹ the answer
Beautiful One	(your glory) fills ¹ the skies; (your mighty works) displayed ¹ for all to see; (the beauty of your majesty) awakes ¹ my heart to sing		(your cross) has spoken ¹ mercy over me			you opened ¹ my eyes, you captured ¹ my heart	wonderful is ¹ (your unfailing love); how glorious how beautiful you are ¹ , how marvelous how wonderful you are ¹
Because He Lives			he bled ¹ and died ¹ ; to buy ¹ my pardon; to forgive ¹ ; He lives ³ ; Christ lives ¹ ; My Saviour lives ¹	God sent ¹ his Son, He came ¹	He holds ¹ the future; (I'll know) he reigns ¹	to love ¹ , heal ¹	
Blessed Be Your Name						every blessing you pour ¹ out; you give ¹ and take ¹ away; (where your streams of abundance) flow ¹	(Blessed) be ³ (your name, the name of the Lord, your glorious name)
Breathe						(your holy presence) living ¹ in me; (your very word) spoken ¹ to me	
Come Now Is The Time To Worship							you are ¹ God
Consuming Fire						Consuming fire, fan ¹ into flame; Spirit of God fall ¹ in this place; Lord have ² your way; Breath of God come ¹ breath ¹ within; Fill ² us anew we pray; come ¹ like a rushing wind; clothe ¹ us with power; set ¹ the captive free; leave ¹ us abandoned to Your praise; let ² your glory fall	

Days Of Elijah	these are days of Elijah, declaring the word of the Lord; days of your servant Moses, righteousness being restored ; days of Ezekiel, the dry bones becoming as flesh; days of your Servant David, rebuilding a temple of praise	salvation comes	He comes ; riding on the clouds; shining like the sun	there is no God like Jehovah
Desert Song			(God is the God) who provides ; refine me; (providence) flow	God is my victory. He is here; God is the God (who provides); You are still God
Draw Me Close			draw me close; never let me go; you say ; help me find the way; bring me back to you; help me know	you are my desire; You're all I want; You're all (I've ever needed); you are near
Enough			You are my coming King	All of you is more than enough; You're my sacrifice of greatest price; You are everything; you are more than enough for me; you are my supply; you are my reward
Everlasting God			you reign forever	You're the defender of the weak; you are the everlasting God
Filled With Your Glory			through history you reign on high	May you be honored and glorified ; exalted and lifted high; for who you are and what you've done; (your glory Lord) is far and wide
For All You've Done		you died ; you rose again on high	You lived ; You came near (from the everlasting to the world we live)	Hallelujah for all you've done
Forever				God is faithful; God is strong; God is with us; He is good; He is above all things
Forever Reign		you have covered all my sin	Light of the world forever reign	You are good; you are love ; you are light ; you are hope ; you are peace ; you are true ; you are joy ; you are (the reason that I sing); you are life ; you are more ; you are Lord ; You are here ; You are God ; (Your love) will always be enough
Freedom Reigns				Where the Spirit of the Lord is , (there is freedom)
Friend Of God				You are mindful of me; You are thinking of me
Glory To God Forever	Before you spoke (the world) to be			You were the King of kings; Now you're reigning; (You are) enthroned above all things
God of Wonders	(You are) Lord of all creation, of water, earth and sky			You are holy
Great Is Thy Faithfulness				great is (thy faithfulness) as thou hast been ; thou forever wilt be

Hallelujah							you gently lift me; You (Your love) makes me sing; (your love) carries me	(your love) is amazing; is a mountain; is a mystery; is surprising
Happy Day								Jesus is alive; You are mine
Healer							you hold my every moment; you calm my raging seas; you walk with me through fire; you heal all my disease; you hold my world in Your hands	You're re my healer; You are all I need; You're re my portion; You're s more than enough for me
Here I Am To Worship						all for love's sake became poor; you stepped down into darkness; Humbly you came to the earth you created	(You) opened my eyes; let me see	King of all days oh so highly exalted ; you're re altogether lovely; (you're) re altogether wonderful to me; you're re my God
Holy And Anointed One								your Spirit (is) like water to my soul; (your name) is like honey on my lips; (your word) is a lamp unto my feet
Holy Is The Lord								Holy is the Lord God Almighty; How great how awesome is he; (the joy of the Lord) is our strength
Holy Spirit							Come ; fill the atmosphere	you are our living hope; you are welcome here; God is what our hearts desire
Hosanna						(I see the King of glory) coming on the clouds with fire	Heal my heart and make it clean; open up my eyes to the things unseen; show me; you have loved me; break my heart	
Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)						who saves us	Come have your way among us; you make us new; Hear the sound	You are the God
How Deep the Father's Love For Us						He should give his only son; to make a wretch; Father turns his face; Bring many sons to glory; has brought me life; wounds have paid my ransom		
How Great Is Our God						he wraps himself in light	And age to age he stands	How great is our God; the King clothed in majesty
How He Loves							he loves us; (He) loves like a hurricane	he is jealous for me; how beautiful you are ; he is our prize; (your affections) are for me
I Am Free								
I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever						(of when your love) came down	the Healer set me free; (your river) runs with love for me	
I Exalt Thee								thou art high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods
I Give You My Heart							Lord, have your way in me	
I Know Who I Am							you found me; you gave me sight; you put a song of praise in me; you healed me; you gave me life; you belong to me	Jesus, you are mine; You are my identity

I Love You Lord					Jesus died 1: Up from the grave he rose 1 again; (the wrath of God) was satisfied 1; (His body) lay 1; (Light of the world) by darkness shain 1; then bursting 1 forth; scorned 1 by the ones; to save 1 (the ones)	(In Christ alone) who took 1 on flesh; he came 1	till he returns 1 or calls 1 me home: And as he stands 1 in victory; Jesus commands 1 my destiny	take 1 joy, my King, in what you hear 1	
In Christ Alone									He is 1 my light my strength my song; He is 1 mine
Indescribable				You placed 2 the stars in the sky; and You know 2 them by name; Who has told 1 every lightning bolt; Or seen 1 heavenly storehouses; Who imagined 1 the sun and gives 1 source to its light; yet conceals 1 it to bring 1 us the coolness of night			You see 2 the depth of my heart, and You love 2 me the same; you see 1 the depth of our hearts; You love 1 us the same	You are 8 amazing, God	
Jesus Messiah				he became 1 sin who knew 1 no sin; he humbled 1 himself and carried 1 the cross; (his body) broken 1 and poured 1 out					
King Of Majesty								You know 1 (that I love you); You know 1 (that I want you)	Jesus, you are 1 the Savior of my soul
Love Came Down				rescued 2 me		(love) came 1 down		you answer 1 (me); you delivered 1 me out of darkness	you are 1 there by my side; you are 1 my God; to my Savior who is 1 seated on high
Made Me Glad								he has delivered 1 me; he has set 1 my feet upon a rock; you have made 1 me glad	you are 1 (my shield, my portion, Deliverer, my shelter strong tower, My very present help in time of need)
Majesty				since you laid 1 down your life				humbled by the love you gave 1; (your grace) has found 1 me just as I am	
Mighty To Save				he rose 1 and conquered 1 the grave; Jesus conquered 1 the grave; (is mighty) to save 2				he can move 1 mountains; take 1 me as you find 1 me; fill 1 my life again; Shine 2 your light; let 2 the whole world see	my God is 2 mighty
My Redeemer Lives				my Lord has conquered 1 the grave; My Redeemer lives 4; (his blood) has covered 1 my sin; he rescued 1 my soul				he's taken 1 (my shame away); you lift 1 my burdens	
My Savior Lives				my Redeemer lives 1; my Savior lives 5; (I stand on what) he did 1		the King has come 1 from heaven	Our God will reign 1 forever		Jesus, you are 1 the only way
O Praise Him				(the sound of salvation) come 1; (this great love that) has redeemed 1					he is 2 holy
Offering								you receive 1 the honor	that you are 1 due
Once Again				(I look upon the cross) where you died 1; (you became nothing) poured 1 out to death		you became 1 nothing (poured out to death)	now you are exalted 1 to the highest place (king of the heavens where one day I'll bow)		

One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)							(one thing) remains ⁴ ; will never change ¹ ; never fails ¹ ; never gives ¹ up; never runs ¹ out on me; it goes ¹ ; it overwhelms ¹ ; it satisfies ¹	
Open The Eyes Of My Heart							open ² the eyes of my heart; pour ¹ out your power	shining ¹ in the light
Our God						you turned ¹ water into wine; you opened ¹ the eyes of the blind;	into the darkness you shine ¹	Our God is ¹ greater; Our God is ¹ stronger; You are ¹ higher than any other; Our God is ¹ healer; there is ² no one like you; If our God is ² for us; If our God is ² with us
Our God Saves						Our God saves ⁴	Hear ¹ the joyful sound of our offering	Great is ¹ your name; (were) seated ¹ above; enthroned ¹ in the Father's love
Overcome						destined ¹ to die ¹ ; poured out ¹ ; suffered ¹	you overcame ² ; You are sending ¹	
Revelation Song						who was slain ¹	is to come ¹ ; to Him who sits ¹ on; clothed ¹ in rainbows of living colour	Holy, holy, holy is ¹ the Lord God Almighty; who was ¹ and is ¹ and is ¹ to come; you are ¹ my everything; Holy, holy is ¹ he; (Blessing and honor, strength and glory and power) be ¹ to you; Jesus (your name) is ¹ power; Worthy is ¹ the lamb
Shout To The Lord								Lord, there is ¹ none like you
Sing Sing Sing							you hear ¹ us; (you are the love) that frees ¹ us; (you are the light) that leads ¹ us	(Son of God) you are ² (the One); you are ² (the One we're living for); you are ¹ (the love); you are ¹ (the light)
Sing To The King						The Lamb that was slain ¹	the King who is coming ¹ to reign ¹ (his empire) shall bring ¹	He is ¹ (all we need); Jesus is ² king
Son Of God						You alone were broken ¹ on the altar of love	come ¹ again and lead ² your people home	(Mighty King how beautiful) you are ¹ ; You are ³ worthy; you are ² beautiful
Still								Father you are ¹ king; you are ¹ God
Surrender								
The Heart of Worship							you search ¹ much deeper within; is not what you have required ¹ ; you deserve ¹	You're ¹ looking into my heart
The Stand						the one who gave ¹ it all; You stood ¹ before my failure; you carried ¹ the cross for my shame		
Today is the Day						the day you have made ⁴	you say ² ; you have ² (in store for me); you lead ¹ me	
Trading My Sorrows							(his promise) will endure ¹ ; (his joy) comes ¹ (with the morning)	(his joy) is ¹ gonna be my strength;
Unchanging							(you) never changes ³ ; (you) never fail ³	Great is ² (your faithfulness); who is ² ; wide is ² your love; you are ² ; who was ² ; you were ² ; you will always be ²
We Fall Down							(who) is to come ²	Holy is ¹ the Lamb

Your Are Good							(your mercy) endureth ² forever	You are ¹⁰ good; (we worship you for) who you are ²	
Your Are My King (Amazing Love)					you my king would die ¹ for me; you were forsaken ¹ ; you were condemned ¹ ; because you died ¹ and rose ¹ again; (Amazing love) how can (it) be ¹			your Spirit is ¹ within me; You are ³ my king; Jesus you are ¹ my king	
Your Grace Is Enough								you wrestle ¹ with the sinner's restless heart; you lead ¹ us; remember ¹ your people; remember ¹ your promise; use ¹ the weak to lead ¹ the strong; you lead ¹ us in the song of your salvation; (heaven) reaches ¹ out to us	Great is ¹ (your faithfulness); (Your grace) is ⁷ enough; Great is ¹ (your love and justice)
Your Great Name					was slain ¹			worthy is ¹ the Lamb; you are ¹ high; (you are) lifted ¹ up; you are ¹ my king; there is ¹ no other name	
Your Love Never Fails								(your love) never fails ⁵ ; (your love) never changes ¹ ; you stay ¹ the same; (I know that)you love ¹ me; you make ² all things work together for my good; you have ¹ new mercies for me everyday	
Your Name								you inspire ¹ songs of praise; come ¹ and fill ¹ our hearts today; Give ¹ us strength to live for you	(Your name) is ¹ a strong and mighty tower; (Your name) is ¹ a shelter like no other

Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 5: Acknowledgment of Human to Human Relationality		
Song Title	Actions of the Worshipper(s)	
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)	Bless1 the Lord; Worship4 his holy name; I'll worship3; (It's time) to sing1; Let1 me be singing1; (my heart) to find1; (my soul) will sing1; Sing2	
Above All	(none)	
All Who Are Thirsty	all who are thirsty2, all who are weak2, come1 to the fountain, dip1 your heart, let1 the pain, we sing1	
Amazed	I'm amazed6, I am unaware1, I never hear1 the sound, (my hope) will always stand1	
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)	I've been set free1; I once was lost1; but now I'm found1; (I was) blind1; but now I see1; the hour I first believed1; (my chains) are gone1; (my heart) to fear1; (my fears) relieved1	
At Your Name	(Your people) cry out2; we shout1; Shout2; (we are) Filling up2; We love2 to shout2; We will praise4; We will sing3; We'll shout1	
Awesome Is The Lord Most High	Raise1 your hands (all you nations); shout1 to God; we will praise2 you; we offer1 everything; we will go1; we want1 the world; we will follow1 all the way	
Beautiful One	I love1 you; I adore1 you; (my soul) must sing4; (no eye) has seen1; (no heart) could fully know1; (no ear) has heard1	
Because He Lives	(they) called1 Him Jesus: I can face1 tomorrow: (all fear) is1 gone: I know1 he holds the future: (life) is1 worth the living: to hold1 our newborn baby; and feel1 the pride and joy; (this child) can face1 uncertain days; I'll cross1 the river; I'll fight1 life's final war; I'll see1 the lights of glory; I'll know1 he reigns	
Blessed Be Your Name	when I'm found1 in the desert place; though I walk1 through the wilderness; I'll turn1 back to praise; still I will say1; (my heart) will choose1 to say1	
Breathe	I'm desperate1 for you; I'm lost1 without you; I breathe2	
Come Now Is The Time To Worship	Come1 now is the time to worship1; Come1 now is the time to give1 your heart; Come1 just as you are1 before your God; Come4; willingly we choose1 to surrender1 our lives; we gladly choose2 you now; willingly we choose1 to how1; (every tongue) will confess1; (every knee) will bow1	
Consuming Fire	we wait1 for you; we pray2	
Days Of Elijah	So lift1 your voice; still we are1 the voice; we are1 the laborers (are) declaring1 the word of the Lord; prepare1 ye the way; (we are the voice in the desert) crying1; (drybones) become1 as flesh	
Desert Song	I will bring2 praise; I will rejoice1; I will declare1; all that's within me feels1 dry; I am1 a conqueror; I'll stand1; I have1 a reason to sing1; I have1 a reason to worship1; I know1; I'm filled1; to be emptied1 again; the seed I have received1 I will sow1	
Draw Me Close	I lay1 it all down; To heart1 you say; I am1 your friend; (no one) else will do1; to feel1 the warmth; (You're all) I want2; You're1 all I've ever needed1; (help me) know1 you are near	
Enough	All I have1 in You; More than all I want1; More than all I need1; More than all I know1; more than all I can say1; still more awesome than I know4	
Everlasting God	as we wait2 upon the Lord; we will wait4 upon the Lord	
Filled With Your Glory	men adore1; I lay2 my life	
For All You've Done	I will never be1 the same; we live1	
Forever	Give1 thanks to the Lord; sing3 praise; we will carry1 on; (the life) that has been made1 reborn	
Forever Reign	for all to see1; (my fear) is crippling1; reason that I sing1; I'm running2 to your arms; (my words) will ever say1; I'm made1 whole; I'm letting1 go; (my heart) will sing4	
Freedom Reigns	Lift2 your eyes to heaven; If you're tired2 and thirsty; Give2 your all to Jesus	
Friend Of God	I am6 a friend of God; who am1 I; When I call1	
Glory To God Forever	we sing1; (saints) cry1 out; we join1 them as we sing1; so I could praise1; (let my whole life) be1; (a life) that shouts1 and sings1	
God of Wonders	I will celebrate1 the light; When I stumble1 in the darkness; I will call1 Your name by night	
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	I see1; All I have needed1; Join1 with all nature	
Hallelujah	(God makes) me sing5; I am1 surrounded; I can feel1 it rising; I see1 you; I can feel1 this God song	

Happy Day	sing1 it out; shout1 it out; I'll never be2 the same; I am1 changed; I stand1 in that place; I am1 yours; (earthly pain) will cease1; Celebrate1 (Jesus is alive)
Healer	I trust2 in you; I believe4; I need4
Here I Am To Worship	Here I am1 to worship1; Here I am1 to bow1 down; Here I am1 to say1; I'll never know2; (this heart) adore1 you; hope (of a life) spent1 with you; to see1 my sin
Holy And Anointed One	I love2 you
Holy Is The Lord	together we sing1; everyone sing1; We stand1 and lift1 up our hands; we bow1 down and worship1 him
Holy Spirit	I have tasted1; (I have) seen1; (we) long1 to be overcome1; we love1; Let1 us become1; Let1 us experience1
Hosanna	I see1 the King of glory; I see1 His love and mercy; the people sing2; I see1 a generation rising1 up to take1 their place; I see1 a near revival; we are2 on our knees; Everything I am1; As I walk1 from earth; we pray1 and seek2; (show me) how to love1
Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)	We turn2 to you; We long1 for you; when we see1 you; we find1 strength; we welcome1 you here; (eyes) are turning1 to you; (hearts) are washed2 away; (hearts are) returning1 to you; (broken lives) are made1 new
How Deep the Father's Love For Us	I hear1; I know2; I will not boast1; I will boast1; I gain1; I cannot give1
How Great Is Our God	Sing1 with me; all will see1; (my heart) will sing1
How He Loves	I am1 a tree bending; I am1 unaware; I realize1 (just how beautiful you are); We are1 his portion; (we are) drawn1 to redemption; we're1 all sinking; (my heart) turns1 violently inside of my chest; I don't have1 time; when I think1 about the way
I Am Free	I am23 free; (I am free) to run4; (I am free) to dance4; (I am free) to live4 for you; the blind will see1; the mute will sing1; the dead will rise1; (all hearts) will praise1; (my heart) screams1
I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever	I could sing4; I will open1 up my heart; (let the healer set me free1; I am1 happy; I will daily lift1 my hands; I will always sing1; I feel1; I know1; (The world) will dance1 with joy; like we are dancing1 now
I Exalt Thee	I exalt6 thee
I Give You My Heart	I give1 you my heart; I give1 you my soul; I live1 for you alone; I am awake1; I worship1 you; I have1 within me; I give1 you praise; I adore1; (every breath that) I take1; to honor1 you
I Know Who I Am	I know5 who I am5; I am2 yours; I was running1; I was blinded1; I was broken1; I was dying1; I know4; I am forgiven1; I am1 your friend; I am accepted1; I am1 secure; I'm1 confident that I am loved1; I am alive2; I am set2 free; I belong1 to you
I Love You Lord	I love1 you; Lord; I lift1 my voice; (my voice) to worship1; (o my soul) rejoice1
In Christ Alone	I stand1; I live1; I am1 His; I'll stand1; (I am) bought1 with the precious blood; (fears) are stilled1; (strivings) cease1; (no scheme of man) can1 ever pluck1 me
Indescribable	awestruck we fall1 to our knees; as we humbly proclaim1; (every creature) unique in the song that it sings1; (All are) exclaiming1; (None) can fathom1
Jesus Messiah	we might become1 his righteousness; (our hope) is2 in you
King Of Majesty	I love1 you; I want1 to know1 you; (more than) I have1 before; (these words) are1 from my heart; I am devoted1 to you; I have1 one desire; (I have one desire) just to be2 with you; I'll give1 my praises to you; know1 you so much more
Love Came Down	I'm free1; All I am1; I've found5 (a Love/a Hope); I once was lost2 now I'm alive8 in you; I call1 on your name; When I fall1; You are1 there; I stand2 in the hope; You're1 my God; I'll trust1 at all times; I give1 glory; oh, sing1; I'm1 singing; we sing1; I thank2 you; I once was1 blind but now I see5 (you)
Made Me Glad	I will bless1; I will trust1; I will not be moved1; I'll say1 of the Lord; Whom have1 I in heaven; I desire1 besides You; I'll say1 of the Lord
Majesty	I've found1 the greatest love; just as I am1; Here I am3; (I am) humbled1; (I am) covered1; I'm1 a sinful man; (I am) covered1 by the blood; (I am) humbled1; I can forgive1; Here, I stand1; I'm1 your desire; (I am) sanctified1; I am changed1
Mighty To Save	(Everyone) needs1 compassion; (Everyone) needs1 forgiveness; I give1 my life; I believe1 in; I surrender1; We're singing2 for the glory; Shine2 your light; let2 the whole world see1
My Redeemer Lives	I know1 (he rescued my soul); I believe4; I'll raise1 a banner; I'll rise1 with you; I'm dancing1 on this mountaintop; to see1 your kingdom come; (my pain) is healed1 in his name
My Savior Lives	I know1; I stand1; (Everyone together) Sing1 the song of the redeemed
O Praise Him	O praise2 him; Turn1 you ear; hear1 the noise inside; we could join1 and sing1; (this song of ours) will rise1; (this love of ours) will rise1; turn1 your gaze to heaven; raise1 a joyous noise; we sing1
Offering	I come1; I bring6; I sing1
Once Again	I look1 upon the cross; I'm humbled1; I'm broken1; I thank1 you; I pour1 out my life; I think1 upon your sacrifice; I've wondered1; I'm2 in that place once again; I'll bow1; I marvel1; I'm full2 of praise
One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)	I face1; I never ever have to be1 afraid; I'm confident1; (I'm) covered1

Open The Eyes Of My Heart	I want4 to seed4 you; as we sing1 (out of the ashes) we rise1; what could ever stop2 us
Our God	
Our God Saves	we come1; we're gathered1 together; to lift1 up your name; to call1 on our Savior; on Your grace; As your saints bow1 down; as your people sing1; we will rise1; lifted1 on Your wings, and the world will see1 that
Overcome	We will overcome1; everyone overcome1
Revelation Song	I sing1; I will adore1 you; sing1 a new song; filled1 with wonder
Shout To The Lord	I want1 to praise; I am1; Shout1 to the Lord; let1 us; I sing1 for joy; Forever I'll love1 you; Forever I'll stand1; I have1 in you; (let every breath) never cease1 to worship1
Sing Sing Sing	we will sing6; we make1 music; we shout1; Lift1 high; (Kings) bow1 down; You are the one we're2 living for
Sing To The King	Come1; let1 us sing; we belong1 to Jesus; Lift1 up a heart of praise; sing1 now (with voices) raised1 to Jesus; Sing2 to the King; we watch1 and we pray1; we will be1 ready; we'll join1 in singing1
Son Of God	I sing1 to You forgiven; I'm overcome1; (our freedom) is2 in Your blood; I will lift1 up my hands and sing1
Still	I will soar1 with you; I will be still1 and know1; Find1 rest (my soul); Know1 His power
Surrender	I surrender1; I'm giving1 you my heart; I lay1 it all down; I'm giving1 down my rights; I'm laying1 down my dreams; I'm giving1 up my pride; I'm singing1 you this song; I'm waiting1 at the cross; I count1 it all but loss
The Heart of Worship	I simply come1; all is1 stripped away; (I am) longing1 just to bring1; I'll bring1 you; I'm coming1 back; I'm sorry1 for the thing I've made1 it; no one could1 express; I'm weak1 and poor; (worship) is1 all about you; all I have1 is yours
The Stand	What can I say1; what can I do1; but offer1 this heart; O God; I'll stand2 (with heart) abandoned1; (my soul) surrendered1; All I am1 is yours; (My soul) now to stand3; (my sin) weighed1 upon Your shoulders; So, I'll walk1 upon salvation; (my life) to declare1 Your promise
Today is the Day	I will rejoice4; (I will) be glad4; I won't worry2; I'm trusting2; I'm casting1; I'm leaving2; I'm setting1; I'm reaching2; (I'm) Believing2; I'm putting1; I'm giving2; I will stand4; I'll live4 for you; I will follow1
Trading My Sorrows	I'm trading4 (my sorrows/my shame/my sickness/my pain); I'm laying2 them down; I am pressed1; but not crushed1; persecuted1; not abandoned1; struck down1 but not destroyed1; I am blessed1
Unchanging	we raise2; to praise2
We Fall Down	we cry3; we fall1 down; we lay1 our crowns
You Are Good	we worship4 you
You Are My King (Amazing Love)	I know1 it's true; I'm forgiven1; I'm accepted1; I'm alive1 and well; It is1 my joy to honor1 you; In all I do1; I honor1 you
Your Grace Is Enough	All your people sing1 along; God; I sing1; I'm covered1 in your love
Your Great Name	Sing1; we worship1; we bow1
Your Love Never Fails	Even if I ran1 away; I know1 I still make1 mistakes; I don't have1 to be afraid; I know1 that you love me; I'm1 not alone; I never thought1 I'd reach1 the other side
Your Name	(our songs of praise) touch1 your heart and glorify1 Your name; Jesus in your Name we pray1; (let1 the nations) sing1 it louder

Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 6: Expressions of Mediatorial Worship						
Song Title	To	For	With	In	By	Through
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)						
Above All						
All Who Are Thirsty						
Amazed				You hold me in Your hand	I'm amazed by You ⁶	
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)						
At Your Name						
Awesome Is The Lord Most High	Shout to God all creation	It's for your glory we offer everything				
Beautiful One	opened my eyes to Your wonders anew					
Because He Lives						
Blessed Be Your Name						
Breathe		I'm desperate for You	I'm lost (with)out You			
Come Now Is The Time To Worship		fan into flame a passion for your name; Spirit of God we wait for				
Consuming Fire	Leave us abandoned to Your praise					
Days Of Elijah				we are the laborers in Your vineyard		
Desert Song			I am a conqueror and co-heir with Christ			
Draw Me Close	Draw me close to You; bring me back to You					
Enough			You satisfy me with Your love	All I have in You is more than enough		
Everlasting God						
Filled With Your Glory		For who You are and what You've done	The whole earth is filled with Your glory Lord ²			
For All You've Done						
Forever	Give thanks to the Lord				By the grace of God we will carry on	
Forever Reign	I'm running to Your arms ² ; Nothing compares to Your embrace			In You death has lost its sting; In your presence I'm made whole		
Freedom Reigns	Give your all to Jesus ²					
Friend Of God						
Glory To God Forever	Glory to God ⁶	All for You ² and for Your glory ²				
God of Wonders	Glory to the Lord on High; Hallelujah to the Lord of heaven and earth ³					

Great Is Thy Faithfulness	To Thy great faithfulness		There is no shadow Of turning with Thee				
Hallelujah							
Happy Day							
Healer		Nothing is impossible for You ⁴		I trust in You ² ; You hold my world in Your hands			
Here I Am To Worship			Life spent with You				
Holy And Anointed One							
Holy Is The Lord			The earth is filled with His glory ³				
Holy Spirit				my shame is undone in Your Presence	To be overcome by Your Presence Lord		
Hosanna		Everything I am for your Kingdom's cause					
Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)	Eyes are turning to you; We turn to You ² ; Hearts returning to You	Hearts are yearning for You; We long for You		In Your presence all our fears are washed away; In Your Kingdom Broken lives are made new			
How Deep the Father's Love For Us				I will boast in Jesus Christ			
How Great Is Our God				time is in His hands			
How He Loves				Drawn to redemption by the grace in His eyes	drawn to redemption by the grace in His eyes		
I Am Free		I am free to live for You ⁴				Through You the blind will see; Through You the mute will sing; Through You the dead will rise; Through You all hearts will praise; Through You the darkness flees; Through You my heart screams I am free	
I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever							
I Exalt Thee							
I Give You My Heart		I live for You alone		All that I adore is in You			
I Know Who I Am	I belong to You			May it be a sweet sweet sound in Your ear			
I Love You Lord							
In Christ Alone			Bought with the precious blood of Christ	In Christ alone my hope is found; In the love of Christ I stand; In Christ alone who took on flesh; in the death of Christ I live; in the power of Christ I'll stand			
Indescribable							
Jesus Messiah	All the glory to You, God			All our hope is in You ²			
King Of Majesty	I am devoted to You; I'll give my praises to You	I will live for You	To be with You my Lord ²				

Love Came Down	I give glory and praise adoration to my Savior		new life with You	I'm alive in You ¹⁰	By grace I'm free	
Made Me Glad						
Majesty				Empty-handed but alive in Your hands	Humbled by your majesty; Covered by Your grace so free; Covered by the blood of the Lamb; Humbled by the love that you give; sanctified by glory and fire; changed by Your love	
Mighty To Save		We're singing for the glory of the risen King Jesus ²				
My Redeemer Lives			I'll rise with You	My pain is healed in His name		
My Savior Lives						
O Praise Him	All to Christ the King; We could join and sing all to Christ the King	All this for a King ² ; All for Christ the King				
Offering	The sun cannot compare to the glory of Your love; I bring an offering of worship to my King; I bring an offering to You ⁵			There is no shadow in Your presence	It's only by Your blood	it's only through Your mercy Lord I come
Once Again					I'm humbled by your mercy	
One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)					Cover'd by the power of Your great love	
Open The Eyes Of My Heart						
Our God						
Our God Saves			We will rise with You	There is hope in Your Name; in the Name of the Father; in the Name of the Son; in the Name of the Spirit		
Overcome				Seated above enthroned in the Father's love	We will overcome By the blood of the Lamb	
Revelation Song	Praise to the King of Kings; Sing a new song to Him Who sits on heaven's mercy seat; blessing and honor, strength and glory and power be to You					
Shout To The Lord	Shout to the Lord; Praise to the King			Nothing compares to the promise I have in You		
Sing Sing Sing						
Sing To The King	A song declaring that we belong to Jesus; Sing now with voices raised to Jesus; Sing to the King ² ; Glory to Jesus	For His returning we watch and we pray				
Son Of God	Jesus, Oh Holy One, I sing to You forgiven		Savior I'm overcome With Your great love for me	Precious Lamb our freedom's in Your blood ²		
Still			Cover me With(in) Your mighty hand; I will soar with You	Find rest my soul in Christ alone		

Surrender	I surrender all to You ⁴				To know the lasting joy Even sharing in Your pain		
The Heart of Worship							
The Stand	Offer this heart, O God, completely to You; my soul, Lord, to you surrendered;				Eternity in Your hand		
Today is the Day	I'm reaching my hands to Yours ² ; I'm giving my hopes and dreams to You Jesus		All my days I'll live for You ³				
Trading My Sorrows			For the joy of the Lord ²				
Unchanging							
We Fall Down							
You Are Good			We worship You for who You are ⁴				
You Are My King (Amazing Love)							
Your Grace Is Enough					I'm covered in Your love		
Your Great Name							
Your Love Never Fails							
Your Name			Lord give us strength to live for You		Jesus in Your Name we pray		

Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 7: Cosmological Correspondence Between Time and Timelessness				
Song Title	Human Verb Tenses: Past	Human Verb Tense: Present	Human Verb Tenses: Future	Time References
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)	0	12	5	day ² , time ² , evening, years
Above All	0	0	0	
All Who Are Thirsty	0	8	0	
Amazed	0	8	1	
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)	4	5	0	hour
At Your Name	0	11	8	morning
Awesome Is The Lord Most High	0	4	5	days
Beautiful One	1	8	0	
Because He Lives	1	7	4	tomorrow, future, day(s) ²
Blessed Be Your Name	0	3	3	
Breathe	0	4	0	
Come Now Is The Time To Worship	0	19	2	time ² , day ²
Consuming Fire	0	3	0	
Days Of Elijah	0	7	0	year (of) Jubilee, days ⁶
Desert Song	2	8	6	season
Draw Me Close	1	8	1	
Enough	0	9	0	
Everlasting God	0	2	4	
Filled With Your Glory	0	3	0	history
For All You've Done	0	1	1	
Forever	1	4	1	
Forever Reign	0	7	5	
Freedom Reigns	0	6	0	
Friend Of God	0	8	0	
Glory To God Forever	0	8	0	days ²
God of Wonders	0	1	2	morning
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	1	2	0	
Hallelujah	0	9	0	
Happy Day	0	6	3	day ⁹ , history

Healer	0	10	0	moment
Here I Am To Worship	1	8	2	
Holy And Anointed One	0	2	0	
Holy Is The Lord	0	6	0	
Holy Spirit	2	4	3	
Hosanna	0	21	0	
Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)	0	12	0	day
How Deep the Father's Love For Us	0	5	2	
How Great Is Our God	0	1	2	age2, time
How He Loves	0	9	0	time
I Am Free	0	36	4	
I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever	0	9	4	
I Exalt Thee	0	6	0	
I Give You My Heart	0	10	0	moment
I Know Who I Am	4	27	0	
I Love You Lord	0	4	0	
In Christ Alone	0	8	1	day
Indescribable	0	5	0	Fall, Spring, night
Jesus Messiah	0	3	0	
King Of Majesty	0	10	2	
Love Came Down	7	25	1	times
Made Me Glad	0	2	5	time(s)2
Majesty	1	14	4	
Mighty To Save	0	12	0	
My Redeemer Lives	0	5	2	
My Savior Lives	0	3	0	day
O Praise Him	2	7	2	
Offering	0	8	0	
Once Again	1	9	1	times
One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)	0	4	0	
Open The Eyes Of My Heart	0	9	0	
Our God	0	3	0	
Our God Saves	1	7	2	

Overcome	0	1	1	1
Revelation Song	1	2	1	
Shout To The Lord	0	8	2	days
Sing Sing Sing	0	6	6	
Sing To The King	1	9	3	dawn, day
Son Of God	0	5	1	(of) old
Still	0	3	2	
Surrender	0	9	0	
The Heart of Worship	1	10	1	
The Stand	2	8	3	
Today is the Day	0	14	19	Today 11 , day 14 , tomorrow 2 , past
Trading My Sorrows	0	13	0	night, morning
Unchanging	0	4	0	
We Fall Down	0	5	0	
You Are Good	0	4	0	forever 2 , time 4
You Are My King (Amazing Love)	0	8	0	
Your Grace Is Enough	0	3	0	
Your Great Name	0	3	0	
Your Love Never Fails	2	6	0	ages, morning
Your Name	0	5	0	morning, evening

Data from Lyrical Content Analysis 8: Cosmological Correspondence between Material and Immaterial				
Song Title	Non-Material (excluding Divine Names/Worshipper Pronouns)	Personification/Anthropomorphism	Material (excluding Divine Names/Worshipper Pronouns)	
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)		(Your) heart 2	sun, song	
Above All	powers, wisdom, way(s) 2, wonders, fall		kings, nature, (created) things, man, world, kingdoms, thrones, world, wealth, treasures, earth, stone, rose, ground	
All Who Are Thirsty	life, pain, sorrow, mercy, deep 8	(dip your) heart	fountain, stream, waves	
Amazed	miracles, mind, hope, love 2	(Your) hand	sound, sky	
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)	mercy, love, grace 5, fears, good, word, hope, life	(taught my) heart	chains, flood, sound, wretch, shield, portion, earth, snow, sun	
At Your Name	praise 2, angels 2		mountains, oceans, earth 4, people 2, skies 2, creation	
Awesome Is The Lord Most High	strength, glory, answer, name, way		hands, nations, creation, world	
Beautiful One	soul 7, love 2, mercy, glory, beauty, majesty, wonders	eye (has seen) 2, ear (has heard), (my) heart 3	cross, skies, works, earth	
Because He Lives	pardon, fear, life, pride, joy, assurance, pain, death, victory, glory		grave, baby, child, river, war, lights	
Blessed Be Your Name	abundance, name 13, suffering, pain, blessing, praise, offering	(my) heart (will choose to say)	land, streams, (desert) place, wilderness, darkness, sun, world, road	
Breathe	presence, word		air 2, bread 2	
Come Now Is The Time To Worship	lives, soul, mind, strength	tongue (confess), knee (bow), (give your) heart 2, knees (will bow)	treasure	
Consuming Fire	passion, name, way 2, power, praise, glory 2, (on) high	breath (of God)	flame, place, wind, captives	
Days Of Elijah	righteousness, trials, way, praise		clouds, sun, call, voice, hill, Elijah, servant 2, Moses, famine, darkness, sword, voice, desert, Ezekiel, bones, flesh, David, temple, harvest, fields, world, laborers, vineyard	
Desert Song	victory, prayer 5, hunger, need, weakness, trial, pain, faith, triumph, promise, life, reason 2, favour, providence		weapon, desert, fire, gold, flame, battle, conqueror, co-heir, harvest, seed	
Draw Me Close	desire, way, warmth, embrace		friend, nothing, place	
Enough	thirst, need, love, life, price, sacrifice, everything	breath (of life)	supply, reward	
Everlasting God	strength 2		defender, (the) weak, wings, eagles	
Filled With Your Glory	glory 3, life 2, passion, angels, soul, love 2, praise, power 2, name, heaven	(in my) heart 2, (Your) feet 2	earth 3, men, creation 2, fire 2, flame, sun, song, ends, (the) heights, (the) depths, sea, mountain (x2), summit, bounds, universe, oceans	
For All You've Done	everlasting, way, (on) high		clay, world 2	
Forever	praise 8, thanks, love 6, life, grace	(mighty) hand, (outstretched) arm	sun, things	
Forever Reign	love 3, hope 2, sin, peace 2, fear, wandering, joy 2, reason, life 2, death, sting, words, presence, embrace	(Your) arms 2, (my) heart	nothing 2, light 2, darkness, riches, creation	
Freedom Reigns	freedom 11, mercy 2, grace 2, all 2, heaven 2		place 2, showers 2, face 2, eyes 2,	
Friend Of God			friend 9	
Glory To God Forever	glory 8, name, life 6, offering, angels		world, things, saints, breath	
God of Wonders	wonders 2, majesty 2, glory, name, (on) high, heaven 6, heavens	(Your) heart	galaxy 2, universe 2, earth 7, creation, water, sky, tabernacle, light, darkness	
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	faithfulness 5, mercies, compassions, witness, mercy, love, sin, peace, presence, strength, hope	(Thy) hand	shadow, sun, moon, stars, nature, blessings	
Hallelujah	love 7, mystery, joy, goodness		mountain, feet, song	

Happy Day	death, life, sin, joy, peace, pain, way			cross, grave, face 2
Healer		(Your) hands		healer, portion, seas, fire, disease, world
Here I Am To Worship	beauty, hope, life, love, sin 2, heaven	heart (adore you)		light, world, darkness, eyes, earth, cross 2
Holy And Anointed One	name, soul			honey, lips, water, lamp, feet
Holy Is The Lord	glory 3, joy, strength, renown 2			earth 3, hands, anthem 2
Holy Spirit	hope, loves, shame, glory 2, goodness	hearts (long for)		nothing, thing, place, atmosphere
Hosanna	glory, love, mercy, sin, faith 2, revival, eternity	(heal/break my) heart 2		clouds, fire, earth 3, people 2, place, (a) generation, knees 2, eyes, things, kingdom
Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)	praise, hope, strength, fears, praises, way, lives	eyes (are turning), hearts 2		sound, kingdom
How Deep the Father's Love For Us	love, measure, pain, loss, glory, sin 2, life, power, wisdom, death, resurrection, answer	(His) face, (all my) heart		wretch, treasure, wounds 2, sons, man, cross, shoulders, scoffers, breath, gifts, reward, ransom, voice, anything
How Great Is Our God	splendor, majesty, names, praise	(His) hands, heart (will sing), (His) voice 2		darkness, earth 2, light
How He Loves	mercy, glory, redemption, grace 2, regrets, way, heaven, afflictions, affections	(His) eyes, heart (turns violently)		hurricane, tree, wind, portion, prize, ocean, earth, kiss, chest
I Am Free		hearts (will praise), heart (screams)		(the) blind, (the) mute, (the) dead, darkness
I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever	love 6, truth, foolishness, joy			mountains, sea, river, hands, world, light
I Exalt Thee				earth 2, gods 2
I Give You My Heart	soul, way, desire, praise	(give you all my) heart 2		breath
I Know Who I Am	sight, praise, life, identity			song, friend
I Love You Lord	soul, joy	(Your) ear		sound, voice
In Christ Alone	hope, strength, love 3, peace, fear 2, strivings, fulness, righteousness, wrath, sin, death 2, victor, curse, guilt, life, destiny, scheme, power 2, power (of) hell	(His) hand		light, song, drought, storm, (the) heights, (the) depths, flesh, babe, gift, cross, ground, body, grave, grip, blood, cry, breath, man, home, darkness
Indescribable	majesty, coolness, name	(depths of my) heart 2, (depths of our) hearts		(the) heights, (the) depths 2, sea, creation, colors, fragrance, creature, song, stars 2, sky 2, knees, (lightning) bolt, storehouse, snow, sun, source, light
Jesus Messiah	names, sin 2, righteousness, love 5, hope 2, glory, heaven			sinners, cross, body, bread, blood, wine, earth, veil
King Of Majesty	words 2, majesty, desire, soul, praises	(words are from my) heart		
Love Came Down	grace, life 6, hope 2, glory, praise, adoration, (on) high			side, darkness, nothing 4
Made Me Glad	fear, strength, help, need, heaven			feet, rock, shield, portion, shelter, tower
Majesty	love 3, life, sacrifice, majesty 7, grace 2, desire, glory	(Your) hands		man, blood, fire
Mighty To Save	compassion, mercy, forgiveness, kindness, hope, fears, failures, life 2, glory 2			grave, baby, child, river, war, lights
My Redeemer Lives	soul, sin, shame, pain, name, burdens			blood, banner, grave, mountaintop, kingdom
My Savior Lives	chance, heaven			world, song, (the) redeemed 2, darkness
O Praise Him	awe, love 3, gaze, salvation, heaven 2, angel 3			ear, noise 2, sound 4, songs, song
Offering	glory, love, presence, mercy, praises, honor, heaven, offering 6			sun, shadow, man, throne, blood, earth
Once Again	mercy, life 2, sacrifice, death, grace, praise 2, heavens			cross 4, nothing, gift, place 3
One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)	power 2, (the) trial, (the) change, soul, death, life, debt, love 2	(my) heart		mountains, grave, thing 4, nothing

Open The Eyes Of My Heart	glory, power, love	eyes 2 (of my) heart 2	light
Our God	power		other, healer, water, wine, eyes, blind, darkness, ashes
Our God Saves	hope, mourning, praise, grace, offering		songs, sound, saints, people, wings, world
Overcome	authority 2, victory 2, honor, glory, praise, power, love, plan, testimony	(power in) hand	mankind, light, land
Revelation Song	blessing, honor, strength, glory, power, wonder 2, mention, name 2, power, mystery		creation, ev'rything, song, seat, flashes, lightning, rolls, thunder, breath, rainbows, color, water
Shout To The Lord	wonders, love, comfort, refuge, strength, power, majesty, praise, name, joy, promise	(Your) hands	shelter, tower, breath, earth, mountains, seas, sound, work, nothing
Sing Sing Sing	praise, name, love, heavens, heaven		music, earth, kings, light, fire, kingdoms
Sing To The King	praise, glory, life, salvation, joy, returning, Satan	(Lift up a) heart	song 2, nations, (the) redeemed, voices, empire
Son Of God	love 3, freedom, strength, compare, kindness, prophecy, soul, praise	(dweller of my) heart	shaper, stars, dweller, gift, altar, blood 2, darkness, people, home 2, hands
Still	rest, soul, power, quietness, trust	(Your mighty) hand	wings, oceans, thunders, storm, flood
Surrender	dreams, rights, pride, promise, life, loss, glory, name, joy, pain	(giving You my) heart	song, cross, world
The Heart of Worship	worth 2, worship, much	(bless Your) heart 2	music, song 2, way, things, thing, breath
The Stand	soul 4, eternity, motion, failure, shame, sin, salvation, life, promise	(Your) hand, (this) heart 2, (Your) shoulders	arms, creation, earth, cross
Today is the Day	cares, mind, fears 2, sorrows, doubts, hopes, dreams, truth 4	(setting my) heart	hands 2
Trading My Sorrows	sorrows, shame, joy 4, sickness, pain, curse, promise, strength, sorrow		
Unchanging	faithfulness 2, promises 2, love 2, grace 2		hands 2
We Fall Down	mercy, love		crowns, feet 2
You Are Good	mercy 2, tongue		people, nation, generation 2
You Are My King (Amazing Love)	love 2, joy		
Your Grace Is Enough	faithfulness, mercy, promise, grace 7, love 2, justice, salvation, heaven	(restless) heart	sinner, waters, nothing, people 2, children, (the) weak, (the) strong, song
Your Great Name	way, shame, fear, souls, enemy		(the) lost, sound 8, (the) condemned, place, man, world, (the) weak, (the) fatherless, (the) sick, (the) dead
Your Love Never Fails	love 5, mistakes, mercies, pain, joy		nothing, oceans, wind, water, seas, chasm, side
Your Name	praise, power, strength	(Your) heart, (fill our) hearts	songs, earth, tower, shelter, nations, nothing

Appendix B

CCLI "Top 25" Lists for the PAOC (April 2007 to March 2013)

Song Title	Year Produced	Apr-07	Oct-07	Apr-08	Oct-08	Apr-09	Oct-09	Apr-10	Oct-10	Apr-11	Oct-11	Apr-12	Oct-12	Total # of Appearances
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)	2011											2	1	2
Above All	1999			18		25								2
All Who Are Thirsty	1998	24												1
Amazed	2004									23				1
Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)	2006			19	18	21		12	13		16	3	13	8
At Your Name	2011											13		1
Awesome Is The Lord Most High	2006		25											1
Beautiful One	2002	7	14	10	10	14		6		15	14		19	9
Because He Lives	1971				24									1
Blessed Be Your Name	2002	2	2	2	2	5	1	5	4	10	5	15	3	12
Breathe	1995		21				21	16						3
Come Now Is The Time To Worship	1998		12		19	16	14						25	5
Consuming Fire	2002		13											1
Days Of Elijah	1996		24	24				13						3
Desert Song	2008							24						1
Draw Me Close	1994	19		20										2
Enough	2002		17											1
Everlasting God	2005			17	4	3	2	8	3	4	7	5	10	10
Filled With Your Glory	2004	8												1
For All You've Done	2004	16												1
Forever	2001	23	7	8	7	11		17	12	17		6	8	10
Forever Reign	2009									21	19	23		3
Freedom Reigns	1998			25										1
Friend Of God	2003	4	15	4	25	8		18	15		20			8
Glory To God Forever	2009						18				17			2
God of Wonders	2000	14			21									2
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	1951	11												1
Hallelujah	2000						22							1

[illegible]

