

University of Denver

Digital Commons @ DU

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate Studies

1-1-2019

"En el Poder del Espíritu": A Qualitative Research Study on Social Ethics/Theology Among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals

Néstor A. Gómez Morales
University of Denver

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd>



Part of the [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Gómez Morales, Néstor A., ""En el Poder del Espíritu": A Qualitative Research Study on Social Ethics/Theology Among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals" (2019). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 1581.
<https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/1581>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu, dig-commons@du.edu.

"En el Poder del Espíritu": A Qualitative Research Study on Social Ethics/Theology Among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals

Abstract

Are most US Latina/o pentecostals concerned about sharing the gospel without having any interest in the reality of oppression, discrimination, and marginalization? Are they just dancing and singing in their temples, having ecstasies and emotional experiences while ignoring the poor and their social struggle? Many scholars see US Latina/o pentecostalism as a tradition with an anemic social ethic, one that lacks any significant interest in the needs of the poorest in society. However, new research on progressive pentecostals shows a different panorama. The theological perspectives and social ethics of a vast sector of US Latina/o churches have changed considerably since its origins as a religious movement. New generations of pentecostals are ably addressing the needs of the poorest and marginalized in the context of the United States. Hence, this research project challenges the idea that Latina/o pentecostals are socially apathetic through a qualitative research study carried out in Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer, a Hispanic pentecostal church in Los Fresnos, TX, just outside Brownsville and South Padre Island. This church has a social ministry called The Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries that primarily serves refugees seeking safety from persecution in their home countries. Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a mainline Protestant denomination.

The research questions explore the pentecostal mission, theology, and ethics that motivate Latina/os to social ministry. The hypothesis of this proposal is that the pneumapraxis observed in the daily life of the US Latina/o pentecostals is fundamental for understanding their social concern with the oppressed and marginalized. The pneumapraxis is analyzed not only as a practice of the Esp ritu, but as lived experiences of the articulation of practices, convictions, beliefs, and affections of the Latina/o pentecostal ethos and spirituality in an integrative model. The study concludes that US Latina/o pentecostals speak less about mission, theology, and ethics as motivating them to serve the poor. Rather, Latina/o pentecostals experience the mission of Jesus when they preach the gospel and help the poor; they do not have an articulated theology but live it every day; and they do not conceptualize their moral values but embody the fruit of the Esp ritu as moral virtues and as a testimony of an authentic Christian moral life.

Document Type

Dissertation

Degree Name

Ph.D.

Department

Religious and Theological Studies

First Advisor

Miguel De La Torre, Ph.D.

Second Advisor

Jennifer S. Leath

Third Advisor

Debora Ortega

Keywords

Latina/o pentecostalism, Misión integral, Integral Mission, Pentecostés theology, Religious experiences, Social ethics, Testimonios, Testimonies

Subject Categories

Arts and Humanities | Christian Denominations and Sects | Religion

Publication Statement

Copyright is held by the author. User is responsible for all copyright compliance.

"En el Poder del Espíritu:" A Qualitative Research Study on
Social Ethics/Theology among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the University of Denver

and the Iliff School of Theology Joint PhD Program

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Néstor A. Gómez Morales

June 2019

Advisor: Miguel De La Torre

©Copyright by Néstor A. Gómez Morales 2019

All Rights Reserved

Author: Néstor A. Gómez Morales
Title: "En el Poder del Espíritu:" A Qualitative Research Study on Social Ethics/Theology among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals
Advisor: Miguel De La Torre
Degree Date: June 2019

ABSTRACT

Are most US Latina/o pentecostals concerned about sharing the gospel without having any interest in the reality of oppression, discrimination, and marginalization? Are they just dancing and singing in their temples, having ecstasies and emotional experiences while ignoring the poor and their social struggle? Many scholars see US Latina/o pentecostalism as a tradition with an anemic social ethic, one that lacks any significant interest in the needs of the poorest in society. However, new research on progressive pentecostals shows a different panorama. The theological perspectives and social ethics of a vast sector of US Latina/o churches have changed considerably since its origins as a religious movement. New generations of pentecostals are ably addressing the needs of the poorest and marginalized in the context of the United States. Hence, this research project challenges the idea that Latina/o pentecostals are socially apathetic through a qualitative research study carried out in Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer, a Hispanic pentecostal church in Los Fresnos, TX, just outside Brownsville and South Padre Island. This church has a social ministry called The Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries that primarily serves refugees seeking safety from persecution in their home countries. Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a mainline Protestant denomination.

The research questions explore the pentecostal mission, theology, and ethics that motivate Latina/os to social ministry. The hypothesis of this proposal is that the pneumapraxis observed in the daily life of the US Latina/o pentecostals is fundamental for understanding their social concern with the oppressed and marginalized. The pneumapraxis is analyzed not only as a practice of the Espíritu, but as lived experiences of the articulation of practices, convictions, beliefs, and affections of the Latina/o pentecostal ethos and spirituality in an integrative model. The study concludes that US Latina/o pentecostals speak less about mission, theology, and ethics as motivating them to serve the poor. Rather, Latina/o pentecostals experience the mission of Jesus when they preach the gospel and help the poor; they do not have an articulated theology but live it every day; and they do not conceptualize their moral values but embody the fruit of the Espíritu as moral virtues and as a testimony of an authentic Christian moral life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A doctoral dissertation is not only an individual work, but a communal one. The completion of my doctoral dissertation has been the result of the support and encouragement of many people. There is no space to mention all those who influenced my work, but I will mention a few in particular. I am grateful to my committee who invested time and provided me with the support needed to complete this work: Miguel De La Torre, Debora Ortega, and Jennifer S. Leath. Miguel De La Torre, my advisor, walked with me throughout this journey of experience and knowledge. Debora Ortega provided me a grant through the University of Denver Latino Center for Community Engagement and Scholarship, to do my research in Los Fresnos, TX. Jennifer S. Leath made great comments and suggestions to improve my dissertation proposal. Thanks also to the late professor Luis León, who assessed my dissertation methodology and recommended that I write one extra chapter about the history of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer.

My gratitude also to Edwin D. Aponte and the great staff at the Louisville Institute, which provided me with a dissertation fellowship to complete my work. Joanne Rodríguez, Executive Director of the Hispanic Theological Initiative, introduced me to Ulrike Guthrie, who was so patient and professional and who edited all my writing. Thank you so much, Uli. Thanks also to some good friends who assisted me with their support. In particular to: Aaron Conley, a great friend who helped me edit part of my work, and with whom I have enjoyed thousands of coffees and beers discussing many issues about my theology and ethics; and R. J. Hernández, who opened many spaces of time and place to discuss many ethical perspectives that came alive in these pages. Iliff was a space of refuge. Staff, students, and faculty—what great people they are! Finally,

I have no words to express my enormous gratitude to the people at Iglesia Cristana Ebenezer. They were so friendly and kind when I was in the field. They made me feel at home.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Introduction	3
Defining the Topic	4
General Literature Review	9
Thesis and Scope	20
Conceptual Framework	21
Main Theorists	26
Research Methodology	32
Significance and Contribution to the Field	35
Positionality Toward the Research	36
Outline of Chapters	37
 Chapter Two: Methodology	 40
Introduction	41
Rationale for Qualitative Research	43
Studying Lived Religion as a Phenomenological Approach	45
Research Participants	53
Overview of Research Design	54
Literature Review	55
Data Collection	55
Phase I: Exploring and Contacting	56
Phase II: Recruiting	57
Phase III: Interviewing	58
Phase IV: Reviewing	62
Data Analysis and Synthesis	62
Phase I: Reading	62
Phase II: Initial Coding	63
Phase III: Theming the Data	65
Ethical Considerations	67
Credibility	68
Dependability and Confirmability	70
Transferability	71
Risks	72
Benefits to Subjects / Future Benefits	73
Positionality of the Researcher	73
Summary	75
 Chapter Three: History of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer	 76
Introduction	76
The Christian Church Disciples of Christ: A Brief Sketch	77
A Historical Encounter	96
A Theological Encounter	106
Conclusion	112

Chapter Four: Pentecostal Misión Integral	114
Introduction	114
Misión Integral is Associated with Past Experiences	118
Misión Integral Means Change	130
Misión Integral Supplies the Needs of the Poor	141
Misión Integral as Making Disciples	149
Conclusion	155
Chapter Five: Pentecostés as Narrative Theology	157
Introduction	157
Pentecostés Theology of Imago Dei	162
Pentecostés Theology of Love	172
Pentecostés Theology of Spiritual Gifts	181
Conclusion	197
Chapter Six: Pentecostal Social Ethics	198
Introduction	198
Pentecostal Ethics as Virtues of the Espíritu	201
Pentecostal Ethics of Acompañamiento	219
Pentecostal Ethics for a Dignification of Life	231
Conclusion	239
Chapter Seven: Conclusions	240
Bibliography	254
Appendices	274
Appendix A	274
Appendix B	275
Appendix C	276
Appendix D	277
Appendix E	278
Appendix F	279
Appendix G	280
Appendix H	281
Appendix I	282
Appendix J	283
Appendix K	284
Appendix L	285
Appendix M	286
Appendix N	287
Appendix O	290
Appendix P	291
Appendix Q	292

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

On a Friday morning, María¹ goes into the church kitchen to fix breakfast for seven refugees who are hosted temporarily in the facilities of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE). While cooking, she receives a call from her pastor checking that everything is on time and organized as planned. María smiles and says, “No se preocupe, pastor, que ya todo está como se planeó la semana pasada.” (“No worries, pastor. Everything has been organized as was planned last week.”) María sings Christian coritos² and dances in the kitchen. People, including the pastor, are coming to have breakfast at a large table in the kitchen. Eggs, beans, tortillas, and coffee have been set

¹ Throughout this dissertation, all names used are pseudonyms to protect the anonymity, privacy, and security of the research participants. For the subjects interviewed, the research is only using first names of research participants to differentiate them from scholars of religions cited in this study. See Chapter 2 on Methodology, subheading “Data Collection.”

² Loida Martell-Otero, “From *Satas* to *Santas*: *Sobrajas* No More: Salvation in the Spaces of the Everyday,” in *Latina Evangélicas: A Theological Survey from the Margins*, ed. Loida I. Martell-Otero, Zaida Maldonado Pérez, and Elizabeth Conde-Frazier (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), 10, 21, 33. Martell-Otero translates the word *coritos* as “musical refrains,” and defines it as “the short, repeated refrains often based on scriptural texts.” Daniel Ramírez has also studied some of the development of the pentecostal music in the borderland of the US and Mexico. Writing about the early Latino Pentecostal hymnody, and especially *coritos*, he comments that pentecostal music with its Latina fiesta influence contrasts with the antagonism of mainline Protestant missionary censure. Latina/o pentecostalism returned to popular music cultures and reintroduced the carnivalesque aspects of this popularity (laughter, body movements, profane instruments, etc.) into liturgical sacred spaces. *Coritos* used simple words that could be repeated, memorized, and sung for any length of time, liberating the emotions of Latina/os who enjoyed participating in the worship services. Ramírez states that these *coritos* “forged a new sonic universe that replaced the earlier popular Catholic visual world of saints, candles, gilded altars, and paintings—stimuli that had been erased by iconoclastic Protestantism—with intense sonic and sensory stimulation.” Daniel Ramírez, *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 178. *Coritos* (choruses) are a type of Hispanic song written in simple words and minor keys, musically speaking. Many *coritos* use story-telling texts. See also Sammy Alfaro, *Divino Compañero: Toward a Hispanic Pentecostal Christology* (Eugene, OR: Picwick Publications, 2010), 136-137.

on the table by María and Lorna, a woman who serves as a volunteer for the church. While people are having breakfast and talking to each other, María runs in to the church to clean and organize the auditorium. She collects trash, vacuums the carpet, and cleans the furniture. After eating, the refugees get to work serving in different areas in the church. Juan cuts the grass while Enrique repairs some of the dormitories' walls. In the meantime, María is writing the week's grocery list on a piece of paper. María serves in different ministries in the church. She helps with the women's ministry and is part of the choir. María es la Mujer Orquesta.³ She is one of the most active members, often assisting during the worship service on Sundays and serving refugees almost full time during the week.

María speaks barely any English. She grew up in a small, rural town in Central America. Due to the increased violence in her homeland, she headed north and crossed the border into Texas. María embodies the story of many immigrants who work hard and have an American dream. “!Mi fe, mi fe en el Dios verdadero me sostiene y me da la fuerza para vencer! ¡Su Espíritu me da poder y no me abandona, aunque no sepa inglés!” (“My faith, my faith in the true God sustains me and gives me the strength to vanquish! His Spirit gives me power and does not abandon me, even if I do not know how to speak English!”), states María, laughing loudly.

³“María es la Mujer Orquesta” (María is the Orchesta Woman). La Mujer Orquesta is a Spanish expression that refers to a person who serves/works in different areas in an organization, or who can do many things at the same time. For example, if someone says, “Carlos is the orquesta man of this office,” this means that “Carlos does everything in the office.” In this example, Carlos is a person who collaborates in different areas, a person with a cooperative spirit.

Introduction

What are we to make of this story? Why does María, a Latina woman, prepare meals every day for refugees that she does not know? What motivates her to sing and pray while setting the table for refugees that come from everywhere? Are most US Latina/o⁴ pentecostals⁵ concerned about sharing the gospel without any interest in the reality of oppression, discrimination, and marginalization?⁶ Are they just dancing and

⁴ Usually in the Spanish language the term “Latino” refers to the male gender while “Latina” refers to the female gender. Though the competing preferences within the community are understandable, this researcher has opted to use “Hispanic” and “Latina/o” interchangeably. The researcher has also opted to use the term “Latina/o,” instead of “Latinx” because a gender binary (male/female) and patriarchal structure is still predominant in Latina/o pentecostal theology. Suzanne Oboler explains that both terms, Latino and Hispanic, are in many ways neologisms that have not been fully accepted. She states, “For, just as Hispanic refers to a specific population and culture on the Iberian Peninsula, so too, the word Latin or Latino... Both terms in fact exclude much of the historical experiences and linguistic traditions of the African, Asian, and indigenous populations of the American continent.” *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives: Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 165–66.

⁵ Amos Yong, *The Spirit of Creation: Modern Science and Divine Action in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Imagination* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011) 1, n1. The researcher intentionally uses the terms “pentecostal,” “pentecostalism,” and its cognates with lower case letters. This usage follows Amos Yong’s insights that these terms have been linked with the classical Pentecostal (capitalized) movements and churches coming out of the Azusa street revival of the charismatic movements in the mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox churches since the middle of the twentieth century. He also clarifies that there are many other movements in the global South (India, Latin American countries, and even congregations in the United States) that “do not go by either name (neither pentecostal nor charismatic) but embrace, manifest, or value pentecostal –and charismatic—type phenomema, practices, and spirituality.” However, the researcher will maintain the upper “P” when quoting authors that follow this usage. See also Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 18–21. Yong’s idea that there are many other independent congregations or revival churches even within mainline Protestant denominations that do not identify themselves with the traditional movements that come from the Azusa revival fits perfectly with Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer where the researcher did his field work. Further explanation about this will be given in Chapter 3.

⁶ The researcher is using the terms “marginalized,” “disenfranchised,” “poor,” “needy,” “defenseless,” “weak,” “oppressed,” “excluded,” “destitute,” and similar terms interchangeably throughout this research in relation to US Latina/o pentecostals. Latina/o pentecostals experience daily social exclusion by systematically being denied full access to the rights and resources (e.g., employment, housing, health care, etc.) that are available to all people in US society. For a better understanding of the concepts of “margins,” “marginalized,” and cognates, see Miguel De La Torre, *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 12–21. Darío López asks, “Who are the poor and marginalized in Luke’s gospel?” He uses the term the “nobodies” and others to refer to the poor. *The Liberating Mission of Jesus: The Message of the Gospel of Luke*, trans. Stephanie de Israel and Samuel Escobar (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 18–24, 33. José Míguez Bonino clarifies that the category or concept “poor,”

singing in their temples, having ecstasies and emotional experiences all the while ignoring the poor and their social struggles? This chapter introduces the topic, hypothesis, research questions, and research methodology of this dissertation, gives a brief literature review, describes the project's contribution to the field, its positionality toward the research, and finally gives an outline of chapters.

Defining the Topic

Many scholars see pentecostalism as a tradition with an anemic social ethic and lack of interest in the needs of the poorest in society. In his pioneering work, *El Refugio de las Masas: Estudio Sociológico del Protestantismo Chileno*, Swiss sociologist Christian Lalive D'Epinay, writing about Latin American pentecostalism, asks the question: Is pentecostalism a church or a sect? Following Troeltsch's idea of sect and Weber's typology, Lalive D'Epinay concludes that pentecostalism with its conversionist churches and its desire to save souls is a virulent sect. This type of sect is conceived as a dangerous religious deviation since most of them are exclusive and tend to distort what is seen as real and authentic in society.⁷ From this viewpoint, pentecostalism is merely a

and even marginalized, disenfranchised, and other similar concepts, refers "not only [to] those poor who have no bread, for whom all the revolutions of the world are undertaken, but also all the poor of humankind, those of unimpressive proportions, those who are different from the majority, those whom the revolutionary movements tend to undervalue and even annihilate." *Toward a Christian Political Ethics* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983), 8. Enrique Dussel prefers to use the term *víctimas* instead of *poor*. *Ética de Liberación en la Edad de la Globalización y la Liberación*, 2ed. (Valladolid: Trotta, 1998), 13–14). It is useful to read about who coined the term "marginal" in Robert E. Park, "The Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 6 (May 1928): 881–893, [https://www.jstor-org. du. idm. oclc. org/ stable/ 2765982? seq= 1# metadata_ info_ tab_ contents](https://www.jstor.org/du.idm.oclc.org/stable/2765982?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents)

⁷ Cristian Lalive D'Epinay, *El Refugio de las Masas: Estudio Sociológico del Protestantismo Chileno* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1968), 130–45, 179–80. Along with Lalive D'Epinay, Jean Pierre Bastian states that due to its authoritarian structure, pentecostalism does not open possibilities for political reform movement but opens new possibilities for community and cooperation. Emilio Willems deems the pentecostal movement to be a "church of the dispossessed" (Niebuhr). According to Pablo Deiros, what Bastian and Willens mean is that pentecostal churches would be "the churches of the poor," while the Catholic Church would be "the church of the rich," and Protestant traditional churches, "the church of the middle-class." See Pablo Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Fraternidad

place of refuge for the masses that are moving out of rural regions into big cities, but its fundamentalist and apocalyptic message has stripped it of all historical social interests (sectarian-apocalyptic theory).

Other scholars conceive the pentecostal movement as a religion established culturally and socially. Two key features of this movement are its adaptability to changing socio-cultural conditions and the ability to produce native leaders. These aspects have been key factors determining its speedy growth and development, but also for the movement's ability to engage in society. Thus, these authors see pentecostalism as a cultural synthesis with indigenous religions, a movement that both marks a point of rapture and shows continuity with previous religious manifestations (cultural theory).⁸ Finally, others observe pentecostalism as a force that transforms the communities with a secularization of hope and the idea of otherworldly salvation and happiness, which

Teológica Latinoamericana, 1992), 328, 330, 757. In sectarian-apocalyptic theory, Latin Americans are converted to pentecostalism because it is focused on massive groups of rural poor who are migrating to urban areas and find in pentecostalism a place of friendship, support, and a sense of community, as well as leaders who guide them to the "good road." See Brian H. Smith, *Religious Politics in Latin America: Pentecostal vs. Catholic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998). López criticizes these sociological perspectives about pentecostalism, stating that these scholars deem pentecostalism to be like a "pill" which with its theology and emotional practices numbs the social consciousness of the poor and helpless. *Pentecostalismo y Transformación Social: Más allá de los Estereotipos, las Críticas se Enfrentan con los Hechos* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Kairós, 2000), 9.

⁸ Hans Tennekes, *El Movimiento Pentecostal en la Sociedad Chilena* (Chile: Sub-facultad de Antropología Cultural y Sociología No Occidental. Universidad Libre de Ámsterdam. CIREN, 1984), 81. Pentecostal evangelization has attracted thousands of indigenous communities and Latin Americans, even in the United States, as pointed out by Luis León: "Protestant evangelization attracts Mexicans for its material benefits and its criticism of the Catholic Church." *La Llorona's Children: Religion, Life, and Death in the U.S. - Mexican Borderlands* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 208. Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda also state, "The fact that most Pentecostal churches and denominations produce native or indigenous leaders has been a key factor in their growth and in their ability to find creative ways to engage in society." *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 12.

develops in these communities a sense of anomie and relative deprivation (secular theory).⁹

However, as pointed out by Ryan R. Gladwin, “The concepts of political and social are often rooted in macrosocial and centrist political narratives that fail to interact with the value of micro and peripheral political expressions.”¹⁰ These macro theories are confronted with the micro reality lived by many Latina/o pentecostals like Maria in our opening vignette who are addressing the needs of the poorest and marginalized in the United States. A great percentage of U.S. Latina/o people live on the margins of society¹¹ and are struggling socially in *lo cotidiano* (quotidian, everyday)¹² and also many Latina/o pentecostal churches are responding to the needs of the poor. New research on progressive pentecostalism¹³ reveals a different picture. The theological perspectives and

⁹ Miguel Ángel Mansanilla, “Pentecostalismo y Ciencias Sociales. Reflexión en torno a las investigaciones del pentecostalismo chileno,” *Revista Cultura y Religión* 3, no. 2 (2009): 32–35. This article has been helpful for understanding the classification of the different theories on pentecostalism (sectarian-apocalyptic, cultural, and secular).

¹⁰ Ryan R. Gladwin, “Toward a Transformative Latin American Pentecostal-Charismatic Social Ethics: An Argentine Perspective,” in *Pentecostals and Charismatics in Latin America and Latino Communities*, eds. Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 55.

¹¹ “Facts for Features: Hispanic Heritage Month 2017,” United States Census Bureau, August 2017, <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2017/hispanic-heritage.html>
The 2016 official poverty rate in the USA was 12.7 percent and for Hispanics was 19.4 percent, i.e., 11.1 million. In total, 32.9 percent of Hispanics age twenty-five and older did not have a high school education, while 84.7 percent did not have a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2016.

¹² The term *lo cotidiano* refers to daily experiences lived by Latina/os. For a better understanding of the term *lo cotidiano*, see Carmen M. Nanko-Fernández, “lo cotidiano,” in *Hispanic American Religious Cultures*. Vol I, ed. Miguel A. De La Torre (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2009), 158–60.

¹³ Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism. The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 2. Miller and Yamamori aptly define *progressive pentecostals* as a movement that affirms the eschatological return of Christ and at the same time addresses the social needs of people in their communities. In the case of Hispanics, progressive pentecostalism refers to a prophetic voice that is focused on those US Latina/os who live on the margins of society and suffer discrimination and oppression. Progressive pentecostals have a strong connection with Liberation Theology, as stated by Douglas Petersen: “Despite some valid evangelical criticisms of liberationists, liberationists’ genuine concern for the poor is one point of convergence that Pentecostals

social concern of a vast sector of US Latina/o pentecostalism have changed considerably since its origins as a religious movement. New generations of pentecostals have sought a holistic understanding of their faith, blending together evangelistic outreach and social ministry,¹⁴ as Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yakamori describe in their 2007 book, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. In the introduction, they affirm:

While it is true that there have always been Pentecostals who have sought this type of holistic understanding of their faith, we believe that this is a movement that is gaining momentum—especially within the last decade or so. In part because of the upward mobility of some elements of the Pentecostal movement, churches increasingly have the means and connections to establish broad-based social programs—including partnerships with nongovernmental organizations—whereas previous generations of Pentecostals tended to be more sectarian, confining their social welfare efforts to members of their own community.¹⁵

Similarly, writing about US Hispanic Assemblies of God pentecostal churches, Gastón Espinosa states, “While traditional Evangelical and liberal Protestant churches

share with liberation theologians and practitioners.” Douglas Petersen, *Not by Might nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America* (Irvine, CA: Regnum Books International, 1996), 195.

¹⁴ The term most widely used in the public sector is *social service*, but the author has opted to use the term *social ministry*, instead of *social engagement*, *social work* or *social service* to refer to the church’s social programs in the context of pentecostalism that benefit the marginalized and oppressed. This term *social ministry* makes more sense in the context of Latina/o pentecostalism that claims that every activity of church work is seen as a ministry serving God. Carl S. Dudley uses the term *social ministry* while Douglas Petersen uses the term *social concern*. In fact, Petersen makes three distinctions: social ethics, social welfare, and social action. See Carl S. Dudley, *Basic Steps Toward Community Ministry: Guidelines and Models in Action* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 1991), 77; and Douglas Petersen, *Not by Might nor by Power*, 6. In this research project, no distinction between the terms will be made as the purpose of this study is different from Petersen’s book. Matthew T. Loveland uses the term *civic involvement* and defines it as “individuals working toward a shared vision of a good society, and engaging in the social, public acts that are required to achieve the desired ends while at the same time submitting to the basic authority of a yet more broadly shared civic culture.” See his doctoral dissertation, “Civic Congregations: Congregational Dynamics and Individual Civic Involvement” (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 2005), 140–41. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

¹⁵ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 3.

have split evangelism and social justice into two different types of ministry, Latino Pentecostals blend them together in evangelistic social work and outreach.”¹⁶ This social work is carried out by indigenous leaders who connect social commitment with a sanctified passion for serving the poor.¹⁷ Through a qualitative microsocial study in a Hispanic pentecostal church, this research project challenges the macrosocial idea that Latina/o pentecostals are socially apathetic. The project examines the missiological outlooks, theological perspectives, and ethical practices that motivate Latina/os to engage socially. Thus, this is a constructive project that emerges from the experiences¹⁸ of US Hispanic pentecostals and attempts to reflect their social location genuinely. As Miguel De La Torre states: “For any Hispanic-based ethics [and theology] to be relevant it must reflect the social location of the Latina/o community, specifically its faith and practices.”¹⁹ Latina/o pentecostal theologies are often formulated from the point of view

¹⁶ Gastón Espinosa, *Latino Pentecostals in America: Faith and Politics in Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 322.

¹⁷ Bernardo Campos uses the term *creole* or *indigenous pentecostalism* to refer to national leaders that develop churches, in his book, *De la Reforma Protestante a la Pentecostalidad de la Iglesia* (Quito: CLAI, 1997), 96.

¹⁸ Wolfgang Vondey *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 19–20. By *pentecostal experience*, the researcher follows Vondey’s explanation, who asserts that for some outside observers of pentecostalism, the pentecostal experience is ambiguous. Taking experience as the foundational basis of theology can be observed without any problem in other Christian traditions. What makes the difference in pentecostalism is the accumulation of experiences that take place around the day of Pentecost. Conversion, as the encounter with God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, is perhaps the most particular pentecostal experience. See also Robert P. Menzies, *Pentecostés: Esta Historia es Nuestra Historia* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2013), 143–47.

¹⁹ Miguel De La Torre, “Ethics,” in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, ed. Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore (Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012), 339. By social location, the researcher follows De La Torre’s definition as all those cultural experiences that influence a person’s identity. De La Torre provides an example: “Being a financially independent white male in the United States is a vastly different experience from being a black impoverished Latina... In other words, we are all born into a society that shapes and forms us.”

of other Protestant traditions and perspectives that dismiss their social location, causing misunderstanding and bias about who they really are. This research study, therefore, will contribute to the discourse: (a) by contributing to the conversation and literature of theology of social concern by providing a qualitative study among Latina/o pentecostals; (b) by integrating holistically all aspects of Latina/o pentecostal spirituality (emotions, practices, beliefs, perceptions, etc.) to be interpreted as a contemporary phenomenon; and (c) by allowing the pentecostal subalterns to speak for themselves.

General Literature Review

Latina/o pentecostals have been labeled “holy rollers,” “fanatics,” “delusional,” “possessed,” and “aleluyas.”²⁰ They have been described as people who are only concerned with living another-worldly life and without any interest in the social needs of the poorest in society. Certainly, Latina/o pentecostalism has not made a clear theological asseveration for a *preferential option for the poor* like Liberation Theology, but it has nonetheless been a movement of the poor and has served the marginalized of society since its origins in Latin American and the United States, as confirmed by Gamaliel Lugo and Walter Hollenweger.²¹ It is a theology *with* the poor, *for* the poor and *by* the poor. Hence, an examination of pentecostal theology of social concern and its development

²⁰ Daniel Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics: The Epicletic Community* (Cleveland, OH: CPT Press, 2012), 107. The term “aleluyas” (“Halleluiahs”) has been used as a pejorative characterization of Latina/o pentecostals who worship loudly and ecstatically and who dance in the Spirit. See Daniel Ramírez, *Migrating Faith*, 14, 72–73.

²¹ Gamaliel Lugo, “Ética Social Pentecostal: Santidad Comprometida,” in *Pentecostalismo y Liberación: Una Experiencia Latinoamericana*, ed. Carmelo Álvarez (San José: DEI, 1992), 107–108; and Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 18–24. See also Gastón Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).

among Latina/o pentecostalism will assist in providing a foundation for a theoretical framework. This literature review addresses some of the main arguments and observations made by a few progressive pentecostal scholars and illustrates with specific examples how Latina/o pentecostals are in fact socially engaged with the poor. As Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen notes,

Pentecostals, who are known for aggressive mission work, are often accused of being indifferent to social needs of the people to whom they proclaim the gospel. Even though Pentecostals have not had a viable theology of social concern until recently, their mission work has always included care of physical and social needs.²²

Miguel Álvarez makes observations along the same lines, writing about pentecostals' missiology and theology of social concern in Latin America. He points out, "The debate on integral mission among Pentecostals in Latin America is still incipient. There is no evidence that Pentecostals have developed their own theology of integral mission."²³ This theology of social concern (integral mission) as manifested by both authors is true in the case of US Latina/o pentecostals. Currently, there are few books and articles about the theology of social concern and ethics, particularly, in the context of the

²² Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Are Pentecostals Oblivious to Social Justice? Theological and Ecumenical Perspectives," *Missiology: An International Review* 29, no. 4 (October 2001): 417.

²³ Miguel Álvarez, *Integral Mission: A Paradigm for Latin American Pentecostals* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016), 39, 53 n1. M. Álvarez is from Honduras and has served in Latin American and the United States. He has been Director of Hispanic Ministries for the Church of God in Virginia and adjunct Professor of Theology and Mission at Regent University. The term "Integral mission" in Latin America is "Misión Integral." The term has been developed by members of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (Latin American Theological Fraternity) to discuss the need of integrating evangelistic mission with social engagement. Sherron George deems C. René Padilla to be the theologian that epitomizes such integral mission. "Constructing Latin American Missiology: How the Holistic Perspective Overcame Traditional Stereotypes," in *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America*, ed. Miguel Álvarez (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015), 28. For a better understanding of Misión Integral, see C. René Padilla, *Misión Integral: Ensayos sobre el Reino y la iglesia* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Nueva Creación, 1986). See also, C. René Padilla, "Integral Mission and Its Historical Development," in *Justice, Mercy and Humility: Integral Mission and the Poor*, ed. Tim Chester (Carlisle, PA: Paternoster, 2003), 42–58.

United States. Even though Latina/o pentecostalism in Latin America and the United States have grown exponentially,²⁴ there is a need to explore more about US Latina/o pentecostalism and its social ministry. One of the goals of this research study is to contribute to the theology of social concern in the academics with a qualitative study of a Hispanic pentecostal church in the United States. For the purposes of this introductory chapter, some Latin American, Hispanic-American, and American authors are included in this brief literature review that traces some of their main contributions.²⁵ These groups of authors are some upon whose work this research builds its theoretical framework and the contributions in the area under study.

Douglas Petersen's book *Not by Might nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern* (1996) can be considered as the first major work to develop a Latin American pentecostal social theology. He argues, "The Pentecostals' rejection of the world was symbolic rather than literal, demonstrating that they were not as impractical as some of their own declarations or their detractors might suggest."²⁶ He claims that Latina/o pentecostals have been involved in social action and social transformation by

²⁴ "The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States," Pew Research Center. Religion & Public Life, May 7, 2014, <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states/>

The Pew Research Center's 2013 National Survey reports that 55 percent of Hispanic adults identify themselves as Catholics, 22 percent as Protestants (including 16 percent who describe themselves as born-again or evangelical), and 18 percent as non-religiously affiliated. Pentecostalism has changed the religious landscape of the USA. The survey reports that among Hispanics who left Catholicism and now are Protestants, 28 percent identify themselves as pentecostals. Even among Hispanic Protestants, 29 percent say they are affiliated with a traditional pentecostal denomination, and 38 percent describe themselves as charismatic or pentecostal. Besides this, 52 percent of Hispanic Catholics describe themselves as charismatic.

²⁵ The researcher has selected some Americans that have served and know the pentecostal churches and their social concern in Latin America, such as Douglas Petersen and Richard E. Waldrop, who have served in Central America.

²⁶ Petersen, *Not by Might*, 31.

working with the most disadvantaged sectors. Petersen illustrates his arguments with a case study of the social impact of Latin American Child Care that provides an alternative education for children who live on the margins of society. It is worth pointing out that Petersen recognizes that much work still needs to be done in a pentecostal theology of social concern to reflect this social location.²⁷ Petersen's work is relevant to this research because it brings to the discussion an early voice about progressive pentecostals and, particularly, the theological and hermeneutical aspects related to my research questions.

Similar to Anderson, Richard E. Waldrop shares the experiences of Iglesia de Dios del Evangelio Completo (Full Gospel Church of God) in Central America in *The Social Consciousness and Involvement of the Full Gospel Church of God of Guatemala* (1997). Waldrop underscores the participation of the Chuicacá congregation in the community development and the Proyecto Evangélico de Servicio a la Comunidad (Evangelical Community Service Project), which was founded in 1979 under the auspices of the Bible Institute of the Guatemalan Center for Practical Theology.²⁸ This educational organization has contributed to health programs, medical clinics, nursery facilities, and children's feeding projects. Interestingly, the first formal course in Christian Social

²⁷ Petersen, *Not by Might*, 181.

²⁸ The term *evangélico* has different meanings and connotations depending on the speaker's geographical area and theological views. In the Anglo-American context, it usually refers to a specific sector called *evangelical*. For Latin Americans, the concept *evangélico* is in many cases synonymous with Protestant, but different than Catholic. Some Latina/o pentecostals consider themselves to be *evangélicos* but not Protestants. For a better understanding of the term *evangélico*, see José Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism: 1993 Carnahan Lectures*, Trans. Eugene L. Stockwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 27–28, n. 1; and Juan Francisco Martínez, *Protestantes: An Introduction to Latino Protestantism in the United States* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011), 5. In this study, the researcher has preferred to keep the Latin American usage that fits more appropriately with the theology of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. See Chapter 3, subheading, "A Theological Encounter."

Ministry was approved for inclusion in the theological curriculum and was offered by the Bible Institute in 1979.²⁹

Waldrop's description of his pentecostal experience in Guatemala, particularly in the field of education is significant in contradicting the assumed illiteracy of Latina/o pentecostals and in showing their social-communitarian involvement with the poorest in society. This aspect of education is crucial to this study because it contributes to reversing the notion that Latina/o pentecostals are biblically ignorant.³⁰

Darío López has been one of the first pentecostal theologians to have contributed significantly to the discussion of the socio-political commitment of pentecostal churches in Latin America. Four of his main works related to Latina/o pentecostal social concern are: *La Misión Liberadora de Jesús* (1997), *Pentecostalismo y Transformación Social* (2000), *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral* (2008), and *La Propuesta Política del Reino de Dios* (2009). López asks two key questions:

Are most pentecostals only concerned about teaching people to love the Bible, neglecting the understanding of it from their reality of misery, oppression, and exploitation?... Do pentecostals who have lived and live in extreme situations, such as the temporary political violence and economic crisis, have only a "devotional" reading of the Bible, with almost no concern to understand its message and apply it to the historical conjuncture of violence, oppression, and death in which they testify to their faith in the crucified and risen Lord?³¹

²⁹ Richard E. Waldrop, "The Social *Consciousness* and Involvement of the Full Gospel Church of God of Guatemala," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal Charismatic Research* 2 (July 1997), <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj2/waldrop.html>

³⁰ Espinosa, *Latino Pentecostals*, 275, 346–47. Espinosa presents several examples of how Latina/o pentecostals in the Assemblies of God are interested in balancing faith and education. For example, Latin American Bible Institute (now LABI College) in La Puente has graduated two thousand leaders, and since 2011 approximately one hundred graduates annually.

³¹ Darío López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral: Teología del Espíritu, Teología de la Vida* (Lima, Perú: Ediciones Puma, 2008), 17–18.

Drawing on his experience as a pastor and theologian, López has focused on marginalized women and children. In his analysis of the book of Luke, he claims that Jesus “was inverting the destiny of the poor and the marginalized, radically transforming social and economic relations contrary to the principles of the kingdom of God.”³² He outlines a *misión integral* from the periphery of the world as *la opción galilea*. These particular aspects are important for this research study, but even more so is his assertion that there is not disjuncture between the baptism of the Spirit (spiritual gifts) and the social mission of the church.³³ López’ perspective is a great contribution to pentecostal theology of social concern.

Miguel Álvarez, Director of Hispanic Ministries for the Church of God in Virginia and adjunct Professor of Theology and Mission at Regent University, has written in his book, *Integral Mission: A New Paradigm for Latin American Pentecostals*, about pentecostal spirituality and integral mission. M. Álvarez considers social theology still to be rather new to Latina/o pentecostals even though they have contributed to social service in different ways. He sees the need for a “formal teaching on integral mission” that can lead Latina/o pentecostals to be people with ‘an authentic spirit of service.’³⁴ Remarkably, the author

³² López, *The Liberating Mission*, 28 See also his books, *Pentecostalismo y Transformación Social: Más allá de los Estereotipos, las Críticas se Enfrentan con los Hechos* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Kairós, 2000), *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral: Teología del Espíritu, Teología de la Vida* (Lima: Ediciones Puma, 2008), and *La Propuesta Política del Reino de Dios: Estudios Bíblicos sobre Iglesia, Sociedad y Estado* (Lima: Ediciones Puma, 2009).

³³ López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral*, 12.

³⁴ M. Álvarez, *Integral Mission*, 179. M. Álvarez examines the historical influence of the Renovación Carismática Católica on pentecostal theology and missiology about issues such as the common good, solidarity as a social principle, the principle of subsidiarity, public service, freedom, and healing and reconciliation. See also Miguel Álvarez, *Beyond Borders: New Contexts of Mission in Latin America* (Cleveland, OH: CPT Press, 2017), 71–94.

underlines that Latina/o pentecostals almost always pray and fast before taking action since these spiritual disciplines prepare them to serve better socially in their communities.³⁵ M. Álvarez's work is important for understanding the ethos and spirituality of Latina/o pentecostals, but also for analyzing some of the weaknesses of the movement because he does not romanticize pentecostals' social work and mission.

An important work in pentecostal social ethics is *The Liberating Spirit: Toward a Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (1993) by the Hispanic American pentecostal scholar, Eldin Villafañe. Villafañe's is the first work written on Pentecostal social ethics that brings together the U S Latina/os' social struggle of oppression and marginalization in the *barrios* and the experience of the Spirit in a social spirituality. His pentecostal ethics is focused on community and advocates not only for individual liberation but also for social liberation that challenges the sinful and evil structures of society.³⁶ This social spirituality focused on communitarian liberation is relevant to this research. A pentecostal theology of social concern must challenge the individualistic aspects of salvation and sin so predominant in western orthodoxy in order to develop a

³⁵ M. Álvarez, *Integral Mission*, 51. For a great collection of articles in Latin American missiology, see Miguel Álvarez, ed., *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2005).

³⁶ Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward a Hispanic America Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 198–202, 222. See also his books, *Introducción al Pentecostalismo: Manda Fuego Señor* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2012); and *Beyond Cheap Grace: A Call to Radical Discipleship, Incarnation and Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 2006).

social spirituality based on the social struggles of the Latina/o oppressed and marginalized. It has to be a pneumatological social ethics.

Arlene Sánchez-Walsh in her book, *Latino Pentecostal Identity: Evangelical Faith, Self and Society* (2003), provides an in-depth examination of women and men involved in the social mission of Victory Outreach in Los Angeles. She acknowledges that “the history and philosophy of this church demonstrates that a Latino Pentecostal identity is shaped by social impulses as much as spiritual ones.”³⁷ Of particular import to this research study is Sánchez-Walsh’s observation about how many women were converted to pentecostalism and later became volunteers, for example helping others to recover from drug addiction. Such women are empowered and become role models to their children and to youth. Sánchez-Walsh’s work is full of *testimonios* of adults, women and men, and youth who were in prison, gangs, or involved with drugs, and who were transformed spiritually and socially by pursuing God, as many of the interviews attest.³⁸

Lois Ann Lorentzen and Rosalina Mira share her experience doing a qualitative research in a pentecostal church called Buen Samaritano in San Francisco. The church is made up of immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico y Argentina. Most of these people are low-to-middle working-class Many of the members claim to be former gang members, guerrilleros and drug addicts. The church promotes increased civic and political engagement of its members in issues such as voting,

³⁷ Arlene M. Sánchez-Walsh, *Latino Pentecostal Identity: Evangelical Faith, Self and Society* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003), xviii. Based on fieldwork, Luis León has also undertaken substantial research in Victory Outreach Church. *La Llorona’s Children: Religion, Life, and Death in the U.S.–Mexican Borderlands* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 203–40.

³⁸ Sánchez-Walsh, *Latino Pentecostal Identity*, 114–31.

immigration and social issues, and also help people find a job, an apartment or childcare. Interestingly, women play an active role in the church and as public leaders.³⁹

Gastón Espinosa asserts that Latina/o Protestants (Mainline Protestants, evangelicals, pentecostals and Alternative Christian counterparts) are more proactive than Latina/o Catholics in participating in political action and providing social services.⁴⁰ In his work, *Latino Pentecostals in America: Faith and Politics in Action* (2016), Espinosa writes about Latina/o pentecostals' Assemblies of God, in the United States. He describes the exponential growth of this pentecostal movement through church planting, evangelism, education, prayer, and Latina/o leadership. He also gives relevant information and specific examples about their social ministry and political action, as well as of the role of the women in the pentecostal movement. Espinosa explains the Latina/o faith-based social action as *Nepantla*-oriented.⁴¹

A recent work in Latina/o pentecostal theology of immigration is *Latin@ Identity in Pneumatological Perspective: Mestizaje and Hibridez* (2016) by Daniel Orlando Álvarez. D. Álvarez studies otherness using the concepts of *mestizaje* and *hibridez* in the formation of Latina/o identity of undocumented

³⁹ Lois Ann Lorentzen and Rosalina Mira, "El Milagro Está en Casa: Gender and Private/Public Empowerment in a Migrant Pentecostal Church," *Latin American Perspectives*, 32, 140 (Jan. 2005), 67-69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X04271852>

⁴⁰ Gastón Espinosa, "Latino Clergy and Churches in Faith-Based Political and Social Action in the United States," in Espinosa, *Latino Religions*, 279-302.

⁴¹ Espinosa, *Latino Pentecostals*, 363, 322-60. *Nepantla* is an Aztec Nahuatl term that means to be in the middle or in between. Espinosa defines it as "a methodological position that seeks to be in the balanced middle and that serves as a bridge between different methodologies and ideological perspectives." See Gastón Espinosa, "History and Theory in the Study of Mexican American Religions," in *Mexican Americans Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture*, ed. Gastón Espinosa and Mario T. García (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 46, n. 8.

immigrants.⁴² Through this, pentecostal churches are better able to serve Latina/os. He puts it this way: “I explore this issue of identity to gain theological resources that enable the church to understand and address the contradictions and conundrums produced by undocumented immigration.”⁴³ D. Álvarez’s ethnographic study is important because he displays the richness and diversity of undocumented Latina/os as hybrid identities, and because he explores the pneumatological experiences as a way of resistance and identity affirmation of Latina/os in the context of the United States.

Otto Maduro, the philosopher and sociologist of religion, makes a great contribution on Latina/o pentecostalism based on his studies in Newark, NJ. He presents the new face of pentecostalismo that is not only concern for the spiritual salvation of those being evangelized, but the practical component (social concern) of the pentecostal spirituality. In beautiful words, Maduro writes about how these Hispanic churches are transforming the lives of the poor:

From being a 'foreigner', an 'illegal', an 'anybody', a 'suspect' or, worse, a 'nobody', the immigrant person, when crossing the threshold of a Hispanic Pentecostal church, becomes more than simply 'someone', to become an absolutely important person, chosen, called, motivated, blessed and protected by God; a person with a more important mission than that of any movie star, millionaire, doctor, president, executive or professor: the mission of showing to those who do not know, the true path of eternal salvation.⁴⁴

⁴² *Mestizaje* usually refers to biological and cultural mixing of Spanish and American Indian ancestry in Latin American. For a better understanding of this term, see Benjamin Valentin, “Mestizaje,” in De La Torre, *Hispanic American*, Vol I, 351–56.

⁴³ Daniel Orlando Álvarez, *Latin@ Identity in Pneumatological Perspective: Mestizaje and Hibridez* (Cleveland, OH: CTP Press, 2016), 2.

⁴⁴ Otto Maduro, “Nota sobre Pentecostalismo y Poder,” *Horizontes Antropológicos* 13, no. 27 (2007): 30, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-71832007000100002>.

Likewise, Samuel Solivan writes about the experience of life in the Spirit as a personal and communal experience of transformation. Latina/os pentecostals, who are voiceless and powerless, exercise the spiritual gifts and ministries in *el culto* and regain voice and power. He maintains,

In *el culto*, the maid and the dishwasher are given respect and opportunities to exercise their gifts and talents. In the event of the gathered community *la hermana* Carmen is regarded as an authority on the Scriptures and *el hermano* Carlitos is sought for his administrative advice and leadership.⁴⁵

Otto's missiological and social perspective and Solivan's affirmation of the dignification of Latina/o pentecostals are significant to see how Hispanics are given a place and role in the community. While being treated as *indignos* (unworthy) in this country, they find a sense of belonging and family in the Hispanic pentecostal community.

The last work to be mentioned is *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel*, written by the pentecostal theologian, Wolfgang Vondey. In this work, Vondey writes of the social concern of pentecostalism and how the eschatological-missiological practices "have shifted from evangelization to social action... [and] have become redefined in terms of political activism, racial reconciliation, concerns for pacifism... and ecological liberation."⁴⁶ Vondey enumerates several social programs, among them emergency services, medical

⁴⁵ Samuel Solivan, "Sources of a Hispanic/Latino American Theology," in *Hispanic/Latino Theology: Challenge and Promise*, ed. Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Fernando F. Segovia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 143 (italics in the original).

⁴⁶ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 138 (italics in the original).

services, mercy ministries, youth programs, and services in the arts. This theological view as explained by this author is holistic, and takes into account not only the mental, spiritual, and emotional factors of the Latina/o pentecostals, but also the physical. What is significant about this for my research study is his way of relating the pentecostal social ministry to a constructive pentecostal theological narrative centered in the event of Pentecost.⁴⁷

Thesis and Scope

Although some research has been conducted on the theology of social concern, one of the goals of this research study is to contribute to the current literature by providing a qualitative study that allows Latina/o pentecostal to speak for themselves about their religious experiences that motivate them to do social work with the poorest in society. In seeking to understand this phenomenon, the study addresses one research question —What are the religious experiences that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry in the context of the United States?—and three sub-questions: a) What are the missiological outlooks that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? b) What are the theological perspectives that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? c) What are the ethical practices/perspectives that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? The research project seeks to interpret and understand these religious experiences under the rubrics of pentecostal mission, theology, and ethics. For those Latina/o pentecostals who experience oppression and domination, religious experiences as a community of the Spirit play a crucial role in their daily life in the

⁴⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 2–8.

context of the United States. The hypothesis of my proposal is that the pneumapraxis observed in the daily life of US Latina/o pentecostals are fundamental for understanding their social concern with the oppressed and marginalized.

Conceptual Framework

Why is this important? Pneumapraxis has been almost always analyzed as the Spirit's practices and experiences in pentecostalism discarding other significant aspects of pentecostal spirituality such as the affections, beliefs and convictions. Hence, in this research study, this concept is examined as an integration of practices, beliefs, affections, and convictions of the ethos and spirituality of Latina/o pentecostals. In order to address the research questions, a conceptual framework has been developed that emerged from the literature review: The missiological, theological, and ethical framework is analyzed as an integration of the religious experiences of Latina/o pentecostals. This framework "essentially represents an 'integrated' way of looking at the problem,"⁴⁸ that brings together related concepts (mission, theology and ethics) to understand broadly the phenomenon of the US Latina/o pentecostals and their social ministry.

Walter J. Hollenweger in his classic book, *Pentecostalism: Origins, Developments, and Worldwide*, argues that

Remarkably, Pentecostalism has not developed a pneumatology which fits its experience. One would expect Pentecostals and Charismatics to be strong in pneumatology; this is not the case. They are strong on experience of the Spirit, on pneumapraxis, but they are weak on the interpretation of these experiences.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Sitwala Imenda, "Is There a Conceptual Difference between Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks?" *Journal of Social Sciences*, 38, 2 (2014): 189, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2014.11893249>

⁴⁹ Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 218 (italics in the original).

In this research, the term pneumapraxis is used in a sense that goes beyond Hollenweger's understanding of pragmatic issue. Instead, it incorporates and integrates the actions, practices, rituals, intentions, motives, values, perceptions, emotions, and beliefs of Latina/o pentecostal religious experience and spirituality as proposed by Samuel Solivan's orthopathos or Kenneth J. Archer's integrative method of doing pentecostal theology.⁵⁰ In fact, Steve Félix Jäger argues that Hollenweger's claim seems "to be a bit dated," since new scholarship has since been done using a pneumatic lens, which is the *modus operandi* "in crafting any scholarly Pentecostal discourse."⁵¹ In other

⁵⁰ Kenneth J. Archer, "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner," *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 9, no. 3 (July 2007): 309, 310-311. Archer writes a method of doing pentecostal theology by integrating ortho-praxis and ortho-pistis into ortho-pathos. In other words, praxis links theory and practice mutually. Actions shape beliefs, and vice versa, beliefs inform activities. These are inseparable aspects that are needed to understand the richness of pentecostal theology and spirituality. He clarifies that this integrative method is "contrary to much of the Western philosophical tradition which insists that theory must proceed first in order to provide the foundation rational for practice." Vondey reaffirms this integrative method in his book, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 44–46. See also Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 184. Samuel Solivan proposes *orthopathos* as an intermediary matrix between orthodoxy and orthopraxy since Protestant and Catholic theology have failed to integrate the poor who remain at the margins. *Orthopathos* shows a concern for those who have been put aside on the margins of society. He claims that *orthopathos* as "an epistemological resource for theology can assist the theologian to bridge the gap between critical reflection and interpersonal engagement." See his book, *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 35–36, 37.

Land observes pentecostal spirituality to be an integration of beliefs, practices, and affections, i.e., orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathos. See Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (New York, NY: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 220. In this study, the researcher examines pentecostal theology, pentecostal missiology, and pentecostal ethics under the rubric of pneumapraxis, thus integrating all these aspects of the religious experiences of Latina/o pentecostals. These religious experiences of practices, affections, perceptions, emotions, and beliefs are mutually integrated in Latina/o pentecostal spirituality. This study analyzes these religions experiences as an integrative approach using the matrix of pneumapraxis. Put differently, the researcher does not separate orthodoxy, orthopraxis, and orthopathos but integrates them by holistically redefining the concept of pneumapraxis. The researcher concurs with Traci West's contention that "both theory and practice, and a fluid conversation between them, are most fruitful for conceiving Christian social ethics. Theory needs practice in order to be authentic, relevant, and truthful. Practice needs theory that so that practices might be fully comprehend." See Traci C. West, *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women's Lives Matter* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), xvii.

⁵¹ Steve Félix Jäger, *Pentecostal Aesthetics: Theological Reflections in a Pentecostal Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2015), 56.

words, the pneumapraxis is observed and understood as *experiences of the Spirit*⁵² and is integrated in the praxis and theory, experience and meditation, of US Latina/o pentecostals in this research study. If these pneumatological religious experiences are observed as human actions “based upon, or infused by, social meanings: that is, by intentions, motives, beliefs, rules, and values,”⁵³ then it is important to analyze the US Latina/o pentecostal phenomenon to understand and interpret their perspectives, outlooks, practices, values, and so on.

Steven J. Land in his book, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, writes about Christian affections and religious experiences in pentecostalism as a distinct configuration. Land proposes the term *integration* instead of *balance* because the latter is used in general culture and evangelical/Protestant churches to refer to a certain imbalance in emotions or mental health among lower-class pentecostals. The term that these evangelical/Protestant denominations use does not grasp the fundamental ethos and spirituality that these religious experiences play in the theological/pneumatological interpretation of Latina/o pentecostalism, for example. Land stresses,

⁵² Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, Trans. Margaret Kohl (London, UK: SCM Press, 1992), 17. By the experience of the Spirit, Moltmann refers to “an awareness of God in, with and beneath the experience of life, which gives us assurance of God’s fellowship, friendship and love.” He also writes about this experience of the Spirit as an intermediate state of every *historical experience* between the past and the future. Here, the researcher has opted to use the word *experience(s)* in the plural for Latina/o pentecostals instead of Moltmann’s use of the singular form. The term in its plural form connotes the variety of pneumatological practices, beliefs, rituals, and emotions that distinguish the pentecostal world.

⁵³ Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2009), 15–16, ProQuest Ebrary. Hammersley & Atkinson (1995) quoted by Saldaña: “If ‘human actions are based upon, or infused by, social meanings: that is, by intentions, motives, beliefs, rules, and values’ then why not just code these actions and social meanings directly.” Criticizing the separation of reason and heart so predominant in the study of religion, Mark R. Wynn states that “in matters of religion, we do not need to opt for (emotional) form over (objective) content, the ‘how’ over the ‘what’; nor do we need to rid ourselves of the ‘how’ to retain the ‘what.’” *Emotional Experience and Religious Understanding: Integrating Perception, Conception and Feeling* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), x.

Integration in certain crises of oppression, domination and breakthrough may be more like the fusion of a hydrogen bomb. Western society, especially in its white, middle and upper classes, *values control and quietness in matters of religion* (though not, of course in sports, political; campaigns, discotheques, rock concerts and so on). In contrast, when those oppressed by demonic forces and/or violated or defiled by humanity catch the vision of a kingdom that liberates, sanctifies and empowers a new existence, there is often, indeed almost inevitably, intensity of response. The joy and exuberance, the depth sorrow and longing, the courageous witness of millions of such persons cannot simply be written off as hysteria, mass psychosis or cheap escapism.⁵⁴

Thus, balance means that Latina/o pentecostals lose their minds in ecstasies and emotional experiences that make no sense to Western reason. It can be said that this way of thinking is rooted in the prevalent idea of reason inherited in the Enlightenment era in line with the traditional systematic theology of Protestantism.⁵⁵ Balance in Western perspective “values control and quietness in matters of religion.” In the meantime, integration refers to the fusion of all the elements of pentecostal spirituality to reflect on the richness of the religious experiences observed in the Latina/o pentecostal world. Pentecostal spirituality *integrates* the living emotional experience of sanctification as moral *integration* in the apocalyptic tension of spiritual transformation in line with their Wesleyan roots in a non-systematic theological tradition.⁵⁶ Integration in Latina/o pentecostal spirituality *values spontaneity and ecstasy in matters of the Spirit*. In other words, Latina/o pentecostalism is a distinct way of being that integrates body, mind, spirit, emotions, good will, intuition, and actions within an apocalyptic sense of urgency

⁵⁴ Steve J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 44–45 (italics added).

⁵⁵ Villafaña, *The Liberating Spirit*, 152. Concerning the *ardour* as part of the element of the culto, Eldin Villafaña states that it is a dominant part of worship in Hispanic churches as part of their religious and emotional experiences that require balance and order.

⁵⁶ See Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 23, 45–46, 211.

for the search of human flourishing.⁵⁷ It is not a way of being other-worldly in heaven. It is a way of being here and now on earth.

Samuel Solivan, a Hispanic pentecostal theologian, proposes the concept of *orthopathos* as an integrative model and intermediary matrix between orthodoxy and orthopraxis since Protestant and Catholic theology have failed to integrate the poor who remains at the margins. Orthopathos shows a concern for those who have been put aside on the margins of society. He claims that “*Orthopathos* is that understanding of theology as the proper relationship between correct belief (orthodoxy) and proper ethics or action (praxis).”⁵⁸ This author uses this concept to rectify two problems he sees in North America. On the one hand, the use of orthodoxy as a “correct doctrine” has ignored the social struggle of oppression and injustice among Latina/os. On the other hand, orthopraxis is often reduced to a critical reflection that is not directed involve in social actions on behalf of the marginalized.⁵⁹ Therefore, this research study seeks to contribute to the understanding and interpretation of US Latina/o pentecostals’ religious experiences which Hollenweger claims has been a weakness of pentecostalism. This understanding

⁵⁷ See Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 41, 130. When I discuss *human flourishing*, I follow Wariboko’s perspective, which entails a “commitment to creating, broadening, and deepening new possibilities for life.” Wariboko uses the term *aretē* (excellence), and the philosophical concept of *eudaimonia* (flourishing living, living, and doing well) to articulate his idea of human flourishing related to the pentecostal spirit as a way of going beyond the Aristotelian definitions. Both concepts are integrated and express power, vitality, fulfillment of meaning of being, life, and freedom, as well as resisting obstacles and interpretations that undergird and accept the social and political structures that create oppression. See also Nimi Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence: A Framework for Social Ethics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 25–28; and Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 156.

⁵⁸ Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 11, 35-37 (italic in the original).

⁵⁹ Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 11-12.

and interpretation are examined through the pneumatic lenses of pentecostal mission, theology and ethics.

Main Theorists

The main theorists for this qualitative research study are informed by four pentecostal theologians/ethicists: Darío López, Wolfgang Vondey, Daniel Castelo and Eldin Villafañe. López's conceptualization of *misión integral* is crucial for examining the missiological outlooks, perspectives, and practices that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry with the marginalized in the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. This author is one of the first pentecostal theologians to have shown interest in social transformation from a missionary perspective. He maintains that

Solidarity with the marginalized, more than interesting theological discourse or relevant ideological proposal has to be an everyday experience that rests upon the risks of publicly identifying oneself with those who are socially and culturally marginalized. Consequently, to sit at the same table and break bread in fellowship with the disinherited of this world forms part of a missionary lifestyle.⁶⁰

Misión integral, then, alludes to a mission from the periphery of the world.

López indicates that the theological perspective in the Gospel of Luke is clear about this mission from the margins:

From the world of the poor and integral view of mission which seeks the transformation of all things is weaved, radical discipleship marked by an

⁶⁰ López, *The Liberating Mission of Jesus*, 22. See C. René Padilla, "La Misión en las Américas: Una Perspectiva Latinoamericana," in *Misión en el Camino: Ensayos en Homenaje a Orlando Costas*, 6 ed., ed. Samuel Escobar (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, 1992); and Sharon E. Heaney, *Contextual Theology for Latin America: Liberation Themes in Evangelical Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publisher, 2008), 238–44. For an understanding of *misión integral* in North America, see Michael Clawson, "Misión Integral and Progressive Evangelicalism: The Latin American Influence on the North American Emerging Church," in *Religion*, 3 (August 2012): 790–807, DOI: 10.3390/rel3030790; See also Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana web site, <https://ftl-al.com/quienes-somos/>

unshakeable faith in God of life is affirmed, peace is built, and the dignity of all human beings as created by God is asserted.⁶¹

Misión integral reverses the story of oppression and marginalization that faces Latina/o pentecostals who are committed to the liberating mission of Jesus by engaging in concrete actions. In López's words, these economic and social circumstances lived by the disenfranchised impel Latina/os to do pentecostal mission "from the periphery of the world, from the corner of the dead, from spurned Galilee [where] the proclamation of the kingdom began."⁶² For this pentecostal theologian, "the Galilean Option of Jesus was neither incidental nor circumstantial" and it was an option from solidarity with those who suffered marginalization.⁶³ God's love is particularly for the poor and marginalized and for all those who live on the margins of society. This solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized is not separate from pentecostal spirituality. That is, the baptism of the Spirit and the spiritual gifts are part of the Christian life as a "testimonio integral," affirms López.⁶⁴ The baptism in the Spirit empowers people to live a life serving the marginalized with the spiritual gifts as a pentecostal integral mission.

Vondey's study of a constructive pentecostal theological narrative centered in the event of Pentecost is critical for examining the theology of

⁶¹ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 28.

⁶² López, *The Liberating Mission*, 31.

⁶³ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 31–32.

⁶⁴ López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral*, 31.

Latina/os and to understanding what motivates them to social ministry with the oppressed. Vondey's methodology has two key organizing principles: a) the theological narrative of pentecostal theology is the five-fold or full gospel: Jesus as savior, sanctifier, baptizer, healer, and coming king; and b) the event of pentecost is the core symbol of pentecostal theology.⁶⁵ These aspects are important to this research study, but so too are Vondey's critiques of Western theology. He argues that "systematic theology is dominated by Western ideas and constructs that are not always readily shared by the Pentecostal experiences in the East and the global south theology."⁶⁶ He clarifies that a pentecostal theology must embody "Pentecostal spirituality, experiences, affections and practices which engage the world not exclusively through doctrine but also materially, physically, spiritually, aesthetically, morally and socially."⁶⁷

Vondey also problematizes the traditional anthropological theological manner of understanding the *imago Dei*. He criticizes the dominant and polychotomous (soul, body, spirit) interpretations in pentecostalism for compartmentalizing human nature and fellowship and for spending more time talking about what human beings *have* than what they *are*. These dominant perspectives suffer from "a dualistic perspective with regard to gender, race, and disability or obscure the communal dimensions inherent in the redemption of all

⁶⁵ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 3–14.

⁶⁶ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 33.

⁶⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 33.

creation.”⁶⁸ Vondey’s conceptualization of a relational interpretation, meaning human agency in relation to God, self, and others, is fundamental for understanding the world of affections observed in Latina/o pentecostalism. others.⁶⁹ His constructive theology and progressive pentecostalism is crucial to analyze the data collected in the field to see the theology of the Spirit that predominates in Latina/o pentecostals engaging with their social location.

In *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics: The Epicletic Community*, Daniel Castelo

ponders these questions:

For all the gravitas that virtue theory has in terms of its history and influence upon Christian moral reflection, why should Pentecostals care? Would not a proposal for virtue ethics within Pentecostalism be an artificial imposition, one with little by way of convergence?⁷⁰

Castelo indicates that the revivalist model so embedded in religious affections in American Pentecostalism is limited in terms of moral formation. A human life is not only marked by these moments of affections, but also by the ups and downs of an ordinary life. For this reason, another model is necessary that complements the religious affections. He sees that complement in virtue ethics: “the virtue may be a way of opening the traditional Pentecostal purview of the Spirit’s work within creation, and such a venue could be promising for constructive moral reflection by Pentecostals.”⁷¹

⁶⁸ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 179.

⁶⁹ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 176.

⁷⁰ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 75.

⁷¹ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 76.

Castelo develops his pentecostal ethical task using the rubric of *moral theology* instead of *Christian ethics*. Traditionally, moral theology has been related to the premodern era of moral reflection and Catholicism, while Christian ethics has been related to the modern social reflection and Protestantism. Moral theology studies the journey of a human person made in the image of God based on dogmatic and spiritual theology, experiencing the triune God, and participating in God's Spirit community and its practices in performance, embodiment, and conditionedness. Christian ethics with its perspectives of global market, nation state, and corporation aims to be more universal and public. While Christian ethics is often focused on the question of "What should we do?" with its emphasis on "right actions," moral reflection is interested in the question of "What kind of people are we trying to become?" Finally, moral theology is concerned with God's character and the development of virtues, whereas Christian ethics begins with the commanding God and deontological theories of moral inquiry.⁷²

Castelo proposes a theological reflection of affections from virtue theory as an epicletic community within pentecostalism. He sees virtue not only as an acquired quality, but as a practice-virtue oriented to transforming the community socially and spiritually. Castelo's concept of pentecostal virtue ethics goes along with the testimonios collected in the interviews. Latina/o pentecostals are particularly focused on how they can show Christ through their social actions and how they are a living testimony and open letters to the public, as Paul mentions in his epistle to the Romans. His perspective

⁷² Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 23–25.

on virtue ethics related to pentecostalism is relevant for realizing how Latina/o pentecostals in Ebenezer see the fruit of the Spirit as *virtues* of the *Espíritu*.

Finally, Eldin Villafaña's theory of ethics as pneumatology will be helpful for understanding the construction of a pentecostal social ethic rooted in the religious experiences of Latina/o pentecostals at the Iglesia Ebenezer. Villafaña asserts,

So far, I have understood that the most fruitful approach to developing the theological foundations for a social ethics for Hispanic Pentecostalism rests in the development of a social spirituality. This spirituality must emerge and thus cohere with Pentecostal experience –particularly as it relates to the ministry of the Spirit.⁷³

This dissertation project is also interested in the ways in which Villafaña's work explains the individualistic aspects of pentecostal ethics and theology, as well as the pentecostal Latina/os as *persons-in-community*. To help us understand the situated reality of Hispanic pentecostalism, he clarifies that it is defined by its self-understanding of the community of the Spirit in society.⁷⁴ Hispanic human and religious experience cannot be seen only as individual, but also as a social-community experience. Villafaña's work is significant to this research project since he understands both sin and salvation as social entities:

All social structures and institutions have moral values embedded in them. They can be good or evil. What is significant to note at this time is that the texture of social existence reveals the presence of institutions and structures that regulate life, that seem to have an objective reality independent of the individual, and thus can become oppressive, sinful or evil. We are all part of this texture of social existence and our spiritual living is impacted by this complex web.⁷⁵

⁷³ Villafaña, *The Liberating Spirit*, 193.

⁷⁴ Villafaña, *The Liberating Spirit*, 150.

⁷⁵ Villafaña, *The Liberating Spirit*, 175–76.

The work of these four pentecostal theologians will help us to analyze the data collected in the fieldwork as an integration of the religious experiences of the Latina/o pentecostals. Hence a key question to be asked is: What methodology can be useful to interpret and understand the US Latina/o pentecostal religious experiences that reflect their missiological, theological, and ethical motives?

Research Methodology

María may not be able to explain her faith in “scholarly” categories, but she lives and practices her pentecostal faith every day. This research project seeks to understand the religion-as-practiced and experienced by ordinary US Latina/o pentecostals like María rather than as interpreted by official spokespersons in the predominant religious institutions. This dissertation is a piece of phenomenological qualitative research based on what has been called *lived religion*.⁷⁶ This research takes seriously peoples’ stories, narratives, and cultural experiences to communicate the voice of those Latina/o pentecostals from Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) who have been relegated to the margins of society and yet are involved in the social ministry of the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, serving the poorest in the Río Grande Valley. In view of this, lived religion includes the religious experiences of Latina/o pentecostals’ bodies and minds and

⁷⁶ Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), chapter 1, n. 9. McGuire sees the importance of the connection between lived religion and phenomenological approach to human consciousness as embodiment. James Murphy recognizes that phenomenological analysis is appropriate to study religious experiences and can be easily integrated with other frameworks and methodologies. “Beyond ‘Religion’ and ‘Spirituality:’ Extending a ‘Meaning Systems’ Approach to Explore Lived Religion,” *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 39, 1 (May 2017): 17. Archana Barua also recognizes the interconnectedness of the lived religious experience and the phenomenological approach. Barua, *Phenomenology of Religion* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2009), 74, 138. Michelle A. González states that Robert Orsi studies religion from a materialist phenomenological approach where the objective is a “more dynamic integration of religion and experience.” *A Critical Introduction to Religion in the Americas: Bridging the Liberation Theology and the Religious Studies Divide* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2014), 15.

how they make sense of their religious experiences. These U.S. Latina/o pentecostals construct their religious world in community through vivid experiences and religious practices that are not always approved by official religious institutions. These pentecostal religious experiences are particularly crucial for many immigrants that come from Latin America and the Caribbean. Especially while they are adapting to their new social, economic, and cultural conditions, religion plays a major role in their lives in family and community. Latina/o immigrants bring with them their culture, religiosity, idiosyncrasies, values, and other dominant characteristics to comprehend their social reality in the context of the United States. Robert Orsi puts it this way:

Workplaces, homes, and streets—as well as churches, temples, shrines, class meetings, and other more immediately recognizable sites of religious activity—are the places where humans make something of the worlds they have found themselves thrown into, and, in turn it is through this subtle, intimate, quotidian action on the world that meanings are made known, and verified.⁷⁷

Several other scholars of religion and sociology have also observed the importance of lived religion, among them Meredith B. McGuire, who was a professor of sociology and anthropology at Trinity University, and who explicates,

The term “lived religion” is useful for distinguishing the actual experience of religious persons from the prescribed religion of institutionally defined beliefs and practices. This concept...depicts a subjectively grounded and potentially creative place for religious experience and expression. Although lived religion pertains to the individual, it is not merely subjective. Rather, people construct their religious worlds together, often sharing vivid experiences of that intersubjective reality.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Robert Orsi, “Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion,” in *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*, ed., David D. Hall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 7.

⁷⁸ Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 12. For a better understanding of lived religion, see Chapter 1, “Everyday Religion as Lived,” 13–17.

This phenomenological qualitative research based on the lived religion school provides two key aspects that are essential to this research: It is dynamic and relational.⁷⁹ The dynamism is predominant in Latina/o pentecostalism as a movement that is characterized by its malleability and adaptability not only culturally but also religiously.⁸⁰ It is a multifaced religious movement with a fluid and hybrid identity. Latina/o pentecostalism is a world of relationships between clergy and laity, women and men, young and old, from different Hispanic subcultures that involve different views, ideologies, and idiosyncrasies about how to live pentecostally.

For this research, qualitative interviews and participant observations were undertaken and gathered at the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer, a Hispanic pentecostal church in Los Fresnos, Texas, just outside Brownsville and South Padre Island. This church is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a mainline Protestant denomination, and has a social ministry called the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries. I spent almost three months interviewing and observing board members, pastors, leaders, and church members, who were serving primarily political refugees who sought safety there from persecution in their home countries. This indigenous methodology has developed collaborative endeavors between the researcher and participants attempting to give voice to the subalterns (Gayatri Spivak.)

⁷⁹The concepts of dynamism and relationality come from Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 5–7.

⁸⁰ See Chen-Yang Kao, “The Cultural Revolution and the Emergence of Pentecostal-style Protestantism in China,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 24, no.2 (2009): 171–188, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537900902816657>

Significance and Contribution to the Field

With a few notable exceptions, when theologians consider Latina/o pentecostals, most seem to be satisfied with the categorizations, descriptions, and accounts borrowed from the social sciences, observes José Míguez Bonino.⁸¹ Therefore, this project is relevant for the church in North America because it will offer a look from inside the lives of the US Latina/o pentecostals. Through a phenomenological study of a Hispanic pentecostal church not affiliated with any of the classic pentecostal denominations, but affiliated with a mainline Protestant denomination called the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), this study will bring a missiological, theological, and ethical reflection to the understanding of Latina/o pentecostalism and its social ministry.

The contributions of this research project are primarily eight: (a) it contributes to the literature of theology of social concern by providing a qualitative study among Latina/o pentecostals; (b) it develops a constructive theology of social concern in the context of the United States by focusing on the social location of Latina/o pentecostals, and describing their contributions to theological conversations; (c) it integrates in a holistic fashion all aspects of Latina/o pentecostal spirituality (emotions, practices, beliefs, perceptions, etc.) to be interpreted as a contemporary phenomenon; (d) it allows and invites the pentecostal subalterns to speak for themselves; (e) it advances critical interdisciplinary research and brings together diverse fields to explore the lives of US Latina/o pentecostals. This research study is located at the intersections of social ethics, pentecostal studies, constructive theology, Latinx studies, and religious studies; (f) it

⁸¹ José Míguez Bonino, "Introduction," in Petersen, *Not by Might*, x.

disseminates new knowledge and understanding about religious experiences as pneumapraxis among Latina/o pentecostals; and (g) it contributes globally with new voices from the marginalized southern world.

After reading this dissertation, the readers will have a deeper understanding of: (a) what motivates Latina/o pentecostals to undertake social ministry with the poor; (b) how the church and the US Latina/o pentecostals interpret and make sense of their religious experiences in their daily life, while addressing the needs of the poor who suffer marginalization and oppression; (c) how the church develops a strong sense of community and cooperation for social transformation; and (d) how US Latina/o pentecostals promote institutional, congregational, and individual change in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Positionality Toward the Research

Together with the Chilean novelist, Hernán Rivera Letelier, I can say “Yo me crié con la Biblia en la almohada”⁸² (I grew up with the Bible under my pillow). I was born in a traditional pentecostal family. I attended all the Sunday School classes in Centro de Enseñanza Bíblica (Bible Learning Center), a pentecostal church affiliated with La Misión Panamericana founded by Ignacio Guevara (1914–2011), a pentecostal denomination developed by local leaders in Colombia. My work and theological views were influenced by my own experience as a pentecostal leader/pastor/educator in several

⁸² Leopoldo Cervantes-Ortiz, “Hernán Rivera Letelier: Una literatura marcada por la religiosidad evangélica,” *Protestante Digital.com*, Nov 12, 2015, http://protestantedigital.com/cultural/37855/Hernan_Rivera_Letelier_Una_literatura_marcada_por_la_religiosidad_evangelica_I. Rivera Leteliers has written several novels in which he reveals in-between-the-lines certain pentecostal experiences. See *Himno del Ángel Parado en una Pata* (Chile: Editorial Alfaguara, 1996); and *El Arte de la Resurrección* (Chile: Editorial Alfaguara, 2010).

churches and seminaries/universities in Colombia and in the United States. I worked as a Hispanic pastor in two different churches: one in Grand Junction, CO affiliated with the Assemblies of God, the other in Aurora CO, affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.) While serving these congregations, I witnessed firsthand how Latina/o pentecostals were/are discriminated against and treated inhumanely, particularly by white congregations. I observed how difficult it was for these white congregations to understand the social challenges that Latina/os face(d) every day in this country. However, I also witnessed how Latina/os were working hard and faithfully attending worship services during the week and on weekends. A strong sense of belonging and community predominated in these Latina/o pentecostal congregations that consequently served as a place of refuge and fellowship. This experience was like the springboard that allowed me to jump into the pentecostal waters and navigate this reality side-by-side with my Latina/o community for this research project.

Outline of Chapters

This research project is divided into two sections: Section I contains introductory materials and Section II covers the findings of the study. Chapter One briefly introduces the topic, the purpose for the study, the statement of the problem, the research question, methodology, general literature review, the project's significance and contribution to the field, and an outline of chapters. Chapter two describes the research methodology and clarifies the purpose of using phenomenological qualitative research (interviews and observations-participations) based on lived religion as a crucial resource for this project. Chapter three offers a brief history of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (hereafter ICE) and its social ministry the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (hereafter SWGSM), the

church's founder pastor Feliberto Pereira, his relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the Latina/o pentecostal world. The purpose of this short history is to clarify the origin and trajectory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and in particular how this mainline Protestant denomination is related historically and theologically to US Latina/o pentecostalism.

Chapter four reveals what the research shows about the missiological outlooks that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social work in the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. In this chapter, the voices of the Latina/o pentecostals are paired with thoughts from scholars such as: Darío López, Miguel Álvarez, Daniel Ramírez, Virgilio Elizondo, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Estrela Alexander, Luis León, Elizabeth Brusco, Arlene Sánchez-Walsh, and Gastón Espinosa. This pairing helps to create an understanding of the ways in which Latina/os pentecostals live and practice the mission of the church while engaged in social ministry. Chapter five reveals what the research shows about the theological perspectives that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry in the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. In this chapter, the voices of US Latina/o pentecostals collected in the research are paired with thoughts from scholars such as: Wolfgang Vondey, Samuere Soliván, Néstor Medina, Javier R. Alanís, Michelle González, Loida Martel-Otero, Amós Yong, Justo González, and Kenneth Archer. This pairing helps to depict the theological narrative of Latina/o pentecostals and their pentecostal identity as a religious movement. Chapter six details what the research shows about the ethical practices that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry in the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. In this chapter, the voices of US Latina/o pentecostals are paired with thoughts from scholars such as: Daniel Castelo, Eldin Villafañe, Miguel De La Torre, Nimi Wariboko, María Teresa

Ávila, Traci C. West, Ismael García, José Míguez Bonino, José M. Castillo, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dorothee Sölle and Steven J. Land. This pairing helps to show what virtue means to Latina/o pentecostals and how they live ethically in the midst of the struggle in *lo cotidiano*. Finally, chapter seven presents the conclusions of the research project.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

It is Sunday morning in Los Fresnos, TX. María wakes up early this morning at 7:00 a.m. She goes to the church auditorium to see that everything is cleaned and in place. She and other women fix a meal in the kitchen for the fellowship time after the worship service. María wears an elegant dress and is ready thirty minutes before worship begins. She is passionate about attending the worship Sunday service and serving others with dedication. The thermometer shows about 85 degrees Fahrenheit at 9:45 a.m. In total, around sixty people arrive for Sunday school at Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. Before the classes begin, the associate pastor leads the group in a welcoming greeting and a prayer of invocation. After the prayer, the group divides into three classes: adults, youth, and children. Among this crowd of Latina/o pentecostals, there are six refugees who are supported by the church's social program.

The adult class is usually led by Pastor Feliberto Pereira, while the other Sunday classes are led by volunteer leaders of the congregation. The theme of the adult class, "How to Live a Life of Sanctification," is taught with biblical texts read by several members of the church following a guide-manual that develops the lesson for each Sunday of the year. The class listens with great attention to the words of the pastor and responds excitedly with an "amen" to each bullet point highlighted by the Pastor Pereira. The class lasts approximately 45 minutes; meanwhile, another large group of people is beginning to arrive for the worship service that begins at 11:00 a.m.

The Sunday class concludes with a prayer while more people drift into the sanctuary, which has a capacity for approximately 120 people. The associate pastor warmly welcomes the congregation and opens the worship service with a prayer. Subsequently, the worship band sings coritos and worship songs effusively. The congregation responds with similar enthusiasm, singing the songs, clapping, raising hands, and even dancing. After the praise time, Pastor Pereira reads the sermon's scripture. He preaches with enthusiasm and the members of the church again respond with an "amen." The sermon lasts for 30-40 minutes, and afterwards the congregation celebrates with Holy Communion. Even after the worship service closes with announcements and the benediction, people stay in the sanctuary for camaraderie and fellowship.

Introduction

María attends all Sunday morning worship services, as well as Sunday and Wednesday evening services. She is a dedicated pentecostal woman who serves God, refugees, and the church with love and passion. She has experienced firsthand what it is to live as refugee and be marginalized in the US.

For this study, the researcher was looking for a theory of religion by which to understand María's experiences in the context of the United States, specifically given that María and most of the Latina/o pentecostals in ICE, including refugees, live on the margins of US society.

The purpose of this study was to examine what religious experiences significantly motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry with the poorest persons in the United States. By social ministry, the researcher refers to addressing the social (material,

physical) needs of the poorest, not only their spiritual needs. These religious experiences were analyzed as daily social actions, beliefs, emotions, and practices of the Spirit (pneumapraxis) in the lives of U.S. Latina/o pentecostals. The research project sought to interpret/understand these social actions/experiences under the rubric of pentecostal mission, theology, and ethics. To that end, the study posed one major research question and three sub-questions:

- (1) What are the religious experiences/practices that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry in the context of the United States?
 - (a) What are the missiological outlooks that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry?
 - (b) What are the theological perspectives that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry?
 - (c) What are the ethical practices that motivate encourage US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry?

This second chapter describes the study's research methodology which includes: establishing a rationale for the qualitative research; studying lived religion as a phenomenological approach; choosing/finding research participants; giving an overview of the research design; determining methods of data collection and data analysis; determining ethical considerations; and establishing issues of trustworthiness.⁸³

⁸³ See Linda Dale Bloomberg & Mare Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Roadmap from Beginning to End*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2008). This book has been very helpful for organizing the structure of the dissertation in its different steps, especially for Chapter 2.

Rationale for Qualitative Research

This research examined the missiological outlooks, theological perspectives, and ethical practices that motivated Latina/o pentecostals to engage in a social ministry at the ICE. It analyzed Latina/os pentecostals' practices, perspectives, and outlooks as everyday pneumapraxis religious experiences.⁸⁴ Comprehending religion-as-practiced and experienced by US Latina/o pentecostals was crucial to this study. As Walter Benjamin explains, "We penetrate the mystery only to the degree that we recognize it in the everyday world." Thus, it was vitally important to understand these pentecostals' everyday religious practices and experiences as a relevant mystery to be studied.⁸⁵

A qualitative phenomenological approach was selected to explore and analyze these Latina/o pentecostals' religious experiences. Anol Bhattacharjee in his book, *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices*, writes that "the emphasis in qualitative analysis is 'sense making' or understanding a phenomenon, rather than predicting or explaining."⁸⁶ It is to explore, discover, and describe the world from the perspective of the research participants.⁸⁷ Two approaches are typically used in a research

⁸⁴ Anol Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices* (Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, 2012), 97, http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3/. Writing about inventing hypotheses in qualitative research Bhattacharjee considers that based on emergent themes that are generalizable across case sites, "tentative hypotheses are constructed. These hypotheses should be compared iteratively with observed evidence to see if they fit the observed data, and if not, the constructs or relationships should be refined."

⁸⁵ Walter Benjamín, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," [1929], in *Walter Benjamín: Selected Writings*, Vol 1 (1927–1934), trans. Edmond Jephcott, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999) 55.

⁸⁶ Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research*, 113.

⁸⁷ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 38. Both state that "Qualitative research is suited to promoting a deep understanding of a social setting or activity as viewed from the perspective of the research participants. This approach implies an emphasis on exploration, discovery, and description." For a better understanding of different qualitative research approaches, see Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, Table 3.1, 39–40.

inquiry: the deductive and the inductive. The first one is a theory-testing approach, in which the researcher tests concepts or patterns of a specific theory using empirical data, while in the theory-building approach, the researcher infers concepts or patterns from an observed phenomenon or data.⁸⁸ This phenomenological research project used qualitative research, an inductive approach, and interpretive thematic analysis.⁸⁹ In such a phenomenological qualitative study as lived religion the questions of “what” and “how” Latina/o pentecostal participants experienced and practiced their religious world were relevant to answer the research questions.⁹⁰

Some advantages to using a qualitative rather than a quantitative research approach are: a) it is useful for theory building; (b) it provides substantial and authentic (subjective) information about the researched community for the researcher to explore and understand; (c) it is contextual/ has a particular social location; (d) it allows significant interaction between the researcher and the participants; (e) that general ideas can be inferred from the specific patterns found in the gathered data; (f) it is centered on phenomenology and understanding, g) it is oriented to the process, a holistic perspective, and a dynamic reality; (h) it gives voice to those who are voiceless in the dominant society; and (i) it is an important source of knowledge about a community that remains

⁸⁸ Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research*, 3, 35. He states, “It appears that inductive (theory-building) research is more valuable when there are few prior theories or explanations, while deductive (theory-testing) research is more productive when there are many competing theories of the same phenomenon” (4).

⁸⁹ Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research*, 18–19. Bhattacharjee writes about four paradigms: the paradigm of functionalism, the interpretivism paradigm, the structuralism paradigm, and the humanism paradigm.

⁹⁰ Clark Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 98.

invisible.⁹¹ These advantages Debora K. Padgett also observes, noting that qualitative methods “favor naturalistic observation and interviewing over the decontextualizing approaches of quantitative research.”⁹² As a summary of the importance of the qualitative research approach, Padgett writes that these methods,

[s]eek to represent the complex worlds of respondents in a holistic, on-the-ground manner. They emphasize subjective meanings and question the existence of a single objective reality ... they assume a dynamic reality, a state of flux that can only be captured via intensive engagement. A qualitative report is a *bricolage*, a pieced-together, tightly woven whole greater than the sum of its parts.⁹³

Latina/o Pentecostalism is a complex world and cannot be comprehensively analyzed from one hegemonic or normative religious theory. A qualitative approach that investigates lived religion allows a great interaction between the researcher and the participants and a better understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Studying Lived Religion as a Phenomenological Approach

In his book, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*, Robert A. Orsi, contends that

Religion is commonly thought of among modern people and by many scholars in the West... as a medium for explaining, understanding, and modeling reality, but this book offers religion as a network of relationships between heaven and earth involving humans of all ages and many sacred figures together. These relationships have all the complexities – all the hopes, evasions, love, fear, denial, projections, misunderstandings, and so on – of relationships between humans.⁹⁴

⁹¹ For more information about the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research, see Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research*, 93.

⁹² Deborah K. Padgett, *Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Public Health* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), 3.

⁹³ Padgett, *Qualitative and Mixed Methods*, 3.

⁹⁴ Robert A. Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious World's People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 2.

For Orsi, “Research is a relationship” and he sees “Religion as relationship,”⁹⁵ i.e., the religious practitioners are subjects/agents that embody a space and time and not just a catalog of systematized doctrines and beliefs.

In *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion*, Manuel Vásquez establishes that the dominant traditional “canon” in religious studies that emerged from Protestant biblical hermeneutics and focused on sacred texts or systematic theologians such as Barth or Tillich has been unhelpful for understanding what has been called *popular religion*.⁹⁶ Yet this canon has been predominant in the study of religion and has been institutionalized as the way of doing research. Vásquez clarifies his idea, arguing that new perspectives are needed that

[e]xplore the transnational production, circulation, and consumption of goods, the fashioning and control of religious bodies, the constrained creativity involved in the emergence of hybrid identities, the relations of domination and resistance that mediate the formation of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, the practices that make possible the creation of spaces of livelihood.⁹⁷

For decades, Eurocentric perspectives have defined what religion is and what religion means for others. Hence, Vásquez’s proposal challenges the hegemonic-orthodoxy-normative study of written texts, beliefs, and doctrines so predominant in the

⁹⁵ Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 3.

⁹⁶ Manuel Vásquez, *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1, 173, 185. In this book, Vásquez writes about enfolded non-reductive materialism as a way of studying religion as a lived body. He claims that traditionally the Cartesian paradigm that remains in the study of religion has caused religion scholars to ignore the body. This paradigm and way of studying religion focused primarily on matters of belief and limits the capacity to consider the material aspects of religions, such as experiences, practices, and so on.

⁹⁷ Vásquez, *More than Belief*, 3.

western study of religion and creates a space for deconstructing those methodologies. His criticism and questions are particularly relevant for US Latina/o pentecostals:

For [those] immigrants, what matters religiously is not high doctrine, but everyday existential problems that they often tackle through the practices, narratives, and material culture that they bring with them or that they encounter in their new homes in the United States. How can the heavily textual approaches that are still dominant in religious studies explore the full force of glossolalia, exorcism, and divine healing among Latina/o Pentecostals and Charismatic Catholics?⁹⁸

In the same vein, Meredith B. McGuire observes the difficulties of studying popular religion⁹⁹ or syncretic religions and spiritualities since the individualized concept of commitment and belonging so developed in the Protestant Western norms limits our understanding of how individuals engage their religions in their everyday lives.¹⁰⁰ Since his earliest research interviews in the late 1960s, McGuire has become less satisfied with the traditional canon of doing research in religious studies and with the “standard scholarly concepts of religion and religiosity.”¹⁰¹ This traditional canon observes religious and spiritual experiences as fixed, non-dynamic, orthodox, and normative, which means that they overlook characteristics of diversity, hybridity, flexibility,

⁹⁸ Vásquez, *More than Belief*, 2.

⁹⁹ McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 45-46. McGuire makes clear that the term *popular religion* has been used with pejorative connotations to the point that some scholars have suggested it be discarded altogether. She states that Robert Orsi considers the concept to have a trajectory of racism and colonialism in Western history. However, McGuire encourages “scholars to consider abandoning the value-laden and ethnocentric distinctions, not just the term ... Thus, it is useful to examine what has been called ‘popular religion’ in order to appreciate how people have selected and used elements of popular religious traditions in practicing their religions in their everyday lives.” This researcher follows McGuire’s idea of popular religion, considering them to be useful to study the religious experiences of US Latina/o pentecostals.

¹⁰⁰ McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 11–12.

¹⁰¹ McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 4.

malleability, and adaptability that are particularly well developed in the religious practices and identities of Latina/o pentecostals or Catholic Charismatics, for example.¹⁰² Rubén Rosario Rodríguez recognizes this space of popular religious practices as a *locus theologicus* that fosters the development of political empowerment and communitarian identity among Latina/os.¹⁰³

Thomas A. Tweed in his book, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*, writes about persons' struggles with the category *religion* when it is seen as fixed and universal. He analyzes the religion and spiritual experiences of Cubans in Miami, observing the difficulty of interpreting those practices that are a confluence and mixing of a variety of afro spiritualities, indigenous traditions, and Christian beliefs. In fact, Tweed prefers to use the term *religions* instead of *religion* in his definition: "Religions are confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries."¹⁰⁴ This definition of religion is interesting because it reflects a phenomenon that is happening in the United States where many independent congregations and pentecostal churches are organizing themselves beyond patterns of traditional Protestant denominationalism and indoctrination. These pentecostal churches welcome people without a strong emphasis on

¹⁰² For an understanding of identities as fluid and dynamic, see Homi Bhaba, *The Location of Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994), 2–3.

¹⁰³ Rubén Rosario Rodríguez, "Hispanic Liberative Ethics," in *Ethics: A Liberative Approach*, ed. Miguel A. De La Torre (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 94. Carmen Nanko-Fernández clarifies that *locus theologicus* is "a source for theology that includes but it is not limited to the social, political, cultural, economic, and gender context taken into account in the theological tasks." "Lo cotidiano," 159.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 53–54 (italics in the original). See also Meredith B. McGuire, *Religion: The Social Context*, 5th ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2002), 123–27, 290.

beliefs or systematized Sunday school classes and are instead focused on their everyday religious experiences. Néstor Míguez admits that scholars have long been “tempted to overlook the life experience of real people, the everyday anxieties of ordinary people, of their subjectivities. Even, in many cases, seeing ‘the subjective’ as suspicious.”¹⁰⁵ A theory was needed that observed these religious experiences of US Latina/os not as fixed but as having the same fluidity and dynamism that characterized Latina/o pentecostalism as a popular religion.

In response to these critiques by Orsi, Vásquez, McGuire, Tweed, and Míguez of the traditional and official canon and method of studying religion, the methodology used in this project is a phenomenological qualitative research method based on what Tweed and others call *lived religion*.¹⁰⁶ Instead of focusing on an abstract-institutionalized religion, the phenomenological approach as a lived religion “is grounded in the concept and conditioned upon setting aside all preconceived ideas (epoché) to see phenomena through unclouded glasses, thereby allowing the true meaning of phenomena to naturally emerge with and within their own identity.”¹⁰⁷ This phenomenological approach provides a more dynamic and relational way to understand religious experiences and events such

¹⁰⁵ Roy H. May Jr., *Ethics without Principles: Another Possible Ethics –Perspectives from Latin America* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 20.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas A. Tweed, “After the Quotidian Turn: Interpretive Categories and Scholarly Trajectories in the Study of Religion since 1960s,” *The Journal of Religion* 95 (3) (July 2015): 366. Tweed states, “Whichever adjective scholars chose –local, popular, or lived—many also appealed to phrases like *ordinary people* and *everyday life* in their analyses of religion.” This is a relevant article that traces the history of the study of religion and everyday life and its main authors. See also Clive Erricker, “Phenomenological Approaches,” in *Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ed. Peter Connolly (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001), 73–101. For a comprehensive distinction between *lived religion* and *popular religion*, see Nancy T. Ammerman, “Finding Religion in Everyday Life,” *Sociology of Religion*, 75, 2 (2014): 190, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/sru013>

¹⁰⁷ Stephanie Sheehan, “A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Transcendental Phenomenology through the Lived Experiences of Biblical Leaders,” *Emerging Leadership Journeys*, 7 (2014): 10,

as divine healing, speaking in tongues, and ecstasies that prevail in US Latina/o pentecostal religious experiences and practices. The theory helps us to understand the flexibility, hybridity and malleability of Latina/o pentecostalism. Alejandro Frigerio summarizes some key elements of this phenomenological approach that are fundamental to this research project: (a) it has no presupposition of a system of beliefs; (b) religious practices and experiences, rather than beliefs, are the most important in this approach; and related to this, (c) it is not only focused on the cognitive functions of religion.¹⁰⁸

The researcher's interest was in comprehending religion-as-practiced and experienced by ordinary US Latina/o pentecostals like María rather than official representatives of religious institutions. Religious pentecostal experiences are crucial for many immigrants that come from Latin American and the Caribbean. While such immigrants are adapting to their new social, economic, and cultural conditions, religion plays a major role in their family and community lives. Latina/o immigrants bring with them their culture, religiosity, idiosyncrasies, and values, as well as other characteristics peculiar to them that helps us comprehend their social reality in the context of the United States. Transformation, assimilation, rejection, or retention are some of the processes that Latina/o immigrants are experiencing in adjusting to their lives in their new home, often far from their countries of origin.¹⁰⁹

<https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/elj/vol7iss1/2ELJ-Sheehan.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ Alejandro Frigerio, "¿Por qué no podemos ver la diversidad religiosa?: Cuestionando el paradigma católico-céntrico en el estudio de la religión en Latinoamérica," *Cultura y Representaciones Sociales* 12, 24 (March 2018): 75, <https://doi.org/10.28965/2018-024-03>. See also, Bettina E. Schmidt, ed., *The Study of Religious Experience: Approaches and Methodologies* (Bristol, UK: Equinox, 2016).

¹⁰⁹ See Karen I. Leonard, Alex Stepick, Manuel A. Vásquez, and Jennifer Holdaway, ed., *Immigrants' Faiths: Transforming Religious Life in America* (New York, NY: Altamira Press, 2005), 1–9. The aspects

Writing about this richness of religious experiences and practices, Orsi underscores, “the key words here are *tensile, hybridity, ambivalence, irony*; the central methodological commitment is to avoid conclusions that impose universality.”¹¹⁰ With this in mind, the researcher examined the everyday lives of Latina/o pentecostals to see what motivated them to engage socially with the poorest in US society, how they lived religiously, and how they served in their churches, places of work, and homes. He took seriously religion not only as manifested through Latina/o pentecostals’ minds (the cognitive approach), but also through Latina/o pentecostals’ bodies (lived religion), and how they made sense of their religious experiences in *lo cotidiano* (everyday) and in their *lucha* (struggle).¹¹¹ The ICE’s Latina/o pentecostals offered a significant variety and richness of religious experiences and practices which manifest in their hybrid identities and innovative ways of serving the poor that were well worth researching.

It was usual to see ICE’s Latina/o pentecostals attend worship services several times per week, praying, dancing in the Spirit, and speaking in tongues. These aspects of the religious practices and experiences of Latina/o pentecostals cannot be dismissed as peripheral or inconsequential but must be taken seriously in a religious research study.

McGuire explains why:

Because religion-as-lived is based more on such religious practices than on religious ideas or beliefs, it is not necessarily logically coherent. Rather, it requires a practical coherence: It needs to make sense in one’s everyday life, and it needs to be effective, to ‘work,’ in the sense of accomplishing some desired end

of “transformation” and “rejection” are mentioned by Karen Leonard (1). See also Manuel Vásquez, *More than Belief*, 253.

¹¹⁰ Robert Orsi, “Everyday Miracles,” 11 (italics in the original).

¹¹¹ For a better understanding of the term *la lucha*, see Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004.)

(such as healing, improving one's relationship with a loved one, or harvesting enough food to last the winter.)¹¹²

Serving the poorest in US society and experiencing a suprahuman religious world is what gives meaning to the pentecostal (spirituality of) Latina/os. Luis León helpfully reminds us that religion also consists of

the emotional, psychological, physical, spiritual, imaginative, real, dogmatic, ambiguous, semiotic, mystical, mundane, ordered, and disordered stuff that emerges when humans try to make sense –*make history*– out of the fantastic forces of the world, of their *unchosen* conditions.¹¹³

A phenomenological approach as lived religion contributes significantly to understanding this everyday pentecostal world that is full of such emotional, physical, spiritual, imaginative, and ambiguous religious experiences.

Vásquez criticizes not only the traditional canon of doing research, but also the lived religion school for placing too much emphasis on micro-descriptions and self-reflections, which risk focusing on the micro-universe at the expense of the macro-universe understanding, that is, losing sight of what the micro-view has to do with national, transnational, and political matters, the modern nation-state, global capitalism, and (post) colonialism. He adds that this school tends to a certain ambivalence, on the one hand of animating resistance and on the other of fomenting a hegemonic imposition.¹¹⁴ Despite Vásquez's criticism, this researcher deemed that lived religion was an appropriate approach for this research project that is embedded in the religious practices and experiences of US Latina/o pentecostals. A phenomenological study of the

¹¹² McGuire, *Lived Religion*, 15.

¹¹³ Luis León, *La Llorona's Children*, 17 (italics in the original).

¹¹⁴ Vásquez, *More than Belief*, 254.

lived religion of the ICE and its social ministry was crucial to this project's research questions and theoretical framework. What Vásquez's criticism seems to overlook is that a micro-universe often reflects what is happening in the macro-universe of national, transnational, and global processes. Local practices of Latina/o pentecostals can be used to study larger cultural fields particularly in religious/theological studies. Rather than treating these micro-worlds only as local spaces of domination and resistance, it is revealing to focus on how Latina/o pentecostals deal religiously in their everyday lives with the social struggles produced by the macro-policies made by the dominant culture.

Research Participants

The site selected at which to carry out the research was Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE), a Hispanic Pentecostal church in Los Fresnos, Texas, just outside Brownsville and South Padre Island, near the borderland with Matamoros, MX (Appendix A). This church is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a mainline Protestant denomination, and it has a social ministry called the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM) (Appendix B). The ICE/SWGSM primarily serves political refugees who seek safety from persecution in their home countries. The SWGSM also includes other social programs, such as Rice and Beans, Bethel Casa Hogar, and Mike's Kids. A purposive-snowball (chain) sampling method¹¹⁵ was used to select the research participants.¹¹⁶ To participate in this study, persons had to fall into at least two of the

¹¹⁵ For a better understanding of this sampling strategy, see Jennifer Mason, *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002), 128, 138, 142, 214, http://www.sxf.uevora.pt/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Mason_2002.pdf. See also Joseph A. Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013), 78–86.

¹¹⁶ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 68, 147. Bloomberg and Volpe clarify that some researchers prefer to use “research participants” or “selected participants” instead of “research

following categories: a) be twenty-one years and older, b) be Latina/o or Hispanic-American or/and, c) have been involved in the social ministry of Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM) for at least two years. The research project had ten participants, of whom eight were members of the ICE and were actively involved in the social ministry of the SWGSM, one was a Board member of the SWGSM, and one was a volunteer partner worker. Participants were from Latin American countries such as Peru, Honduras, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Although all participants fit the study participation criteria, there were differences among them, such as: length of time spent serving in the ICE/SWGSM, gender, age, and occupation (Appendix C).

Overview of Research Design

Listed below are the steps used to carry out this research. (These steps are discussed at greater length in the sections that follow.)

1. A selected review of literature was conducted in the area of the research study and also on the qualitative research methodology before the collection of data began. The purpose was to read the contributions of scholars in religion and authors in the broad areas of pentecostal theology, Latina/o studies, theories of religion, ethnic studies, missiology, and ethics.
2. At the 2015 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the researcher talked with Pastor Feliberto Pereira to clarify final details about the purpose of the research he intended to undertake at the ICE.
3. The IRB approved the process to proceed with the research.

sample.” In this study, the researcher will be referring to the “research sample” as “research participants” or “participants.”

4. The dissertation proposal was defended successfully.
5. During fieldwork in Los Fresnos, TX, some potential research participants were contacted by phone or personally, face-to-face. The researcher handed out the consent form and interview questions for their review to help them decide whether or not to participate in the study.
6. Open-ended semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten participants.
7. A brief post-research interview was conducted with the research participants.
8. The data collected was analyzed using initial coding and theming.

Literature Review

A selective literature review was conducted to inform this study (Appendix D). Among the several topics identified, three were selected as particularly relevant to this research and worthy of further investigation: pentecostal theology, pentecostal mission, and pentecostal ethics. The focus of the review was to gain a better knowledge of the predominant topics in progressive pentecostalism and the pneumapraxis as an integrative matrix to understand the religious experiences of Latina/o pentecostals that are crucial in their missiology, theology, and ethics.

Following the review of this literature, the researcher took all the online courses required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the research project to be approved. After the IRB approval (Appendix E), the researcher defended the dissertation proposal.

Data Collection

As a way of checking the research process, this study used multiple methods to collect the data and to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.¹¹⁷ The phases

¹¹⁷ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 154.

used in this qualitative research were exploring and contacting, recruiting, interviewing, and reviewing.

Phase I: Exploring and Contacting

In this phase, the researcher met several times with Dr. Miguel De La Torre and Dr. Luis León to become oriented about the research project.¹¹⁸ Dr. De La Torre carefully reviewed the dissertation proposal draft and made substantial comments and corrections. Dr. León recommended that the researcher search for a pentecostal church of at least two hundred members and to use a qualitative research approach instead of a quantitative one. Through the Hispanic Theological Initiative networks, the researcher met with Dr. Loida Martell-Otero in Princeton, NJ, and with Dr. Gastón Espinosa. Dr. Martell-Otero was like a spiritual mentor, while Dr. Espinosa reviewed the dissertation proposal and made extensive corrections and comments. Subsequently, the researcher searched for pentecostal churches and spoke with several pastor friends and others who were interested in the research project among different denominations, such as Assemblies of God, Four Square, Church of Christ, and Disciples of Christ. After careful review of the research questions and the purpose of the study, Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) and its social ministry Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM) was selected as the place to carry out the research. This church fitted the purpose and objectives of the research perfectly. It is a Hispanic pentecostal church, and practically all its members came from Latin American countries or are Hispanic-Americans. At the time of the

¹¹⁸ Dr. Miguel De La Torre is a professor of Social Ethics and Latinx Studies at the Iliff School of Theology and is the chair of my doctoral committee; the late Dr. Luís León was professor of Religious Studies at the University of Denver and second chair; and Dr. Jennifer S. Leath is assistant professor of Religion and Social Justice at the Iliff School of Theology, and third chair.

research, the church had already served the poorest in the Rio Grande Valley for some years and had expanded its social ministry to serve people in Mexico. The church is also a congregation within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), which is the denomination in which the researcher has been ordained. It transpired that this was the first time that this type of research had been done in a Hispanic church within this denomination.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher met with Pastor Feliberto Pereira at the 2015 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Columbus, OH to discuss the project in more detail. Pastor Pereira showed a genuine interest in the study to be carried out in ICE in Los Fresnos, TX.

Before beginning the fieldwork, the researcher submitted a summary in Spanish of the research proposal and the recruitment letter (Appendix F)¹¹⁹ to Pastor Pereira by email (see Appendix G).

Phase II: Recruiting

Through a grant given by the University of Denver Latino Center for Community Engagement and Scholarship (DULCCES), the researcher traveled and stayed in Los Fresnos, TX for the duration of the fieldwork. A meeting was planned with Pastor Pereira, the associate pastor, and a key leader of ICE to identify potential participants. They were contacted by telephone or personally face-to-face using the recruitment letter. The researcher clearly explained the purpose of the study to each potential participant and handed out the consent form (Appendix H) and interview questions (Appendix I) for their

¹¹⁹ The recruitment letter, consent form, and interview questions were translated from English into Spanish language by the researcher, as part of the requirements of the IRB protocol.

review and information so that they could decide whether or not to participate in the research. Of the eleven participants who were contacted, one declined to participate at this stage.

Phase III: Interviewing

The interview method was used as the primary tool to collect the data and a secondary method was participant observation. In a qualitative study, the interview is considered the main tool to gather research participants' information.¹²⁰ Quoting Michale Quinn Patton, Bloomberg and Volpe confirm that “qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit.”¹²¹ In the Ethnography Field Methods course that the researcher took at the University of Denver, a *pilot project* as a sample of qualitative open-ended interviews was carried out in a Hispanic pentecostal church in Aurora, CO (Appendix J).¹²² This course and the pilot project helped the researcher to gain an understanding of and practice in purposeful observation, double-entry field notes, interview questions, IRB process, and organization of the gathered data.¹²³

¹²⁰ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing your Qualitative Dissertation*, 192.

¹²¹ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing your Qualitative Dissertation*, 173. For a better understanding of the advantages and limitations of using qualitative interviews, see Radhira Viruru and Gaile S. Cannella, “A Postcolonial Critique of the Ethnographic Interview: Research Analyzes Research,” in *Qualitative Inquiry and the Conservative Challenge: Confronting Methodological Fundamentalism*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Michael D. Giardina (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 175–89, EBSCOhost Academic eBook Collection.

¹²² Appendix J contains the consent form used in the pilot project.

¹²³ The researcher served as an associate pastor at the Iglesia Tabernáculo de Restauración from 2008 to 2014, where this pilot project was carried out to practice the interview method and learn about the IRB protocol.

The researcher spent almost three months observing participants and interviewing board members, pastors, leaders, and church members, who were serving primary refugees seeking safety from persecution in their home countries. The set of open-ended questions was answered through qualitative research at ICE, a Hispanic pentecostal church in Los Fresnos, TX, just outside Brownsville and South Padre Island. This church is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a mainline Protestant denomination.¹²⁴ Open-ended semi-structured questions were used to interview the participants (See Appendix I). As stated by Bonnie Stone Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, “*open questions ... help elicit your informant’s perspective and allow for more conversational exchange.*”¹²⁵ The logic for using this method was that interview questions allow a better interaction between the researcher and the participants since more than one answer is possible for each question, and the method both opens a space for dialogical engagement between the interviewer and the interviewees and gives the both parties the opportunity to clarify information.

After the recruitment and handing out the consent forms and interview questions (See Appendices H and I), the researcher telephoned or contacted personally each participant to set a time and date for the interview. Each participant was asked if they had questions or comments about the study ahead of the interview. The researcher explained verbally that all information would be kept locked in a church office and that participation in the study was voluntarily. He also clarified that without penalty

¹²⁴ In Chapter 3, the history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is developed relating to the history of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries.

¹²⁵ Bonnie Stone Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing*, 3ed. (New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007), 238 (italics in the original).

participants could stop their involvement in the study and the interview at any time or skip any questions they did not wish to answer. No one manifested any inconformity with or distrust of the process. The researcher kept a hard copy of the interview questions on the study site at all times. He asked the interviewees to read attentively and sign the consent form (Appendix K). Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. Once each interview was completed, the researcher wrote down some notes about para-verbal communication and about how he had observed the affection of the participant (relaxed, quiet, anxious, etc.) during the interview time. Ten interviews were completed face-to-face with a total of six key female and four key male adult leaders who were involved in the work of the social program known as SWGSM. The interviews all took place between October 2016 and January 2017 and were recorded and transcribed for later qualitative analysis. Eight participants were interviewed in a private office in the ICE's facilities, one in the participant's home, and one in Dallas, TX.

On the one hand, the in-depth interviews enabled the researcher to listen and learn from the vivid experiences of those Latina/o pentecostals who were selflessly serving refugees, as well as working in several areas in the church and other social programs in SWGSM, such as Rice and Beans, Bethel Casa Hogar, and Mike's Kids. He heard their stories about their past, their difficulties in their homelands, and about how many of them had come to this country leaving everything behind. The interview questions included topics about the participant's personal background, favorite biblical texts, gifts of the Spirit, ethical values, and about the mission of the church, among others. The flexibility of the structure of the interviews gave space for spontaneous moments, questions, and responses in which participants typically shared stories that went beyond responses to the

formal interview questions. All participants contributed actively to the research and were genuinely interested to share their responses as testimonies of life.

On the other hand, double-entry notes (Appendix L) were used in the participant-observation strategy.¹²⁶ This method enabled the researcher to grasp firsthand what these Latina/o pentecostals and refugees considered to be particularly meaningful by participating in their everyday activities. He participated in many daily activities, such as having breakfast or lunch with refugees, living in the same dormitories as them, and collaborating with some of the tasks assigned to them while they remained in the church facilities. But he also spent time with church members who serve voluntarily in the social ministry, for example by talking, eating, watching TV, playing, and attending the worship services alongside them. The researcher also visited Bethel Casa Hogar in Matamoros, MX and spoke with the director and some of the youth who served in the orphanage. There were many benefits to being so present with them. The rapport between researcher and participants was easy and emerged naturally. Sharing with them as a Latino and speaking Spanish were both helpful in building this rapport. Some of the refugees, people from the orphanage, and church members shared their stories spontaneously with the researcher. As such conversations were in addition to those in the formal interviews with the ten research participants, such experiences helped the researcher understand more deeply how church's members and refugees worked together for the well-being of the community.

¹²⁶ Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater, *Fieldworking. Reading*, 85–89.

Phase IV: Reviewing

After the initial interview, the researcher followed up with a brief post-interview of about 15–20 minutes to offer a summary of the notes and to invite and take note of comments and corrections to the transcripts that the research participants suggested. Nine out of the ten participated in the post-interview. This post-interview served to revise and clarify some aspects of the gathered data.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

After completing the data collection, the next task was to manage the significant amount of information gathered. The phases of data analysis were reading, initial coding, and theming the data.

Phase I: Reading

The goal of the phenomenological approach as lived religion is to allow the participants to speak for themselves about their lived religious experiences. Therefore, in this phase, essentially, the researcher was focused on reading with open eyes and open ears. He transcribed all the interviews as a way of immersing himself in the data collected in the field work and became more familiar with it, as recommended by Bloomberg and Volpe¹²⁷ All interview transcripts were printed out (Appendix M). He carefully re-read the interview transcripts, observation notes, and other church documents (pamphlets, board reports, posters, etc.) (Appendix N), re-imagining those lived moments he had experienced with the Latina/o community as part of his fieldwork. This step is like

¹²⁷ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 189. They assert, “Bear in mind that you must know your data intimately. Although extremely tedious, transcribing your interviews yourself is one way of immersing yourself in your data and becoming familiar with it.”

looking back and attempting to compile the vivid experiences, as well as writing notes to “develop tentative ideas about [sub] categories and relationships”¹²⁸ The initial categories of missiology, theology, and ethics on this research project were “deductively obtained from the literature.”¹²⁹

Phase II: Initial coding

What is a code? In a qualitative inquiry, a code “is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data.”¹³⁰ In this first cycle of coding the method used was that of *initial coding* to arrange the data collected as part of the fieldwork and group it systematically. Saldaña suggests such initial coding for beginning qualitative researchers and for interview transcripts as a way of attuning the researcher to participants’ language and perspectives.¹³¹ This initial coding process began analyzing the transcripts by selecting quotes and then those quotes were classified in themes. Initial coding is about “breaking down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities and differences.”¹³² In this research project, the researcher used this method for reduction of data material, visualization of the research project, and conceptual framing. This method is useful for attaining a

¹²⁸ Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, 105.

¹²⁹ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 160. In this research, the coding and subcategories (subthemes) were extracted inductively.

¹³⁰ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 3.

¹³¹ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 48.

¹³² Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 81.

detailed big picture of the research theme, focusing on the research questions, and better engaging with the studied material.

The initial coding process began manually, as suggested by Johny Saldaña: “I am one of those instructors who require that my students first perform ‘manual’ coding and qualitative data analysis using paper and pencil on hard copies of data entered and formatted with basic word-processing software only.”¹³³ The researcher began coding manually sentence-by-sentence, enumerating them and writing some words (codes) on the right-hand margin of the paper (Appendix O). Interview transcripts, researcher’s notes, posters, church bulletins, and Board reports were analyzed in this first cycle of coding. The coding process identified key passages of the text and related them to the key categories previously designed. The researcher used different colors for each category: missiology (blue), theology (green), and ethics (pink). Using this method allowed clear visualization of the different codes/categories and easy identification of particular themes or patterns in the participants’ interviews. This was one of the slowest processes in the qualitative data analysis: it demanded high concentration and careful re-reading of the transcripts. The purpose of this first step was to search for concepts that bring together similarly ideas, concepts, or categories to be organized in groups of families. For example, in the category of missiology, some codes emerged such as “Social mission as testimony,” “Social mission as a commitment with the poor,” “Social mission as unconditional love,” “Social mission has to see with spiritual needs,” “Social mission

¹³³ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 21-22. Saldaña deems that Initial Coding is appropriate for beginning researchers so that they learn to code a variety of data forms such as interview transcripts, field notes, journals, documents, diaries, correspondence, and so on (81).

demands supplying material needs,” among others. The researcher also circled, highlighted, and wrote some notes on the left-hand margin to support the conceptual framework of the research study.¹³⁴ Eighty-two codes emerged in this initial coding process (See Appendix O).

Phase III: Theming the Data

In this second cycle,¹³⁵ the researcher employed a coding method called *theming the data* and *focused coding*. Saldaña defines a theme as “a *phrase* or *sentence* that identifies what a unit of data is *about* and/or what it *means*.”¹³⁶ The purpose of the first method, theming the data, was to analyze extended passages of code (extended thematic statements) rather than shorter ones, passages that captured “the essence and essentials of participant meanings.”¹³⁷ In this second cycle, he created a template to enter the codes that emerged in the initial coding (Appendix P). While entering and transferring all the information, he translated the interview transcripts from Spanish into English. The researcher used the same colors for each thematic category and printed out all the templates created in the computer (120 pages.) As a great number of codes emerged in the initial coding from this process, after reading through them, in this second cycle of theming the data he searched for codes that could be linked together to create subcodes (subcategories) to narrow down even more the gathered data (see Appendix P). In other

¹³⁴ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 16–17. This process of highlighting, circling, or bolding is called “precoding.”

¹³⁵ First Cycle and Second Cycle refers not to a linear process but to ongoing stages that are continually in the process of being reevaluated and improved.

¹³⁶ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 139. (Italics in the original).

¹³⁷ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 52, 139.

words, he analyzed the data “by reducing information to significant statements or quotes and combine[d] these into thematic categories.”¹³⁸

Focused coding is also recommended as a second cycle method for qualitative interview transcripts. Basically, this method organizes the data based on the themes that emerged in the previous processes of coding, searching “for the most frequent or significant Initial Codes to develop “the most ‘salient categories’ in the data corpus.”¹³⁹ During this stage, the researcher winnowed down the themes and organized the data around the key categories (missiology, theology, and ethics) focused on “what is ‘essential’ rather than ‘incidental,’”¹⁴⁰ in the studied phenomenon. Finally, he created graphics of relationship networks between codes (categories) to identify possible structures or systems of relationships. The main purpose of all this data analysis in a phenomenological qualitative study as lived religion is for the researcher to develop “a *textural description* of the experiences of participants, as well as [a] *structural description* of their experiences.”¹⁴¹

All these phases in the data analysis required keeping in mind the research questions. To ensure such a focus, the researcher attached to a wall a printed matrix of the

¹³⁸ See Linda Dale Bloomberg and Mare Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Roadmap from Beginning to End*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2012 [2008]), 33. For an understanding of thematic analysis in qualitative research, see Lorelli S. Nowell, Jill M. Morris, Deborah E. White, and Nancy J. Moules, “Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16 (Aug 2018): 1–13, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327078001>; and Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, “Using thematic analysis in psychology,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, no. 2 (Jan 2016): 77–101, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235356393>

¹³⁹ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 155.

¹⁴⁰ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 140.

¹⁴¹ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 49 (italics in the original).

questions and the main purpose of the research project. During these cycles he practiced “peer debriefing” to gain trustworthiness and credibility.¹⁴²

Ethical Considerations

During the various phases in any qualitative study, as Giampetro Gobo argues, “the researcher in his or her capacity as a scientist and professional must make decisions with regard to his or her code of ethics.”¹⁴³ Joseph A. Maxwell similarly observes that “attention to ethical issues in qualitative research is being increasingly recognized as essential, not just for ethical reasons but as an integral aspect of the research.”¹⁴⁴ The researcher took great pains to maintain expected standards of confidentiality and reliability during the research process, which were also necessary to establish his trustworthiness as a researcher throughout all the stages of the study. In the recruitment step, the consent form and interview questions were the primary tool to give clear information to the research participants about the study and to secure privacy. Each participant signed the consent form that gave specific information about the purpose of the study. The researcher furthermore clarified to participants that they could stop at any time or skip any questions they did not wish to answer, without penalty. Gobo posits that the informed consent is a signal that the people have been treated as *subjects* and not as

¹⁴² For a better understanding of “peer debriefing,” see the subheading *Dependability and Confirmability*. The researcher met several times with Dr. Luis León, who reviewed the data collection, data analysis processes and findings. He made substantial corrections and comments about the initial coding and helped strategically in narrowing down the numbers of codes to be more manageable. Also, Dr. Andriette Jordan-Fields, PhD in Religion and Social Change and Academic Advisor at the Iliff School of Theology reviewed the codes and some interview transcripts. Both made solid comments and suggestions to the research work.

¹⁴³ Giampetro Gobo, *Doing Ethnography*, trans. Adrian Belton (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008), 136.

¹⁴⁴ Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, 7.

objects of research.¹⁴⁵ To this researcher, this seemed particularly important for the vulnerable population he was studying. As a marginalized population in the context of the United States, the researcher protected the privacy and personal information of the Latina/o participants by giving them pseudonyms for the research (see Appendix C). The interviews and transcripts were secured on a laptop and on an external hard drive per the protocol of the IRB. The laptop was secured with a strong password known only by the researcher. The church staff allowed the researcher to use an office in which to keep the laptop and all the materials locked up when they were not in use. The researcher was the only person with a key to this office. Lincoln and Guba postulate that to establish trustworthiness in and of a qualitative study is necessary for four reasons: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.¹⁴⁶ These four elements are considered in this section; as aspects of trustworthiness, this section also includes risks, benefits, and positionality.

Credibility

Are the methodological and interpretive research processes trustworthy and credible (valid) from the standpoint of the participants, the researcher, and the reader? To increase the credibility and validity of this study, the researcher employed a variety of methods.

First, he employed open-ended interviews and participant observations to collect the data. He spent three months in Los Fresnos interviewing Latina/o pentecostals at

¹⁴⁵ Gobo, *Doing Ethnography*, 140 (italics in the original).

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 162–65, 176–77.

Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) who were involved in the social ministry of Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM.) This methodology was useful to grasp their ideas about what motivated them to social ministry with the poorest in the Rio Grande Valley (see Appendix M). Being significantly involved in the field in such ways “facilitates a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study, conveying detail about the site and the participants.”¹⁴⁷ Second, double-entry notes were used to keep a record of his observations and participation (see Appendix L). He participated in many daily activities, such as cutting the grass, cleaning the dormitories, having lunch with refugees, and attending the worship services.¹⁴⁸ This experience helped him to understand deeply how Latina/o pentecostals worked hard to build relationships with refugees and build bridges between the resident and non-resident communities.

Third, the researcher followed up with a brief post-interview of 15-20 minutes to offer a summary of the notes and to solicit comments and corrections the research participants might want to make to the transcripts.

Finally, two other researchers worked with him as “member checks” or peer reviewers, discussing the data analysis process to minimize biases and offer suggestions and comments about the procedures and findings. These two final methodologies, a post-interview and member checks, helped ensure that the researcher’s biases did “not influence how participants’ perspectives [were] portrayed and to determine the accuracy of the findings.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 163.

¹⁴⁸ For a more detailed information about these methodologies, see the section Data Collection, under the subheading, “Phase III: Interviewing.”

¹⁴⁹ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 163.

Dependability and Confirmability

Traditionally, dependability means reliability and confirmability refers to objectivity. These terms are used to support the concepts of consistent and unbiased by the subjectivity of the researcher. That is to say, if other researchers were to look over the data, they would arrive at the same or very similar interpretations of the studied phenomenon.

Two techniques were used to establish such dependability and confirmability. First, outside researchers examined the research process (data collection and data analysis).¹⁵⁰ This is known as an *external audit*. According to Dana L. Miller,

The external audit assesses the trustworthiness of a study. Ultimately, the audit attests to the dependability of the study from a methodological standpoint, and the confirmability of the study by reviewing the data, analysis and interpretations and assessing whether or not the findings accurately represent the data. In essence, the audit examines both the process and product of the inquiry to determine its trustworthiness.¹⁵¹

Bloomberg and Volpe suggest that a researcher “obtain inter-rater reliability” or the so-called *peer debriefing* to help in reviewing the data analysis and findings and to receive comments, corrections, or suggestions. Of course, this results in additional work to refine the research data analysis.¹⁵² The identities of the peer reviewers were important to data interpretation. Both reviewers were people of color raced in Christian traditions. They were selected to reduce the implicit bias that could be associated with dominant

¹⁵⁰ See n. 142.

¹⁵¹ Dana L. Miller, “One Strategy for Assessing the Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research: Operationalizing the External Audit.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Chicago (March 24–28, 1997), 2, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED411268.pdf>

¹⁵² Miller, “One Strategy,” 160.

racial identity. This peer briefing helped the researcher avoid bias and offered him some accompaniment throughout the study process.¹⁵³

Second, the researcher kept a journal recording the process of the data collection and data analysis so that he would have a detailed record of the process and be sure that it focused on the research questions. Such a journal helps to establish the trustworthiness of the researcher¹⁵⁴ (see Appendix Q).

Transferability

Transferability refers to how the findings of one particular study can have import for another particular context. Some of the findings from one research study might be useful in others. Thus, “transferability refers to the fit or match between the research context and other contexts as judged by the reader.”¹⁵⁵ Even though the chief purpose of this research study was not this idea of transferability, some general ideas from this research project can no doubt be used or applied in other contexts. In order to have this transferability, the researcher has shared “thick descriptions” of the findings of the

¹⁵³ The researcher worked with two persons: Dr. Luis León, professor of Religions in the Americas and Latinx Studies at the University of Denver, who was, until his death, also part of the researcher’s doctoral committee, and Dr. Andriette Jordan-Fields, PhD in Religion and Social Change and Academic Advisor at the Iliff School of Theology. The last two reviewed the data analysis and data collection processes and made substantial suggestions and recommendations about the research project. The first cycle of coding was made in Spanish and the second one in English. The transcripts were translated by the researcher, who had followed the IRB protocol. The researcher made this decision since all but two participants preferred to be interviewed in English. There is always some loss when translating from one language to another. Pirjo Nikander writes about the need for transparency in translating documents in qualitative research and states, “Overseas students and students of different ethnic background should be supported in conducting analysis on data in their mother tongue and encouraged to publish their own work internationally.” “Working with Transcripts and Translated Data,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 5 (3) (2008): 229, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780880802314346>

¹⁵⁴ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 177.

¹⁵⁵ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 164.

experiences of Latina/o pentecostals who were serving as volunteers in the SWGSM. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz coined the term “thick descriptions” as a way of communicating or transferring to the reader a clear and rich picture of the phenomenon under study.¹⁵⁶ The richness of the religious experiences and practices observed through the lenses of pentecostal mission, theology, and ethics have been a great resource to understanding what motivates these Latina/o pentecostals to serve the poor unconditionally in the context of the United States.

Risks

This research study did not present any economic, physical, social, or psychological harm to the researched participants. In the IRB protocol, this is called “minimal risk.” The federal regulations define “minimal risk” as follows:

Minimal risk exists where the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, in and of themselves, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.¹⁵⁷

To minimize risk or harm, firstly, every participant voice freely their experiences and responses of the interview questions; secondly, no one manifested inconformity or feeling threatened; thirdly, pseudonyms were used to protect the research participants’ privacy and confidentiality; and fourthly, all information collected was saved in a lap top and locked in a private office.

¹⁵⁶ Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation*, 164. King suggests that “direct quotes from participants are an essential component of the final report” and adds that “more expensive passages of quotation may be included to give readers a flavor of the original texts.” Quote in Nowell et al., “Thematic Analysis,” 11.

¹⁵⁷ “Appropriate Risk to Benefit Ratio,” Teaching the Responsible Conduct of Research in Humans (RCRH), accessed on May 12, 2018, <https://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/ucla/chapter3/page01.htm>

Benefits to Subjects / Future Benefits

There were no direct benefits to the subjects participating in this research. By completing this dissertation research project, the researcher hopes to impact Latina/o pentecostal community by doing the following: (a) be able to gain better knowledge about what motivates Latina/o pentecostals to engage in social ministry with the poor in the US; (b) be able to explore how the church and the US Latina/o pentecostals interpret and make sense of their religious experiences in their daily lives by addressing the needs of the people who suffer marginalization and oppression; (c) be able to implement initiatives that improve the life and social work of the SWGSM and all people involved in this ministry; (d) be able to develop a strong sense of community and cooperation between ICE and their broader community in the Río Grande area; (e) be able to use the experience and knowledge gained to teach and invite others to participate in the SWGSM; and (f) be able to promote institutional change in the Disciples of Christ-Christian Church, which is the institution of which Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer is a part.

Positionality of the Researcher

The purpose of this qualitative research was to examine the missiological outlooks, theological perspectives, and ethical practices that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to engage in social ministry. Latina/o pentecostals' practices, perspectives, and outlooks were analyzed as everyday pneumap Praxis in their lives. The participants of this research project were adults who were serving in the social ministry of ICE/SWGSM. The majority were serving for many years in this social ministry. I had no previous relationship with any of the participants except for Pastor Pereira. Even though I grew up in a traditional pentecostal family and had served as a leader/pastor in several

churches in Colombia and the United States, I did not allow these factors to intervene with the recruitment, data collection, data analysis, or with any part of the process of this research. In this research project, the researcher opted to bracket himself, suggested by Christopher P. Scholtz as a type of performativity.¹⁵⁸ Bracketing is the researcher's act of setting aside the researcher's opinions, views, and reactions about the community that they are studying. By refraining from offering judgments, ideas, or articulating prejudices, the researcher created a space for himself to attain more solid insights about the Latina/o participants and their missiological outlooks, theological perspectives, and ethical practices about the pentecostal world. Bracketing or disconnecting helps researchers not to create bias and allow prejudices into their research and enables them to concentrate completely on the studied phenomenon.¹⁵⁹ Perhaps, it would be good to say as Benedict de Spinoza that "I have laboured carefully, not to mock, lament, or execrate, but to understand [pentecostal] human actions; and to this end I have looked upon passions, such as love, hatred, anger, envy, ambition, pity..."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Christopher P. Scholtz, "The Performativity of Perception and its Theological Significance: The Example of Pastoral Care," in *Lived Religion: Conceptual, Empirical and Practical-Theological Approaches. Essays in Honor of Hans-Günter Heimbrock*, ed. Heinz Streib, Astrid Dinter and Kerstin Söderblom (Boston, MA: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2008), 152. See also Patrik Aspers, *Markets in Fashion: A Phenomenological Approach* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 173, 187.

¹⁵⁹ Christopher P. Scholtz, "The Performativity of Perception," 152. It is important to acknowledge that even though bracketing is a very useful tool, it is not a panacea. Scholtz mentions three key clues on this issue: a) Epoché (bracketing) is a guiding principle that is never fully realized, b) epoché is not a permanent neutrality, and c) epoché is not an absolute criterion or benchmark.

¹⁶⁰ Benedict de Spinoza, *A Theologico-Political Treatise and Political Treatise*, trans. R. H. M. Elves (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 288. This idea was borrowed from Martin E. Marti, "Foreword," in Paul Alexander, *Sings and Wonders: Why Pentecostalism is the World's Fastest Growing Faith* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009), viii.

Summary

In summary, this chapter has provided detailed information about the research methodology used in this study. The purpose of the study was to examine what religious experiences and practices were significant to motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry with the poor in the United States. The research project sought to interpret/understand those social actions/experiences under the rubric of missiology, theology, and ethics. Studying lived religion as a phenomenological, qualitative research approach achieved this purpose. The main research methodology consisted conducting face-to-face interviews with ten participants using open-ended questions and participant-observation. Participants were actively involved in the SWGSM and contributed to the study openly and avidly. A review of the literature provided three key areas (missiology, theology, and ethics) with which to devise a conceptual framework. A clear roadmap was displayed about data collection process and data analysis linked with the ethical considerations about the study. The researcher's intention is that this study contribute to and benefit the Latina/o community in particular, and the academic world in general.

CHAPTER THREE: HISTORY OF IGLESIA CRISTIANA EBENEZER

For a moment, I thought we were returning to Cuba. When we left New York early that morning for Texas, I didn't know what to expect upon arrival in the Río Grande Valley...

As the plane pulled into our gate at Valle International Airport and the flight attendants opened the cabin door, a rush of sticky, humid air baked the by the brilliant afternoon sun hit my face. Startled by the warmth and texture of the breeze, tears filled my eyes... When I observed her reaction, I knew instantly that this was the place that the Lord was asking me to be, the land he chose for me to live out my days.¹⁶¹

Pastor Feliberto Pereira

Introduction

How does a predominantly Protestant white denomination embrace Latina/o pentecostals who speak in tongues? How is Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) and its social program called the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SGSM) linked to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) historically and theologically? This chapter unfolds in three subsections as follows: First, it offers a brief history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to give an idea of the origin of the movement and its history from its beginnings to today. Second, there follows a brief history of the Hispanic pentecostal church Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and its social ministry called Southwest

¹⁶¹ Feliberto Pereira and Chris Kelley, *I was a Stranger: Hope for a Hidden World* (Dallas, TX: Brown Books Publishing Group, 2008), 94–95. A Spanish book was published in 2013 entitled *Yo También Soy Inmigrante... y Jamás Lo He Olvidado*. This is not a literal translation of the first one published in the English language, which would be something like *Yo Soy un Extranjero* (or “extraño,” or “desconocido.”). *Esperanza Para un Mundo Escondido*. However, the title in Spanish (*I am an Immigrant... and I have never forgotten*) makes more sense to the story narrated in the book. There is no information about the publishing house or in what city was this book published. The only information provided is that the edition and cover design was made by Juan Rojas.

Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM), along with an explanation of how it is related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination. Third, the last section discloses the theological aspects that are relevant to understand adequately the pentecostal theology of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) and its relationship with Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): A Brief Sketch

The beginning of the history of the movement now known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century. D. Duane Cummis observes that, “This is a story with many names – ‘An American Religious Movement,’ ‘The Second Reformation,’ ‘The Restoration Movement,’ ‘An Experiment in Liberty,’ ‘Reformation for Christian Unity.’”¹⁶² Others have called it “The Stone-Campbell Movement,”¹⁶³ or simply the “Disciples.”¹⁶⁴ The origin of the movement was framed by three characteristics described by Winfred E. Garrison and Alfred T. DeGroot: First, it arose at a time that the US nation was very small and had a likewise small population. The Disciples grew out of two movements on the western frontier of Pennsylvania and Kentucky; second, five or six more major denominations existed at the time, along with many smaller ones, but they were divided for theological, political, and biblical reasons: it was a time of rigid denominationalism; third, there was religious

¹⁶² D. Duane Cummis, *A Handbook for Today's Disciples in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003), 1.

¹⁶³ D. Newell Williams, Douglas A. Foster, and Paul M. Blowers, ed., *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2013.)

¹⁶⁴ M. Eugene Boring, *Disciples and the Bible: A History of Disciples Biblical Interpretation in North America* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1997), 406.

liberty in the country, meaning that all persons could freely hold and share their religious ideas, beliefs, and practices, or hold and practice no religion at all.¹⁶⁵ This convergence of conditions was critical for the development of the Disciples of Christ movement, one of whose main premises was seeking Christian unity in a time of division and difference between Christian denominations.

The frontier offered a great opportunity for settlement of those who sought to practice their religion outside of the formalized church and its entrenched doctrines and return, for example, to what they considered to be the original New Testament teachings. These settlers sought a religion with a different character: “individualistic, uncomplicated, free of institutional authority, and unbound by tradition.”¹⁶⁶ An adventurous spirit of liberty and unity prevailed in the mindset of those who were exhausted and put off by the rigid orthodoxy and demands of the institutionalized church.

One of those free spirits was Barton Warren Stone, an ordained Presbyterian minister in Kentucky, born in 1772 at Port Tobacco, Maryland Tidewater, whose lineage came from William Stone, the first Protestant governor of Maryland (1648–53).¹⁶⁷ Stone had been a key participant in the revival camp meeting at Cane Ridge from August 6 to 12, 1801. According to *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, first 10,000

¹⁶⁵ Winfred E. Garrison and Alfred T. DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ: A History* (St. Louis, MO: The Bethany Press, 1958), 59–60.

¹⁶⁶ Cummis, *A Handbook for Today's Disciples*, 2.

¹⁶⁷ Cummis, *A Handbook for Today's Disciples*, 93.

and later 20,000 attended the camp meeting, that was led predominantly by Presbyterian ministers along with some Methodist and Baptist pastors too.¹⁶⁸

During the meeting, many participants experienced what was called “religious exercises.” Some had bodily agitations, while others fell to the ground or danced around until they felt exhausted.¹⁶⁹ This situation escalated in response to Stone’s preaching and discussions about doctrinal differences. Despite Stone and his followers having a desire for unity among Christians, the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky questioned Stone and other five ministers in regard to their openness towards other Christian faiths and traditions, their support of “religious exercises” at the revival, and about Calvinism. The questioning prompted a split, with Stone and the five ministers forming their own association called the Springfield Presbytery. In an 1804 document entitled *The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*, they explained the reasons for Christian unity and proclaimed the scriptures as their only once source of authority. This group of reformers led by Stone officially called themselves *Christians*.¹⁷⁰

Similar revivals and reforms occurred in western Pennsylvania, where Thomas Campbell (1763–1854), born in County Down, Ireland, and his son Alexander Campbell (1788–1866) had migrated to America. Campbell was a scholarly Scottish minister and a

¹⁶⁸ Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 13. Gary Holloway and Douglas A. Foster estimates the crowds as numbering between ten and thirty thousand, and as being the largest “camp meeting” revival in the history of the United States. *Renewing the World: A Concise Global History of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University press, 2015), 26.

¹⁶⁹ Holloway and Foster, *Renewing the World*, 27. They ask: “Does this make Stone Pentecostal or Charismatic? No... To call him Pentecostal or Charismatic would be inaccurate and anachronistic.”

¹⁷⁰ See, Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 13–15; Cummis, *A Handbook for Today’s Disciples*, 3; and Holloway and Foster, *Renewing the World*, 28–31.

pious pastor. Coming from the division of the “Seceders” Presbyterian Church in Scotland, Thomas was affiliated with the Anti-Burghers’ brand of the Seceder division of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland.¹⁷¹ He was welcomed into the Presbyterian Synod in Philadelphia when he arrived in 1807, but his ideas of reformation and unity across denominations, among other issues, led first to difficulties with the American Presbytery and finally to his suspension on February 12. After almost two years of appeals and discussions, a group of his followers in Washington, Pennsylvania supported him with the idea “to give more definiteness to the movement in which they had thus far been cooperating without any formal organization or arrangement.”¹⁷² What became known as the “Christian Association of Washington” emerged from this meeting on August 17, 1809. The group had embraced the slogan, “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.” Soon after, Thomas wrote his own *Declaration and Address* on September 7, 1809, in which he speaks about the restoration of the church according to New Testament precepts, and the vitality of Christian unity. The document contained the purpose and plan of the emerging association.¹⁷³ To this day, this document has had great influence in the history of the Disciples of Christ. The document

¹⁷¹ Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 17. Scottish Seceders had come to Northern Ireland promoting their ideas of rejecting the reintroduction of patronage into the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland in 1712. Later, the Seceders divided themselves in two groups: Burghers and Anti-Burghers. The Burghers believed that the term “true religion” referred to the Seceders and therefore supported the oath, while the Anti-Burghers opposed this idea. The “Burgess oath” consisted of promising to keep Catholics out of public office and was imposed on city officials in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

¹⁷² Hampton Adams. *Why I am a Disciples of Christ* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1957), 31; Garrison and DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ*, 140.

¹⁷³ See Hampton Adams. *Why I am a Disciples of Christ*, 31–32; Cummis, *A Handbook for Today’s Disciples*, 3–4; Garrison and DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ*, 124–41; and See Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 16–22.

contains thirteen principles, the first one highlighting the unity of the Church: The Church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one.

On September 29, 1809, some weeks after the *Declaration and Address* was published, Alexander Campbell and the other members of his family arrived in the United States. Thomas and Alexander worked to give form and content to the Association. The Association was constituted as the Brush Run Church in 1811, after having been denied a request for acceptance in the synod of the main Presbyterian body. Christ as center, baptism by immersion, the Lord's Supper weekly, emphasis on the New Testament and congregational leadership were some of the principles of this resurgent church.

In the autumn of 1813, the Brush Run Church applied for admission to the Redstone Association of Baptists. The acceptance of baptism by immersion by the members of the Brush Run Church helped them be admitted to the Association. But Baptists and Campbells were having heated discussions about several doctrines, such as the administration of the Lord's Supper and baptism, creeds, salvation, and the remission of sins, among other issues. Some Baptist associations in Kentucky and Virginia condemned the ideas of the reformers. Many of these debates were published in the inaugurated journal, *The Christian Baptist*. The separation came to an end when the Mahoning Baptist Association dissolved itself in 1830. However, many Baptists were attracted by the ideas of reformers such as "Raccoon" John Smith (1784–1868), who became an effective evangelist.¹⁷⁴ From this time on the Campbellites made the decision to be completely independent and to be called Disciples instead of Baptists.

¹⁷⁴ D. Duane Cummis, *The Disciples: A Struggle for Reformation* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2009), 74. Cummis says that "Within the Baptist fold Campbell's followers were known variously as Reformers, New

Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell met when the latter was preaching in Kentucky in 1824. After several articles discussing the possibility of uniting were published in *The Christian Messenger* (a publication started by Stone) and *The Millennial Harbinger* (a periodical that replaced the *Christian Baptist*), the Christian Church under Barton Stone's leadership and the Disciples Churches under Alexander Campbell became one congregational body at Hill Street Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky on Sunday, January 1, 1832. Stone and Smith were responsible for speaking for both groups respectively and co-celebrated the Lord's Supper as symbol of the new union between them. The *Christian Messenger* announced the union of both groups in its publication of January 1832, stating: "The spirit of union is spreading like fire in dry stubble."¹⁷⁵ John Williams, biographer of John Smith, wrote of this event that,

It was an equal and mutual pledge... The brethren of Stone did not join Alexander Campbell as their leader, nor did the brethren of Campbell join Barton W. Stone as their leader; but each, having already taken Jesus the Christ as their only leader... became one body.¹⁷⁶

Even though there were some theological differences, both the Christians and the Disciples joined together, a turning point in the history of both groups. Between 12,000 and 15,000 Disciples members and approximately 10,000 Christians united.¹⁷⁷ It is during this time between the separation of the Baptists in 1830 and the union in 1832 that many authors speak about the birth of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Despite their

Testament Baptists, Reforming Baptists, and Campbellites. By whatever name, they were growing faster than the Baptists, a fact that alarmed the Baptist old guard."

¹⁷⁵ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 79.

¹⁷⁶ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 79.

¹⁷⁷ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 79.

theological differences, a strong sense of unity prevailed in the newly united denomination. A twofold idea triumphed: a restoration of the ancient order like in the New Testament, and Christian unity.

From 1832 on, the new movement grew substantially, which demanded a church organizational structure of leaders and congregations. Many schools were founded with a liberal arts curriculum. The first was Bacon College in Georgetown, Kentucky in 1836, followed by Bethany College in 1840. Over the course of the next decades, Campbell wrote a series of articles in the *Millennial Harbinger* on “The Co-Operation of Churches,” attempting to organize the churches that by 1840 were organizing themselves in state conventions to worship and fellowship. Campbell suggested a general meeting, and it took place in the Christian Church in Cincinnati on October 23–27, 1849. One hundred churches from 11 states with 156 delegates gathered for the first national meeting of the movement. Campbell could not attend the meeting, but he published a report written by W. K. Pendleton. Campbell noted this event as the beginning of many more good things to come. One such good thing was the creation at this meeting of the American Christian Missionary Society, which addressed both the desire for greater cooperation among the congregations and the development of an international vision for sharing the gospel.¹⁷⁸

Before the Civil War (1861–1865,) the geographical expansion and growth in adding new members to the new united movement escalated during its first decades in the

¹⁷⁸ See Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 30–33; Cummis, *The Disciples*, 6–8. Garrison and DeGroot state: “Growth in numbers within the area where the two groups already had their chief following was due to vigorous evangelism, which gained converts both from the older churches and from among the unchurched.” New people moved out into new areas in the territory and expanded not due to proselyting. *The Disciples of Christ*, 217–18.

East, West and the Mississippi Valley. According to Garrison and DeGroot, it was a period of consolidation and organization of the movement, of the founding of new colleges and seminaries for training youth, of national conventions, and of unity in purpose and mission.¹⁷⁹ But certainly there were some controversial issues to be addressed too, such as slavery/race and the treatment of Native Americans. In matters of war, the leadership generally embraced a spirit of pacifism and appealed for Christian unity.

In 1834, Stone moved from Kentucky to Illinois, and in April 1835, published in the *Christian Messenger* a tract titled “Address to the People of the United States on Slavery,” which was originally published in 1832 by the New-England Anti-Slavery Society. It states the need to treat people as human beings, and not as property. In July 1835, Stone also wrote about supporting abolition, for there was evidence of racism and some controversial discussions on the issue of slavery in the Stone-Campbell churches. However, the churches managed to produce two anti-slavery documents—one in 1854 by John Boggs, and a manual by John Fee. Fee founded an interracial school in Berea, arguing that the Bible did not endorse slavery.¹⁸⁰

Around this time, the founders of the movement and many of those who worked next to them passed away: Barton Stone in 1844, Thomas Campbell in 1854, and Alexander Campbell in 1866. New challenges were to come as well new opportunities for growth and development. Nonetheless, the twofold idea that united the Christians and the

¹⁷⁹ Garrison and DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ*, 231–32; see also Cummis, *A Handbook for Today's Disciples*, 6–7.

¹⁸⁰ See Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 35; and Cummis, *A Handbook for Today's Disciples*, 8.

Disciples led them into a division. Questions about the use of organ music, missionary societies, and professional ministry were the points of contention. In the 1906 Federal Census, one group, the “Churches of Christ” was listed separately, following the idea of reestablishing the ancient order. The other group, Disciples of Christ, focused on Christian unity.¹⁸¹ Despite this division, the Disciples continued growing in churches and members.

Between the Civil War (1861–1865) and the First World War (1914–1918), Cummis states that four ministries grew out of Disciples.¹⁸² These ministries contributed considerably to the advancement, formation, and structure of the movement for the next coming years. Those ministries were journalism, missionary initiative, higher education, and cooperation with other communions. Two editors and their insights were important for this: Isaac Errett in *Christian Standard* and H. Garrison in *Disciples World*. Missionary initiatives under the leadership of Caroline Neville Pearre and Archibald McLean. Also, the formation of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society and the Christian Woman’s Board of Missions (1874-75), along with the National Benevolent Association (1877) pioneered in outreach work. In higher education, around four hundred Disciples-related institutions contributed to the education of lay and clergy people. In 1914, they organized a Board of Education. In matters of cooperation, Disciples participated in the social gospel movement as a charter member of the Federal Council of

¹⁸¹ Holloway and Foster, *Renewing the World*, 62–68. Some others claim that the division occurred early in 1889 when Daniel Sommer and others called for a separation in the *Address and Declaration* at Stand Creek, Illinois. There was another division in 1968 that resulted in Christian Churches/Churches of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

¹⁸² Cummis, *A Handbook for Today’s Disciples*, 9–10. See also Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 173–82.

Churches in 1907. Under the initiative of Peter Ainslie, the Council on Christian Unity was established in 1910 to collaborate ecumenically.

From 1890 to 1906, the fastest growing religious movement of the mainline Protestant denominations was the Disciples, with a membership of about 1,100,000 before the split of the Disciples of Christ and the Churches of Christ mentioned above. By 1909 when the Disciples celebrated one hundred years of the publication of the *Declaration and Address* written by Thomas Campbell, they numbered 1,250,000. There was an expansion of the Disciples world missions between 1874 and 1929 in places such as France, Turkey, Japan, India, China, Thailand, Philippines, Liberia, South Africa, Jamaica, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Argentina, Paraguay, Canada, and the United Kingdom. However, the Disciples was not prepared to face the immense wave of immigrants that would come to the US over the next decades, the phenomenon of industrialization and the mobilization of people from rural to urban cities, social concerns (poverty, racism, etc.), and theological controversies between conservative orthodox and new liberals regarding differing views of the Bible and social ethics, among other issues.

D. Newell Williams, Douglas A. Foster, and Paul M. Blowers indicate that the Disciples' new approaches to the Bible and Christian unity were infused with liberal Protestant theology.¹⁸³ There were two groups: a larger group represented "Evangelical" or "Christocentric" liberalism, while a minority group represented the so-called "modernistic liberalism" or "scientific modernism." The debate between them became so heated that in 1934 the International Convention established a commission to review the

¹⁸³ Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 182.

discrepancy. After several meetings discussing the Disciples' theology, structural organization, and purpose, the commission made a final decision on October 1949 in Cincinnati, in which they proposed not a separation, but to become "an invisible fellowship of prayer."¹⁸⁴ Basically, this fellowship meant an emphasis on Christian unity and praying together. The findings were published in 1963 as *The Renewal of the Church: The Panel Reports*.¹⁸⁵

In the decade in which the Disciples were going through a restructuring of the movement, the year 1968 marked another division in the history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Christian Churches—Churches of Christ. Cummis summarizes the reasons for this division in three points: a) the theological development of Modernism; b) the twentieth-century emergence of ecumenism; and c) open membership.¹⁸⁶ It was a shocking moment, since the Disciples had paved the road for a restructuration. Kenneth L. Teegarden was appointed as the Administrative Secretary of the Commission on Brotherhood Restructure in 1965. The Disciples of Christ Historical Society conducted interviews with forty-seven leaders and identified several general responses for restructuration.

First, in light of the tragic events of the World Wars and the social changes, the World Council of Churches invited the denominations to consider two questions: "Does

¹⁸⁴ Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 186.

¹⁸⁵ Holloway and Foster, *Renewing the World*, 73. The commission's leaders were F. D. Kershner (1875–1953), R. H. Miller (1874–1963), O. L. Shelton (1895–1959), C. C. Morrison (1874–1966), and Dean E. Walker (1898–1988).

¹⁸⁶ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 195–96.

your structure facilitate the fulfillment of the mission of the church?” and “Is the structure of your church responsive to the culture and to the world of the 1950s and the 1960s?”

Second, the increased number of agencies within the movement between 1920 and 1950 resulted in an intricate and complex system. Third, the movement had no theology of church.¹⁸⁷ Fourth and finally, the Assembly meeting in Kansas City in 1968 was the ending moment: The Provisional Design was approved. Through covenant, the various congregations, regions, and general agencies would work in partnership with shared leadership, no one being servant of the other. A ten-year period was established to implement the new Design, culminating in 1977.

The relationship and engagement with racial/ethnic/cultural minorities in the Disciples’ movement did not begin with a specific national program or strategy. Individuals, congregations, and social service centers spread the gospel in the early 1890s and beginning of the 1900s. For instance, Williams et al., argue that Few in Native Americans communities became members of the Stone-Campbell movement. He states that “This may have reflected the attitudes of Alexander Campbell whose growing accommodation to slavery was mirrored in his response to Native Americans.”¹⁸⁸ James Jenkins was the most well-known advocate of Native Americans among the Cherokee in Georgia. Unfortunately, his poor health and the Civil War took his life in 1868 and

¹⁸⁷ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 204–207.

¹⁸⁸ Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 39. For a better understanding of Alexander Campbell’s theology and contributions to the movement, see Hiram Van Kirk, *A History of the Theology of the Disciples of Christ* (St. Louis, MO: Christian Publishing Company, 1907), 30–51, 95–104, 130–43.

undermined his efforts.¹⁸⁹ A statement of gratitude for his work from Native Americans and First Peoples appeared belatedly in 2016:

We are grateful for the leadership of these tribes who have loved the land in the United States and Canada long before the Europeans arrived. We are grateful for the willingness of the Bears Ears Coalition to work alongside and partner in managing the land. We are grateful for the reminder that our thirst for unrenowable resources can directly affect the lives of our fellow Americans and Canadians.¹⁹⁰

Before the Civil War there were many African Americans in white churches, and some decades after the War, the number of them grew exponentially. One of the pioneers that joined Disciples in 1870s, was Preston Taylor, who preached for a large African American Christian Church in Kentucky. Rufus Conrad, a missionary of the American Christian Missionary Society, called a convention of colored Disciples in Nashville in 1867. The National Christian Missionary Convention (NCCC) was organized in 1917. The Christian Woman's Board of Missions (CWBM) founded in 1874 by white members formed the CWBM chapters in black churches and conventions. The Kentucky Christian Woman's Board was organized by black women in 1880.¹⁹¹ A large trajectory of racism and social struggles faced the African Americans in the post-Civil War era in the United States. They created their own regional/national conventions and planted many churches

¹⁸⁹ See Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 40–44. Garrison and DeGroot state that most of mainline Protestant denominations (Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians) were divided because of the Civil War; however, Disciples were an exception. They summarize the reasons in four interesting points: a) slavery is a matter of opinion, not faith; b) members supported pacifism, c) the Disciples were a loose organization that does not exclude churches; and d) the denomination's emphasis on unity. *The Disciples of Christ*, 330. For war controversies and other related issues, see *The Disciples of Christ*, 331–58.

¹⁹⁰ "A Statement of Gratitude to Native Americans and First Peoples," Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, Nov 15, 2016, <http://disciples.org/general/thanks-native-americanfirst-peoples/>

¹⁹¹ Garrison and DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ*, 480.

within the movement. Williams et al. conclude: that blacks in the Stone-Campbell Movement resisted “the virulent racial discrimination of their era, signaling in restrained and sometimes more overt ways their refusal to allow others to determine their destiny.”¹⁹² The National Convocation 25th biennial assembly took place on July 19–22 in Birmingham, Alabama.

In 1891, the CWBM opened a mission for Chinese immigrants in Portland, Oregon. The Chinese Christian Institute opened its doors in 1892, but it was closed in 1924. In 1928, Dr. and Mrs. Royal Dye started Sunday School classes among Filipinos. A Fellowship of Asian American Disciples (FAAD) was organized to address the need of Asian communities and as affirmation of their identity in 1978. In 1979, the organization changed its name to American Asian Disciples and, after several assemblies, in 1996 it was renamed the North American Pacific/Asian Disciples (NAPAD). In 1992, the General Assembly had created the position of director for Asian Ministry in Disciples Home Missions to which Rev. Dr. Geunhee Yu was appointed. The NAPAD is composed of seven different ethnic groups: Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Filipino, Indonesian, and Samoan.¹⁹³ The 20th Biennial NAPAD convocation was held on August 8-11, 2018 at the First Christian Church in Portland, OR. The theme was “One in Christ: Growing into Unity.”

¹⁹² See Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 46–59, 60; and Garrison and DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ*, 468–84. For more information about the National Convocation, see <http://www.nationalconvocation.org>

¹⁹³ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 183–85; Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 212–15; and Cummis, *A Handbook for Today's Disciples*, 14. For more information about NAPAD, see <http://www.napad.net/>

The first known time that the Disciples interacted with Hispanics was when a sixteen-year-old boy, José María Jesús Carvajal (1810–1874), heard Alexander Campbell speaking in Kentucky. This young boy subsequently lived with the Campbell family for four years in Bethany and returned to San Antonio, TX in 1830. He preached the gospel and distributed Bibles in Spanish, but later participated in the revolution in the northern states of Mexico. The first Hispanic Disciples church was founded by Pastor Ignacio Quintero in San Antonio in 1899.¹⁹⁴ Perhaps José María had sown some seeds in that area for the church, but there is no document or testimony to corroborate that rumor.

Domingo Rodríguez (1918–2006), a native from La Isla del Encanto, Puerto Rico, was the first Latino who served as director of the Office of Program and Services for the Hispanic and Bilingual Congregations of the Division of Homeland Ministries. He was formerly the pastor of three different churches on the Island and pastor of the Iglesia Cristiana La Hermosa in New York (1953–1955). He served in several positions, as the first executive secretary of the Disciples in Puerto Rico (1953–1955); as vice-president of the World Convention of the Churches of Christ; as president of the Evangelical Council of Churches in Puerto Rico; and as president of the board of Trustees and Board of Publication of *Puerto Rico Evangélico*.¹⁹⁵

The Hispanic Caucus fortified and grew out of a convocation of Hispanic ministries led by Rodríguez in 1975. This committee developed the National Hispanic and Bilingual Fellowship of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1980 and

¹⁹⁴ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 179–80.

¹⁹⁵ See Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 180–81, 212; Cummis, *The Disciples*, 179–81.

organized the first Asamblea Nacional Hispana in 1981. However, a sense of discontentment was growing among the emergent Hispanic leaders to Homeland Ministries regarding the place they occupied (or rather did not) in the Disciples structure. The leaders expressed the need for them to have more participation and more of a voice nationally that understood their social reality. For this reason, the Central Office for Hispanic Ministries was organized in 1991, and the first person to occupy this position, David Vargas, was called “National Pastor.” According to the constitution and bylaws, the National Pastor provides pastoral care for Hispanics and congregations, elaborates work plans in partnership with all the expressions of the Church, manages the office and staff, and represents the *Obra Hispana* (Hispanic Ministry) in ecumenical meetings and the Church.¹⁹⁶ Having a National Pastor and more active participation in the Disciples leadership opened new possibilities for developing programs and strategies in conjunction with white churches and African American congregations. *Obra Hispana* is a ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that serves around two hundred bilingual and Hispanic churches structured into six conventions that are concentrated mainly in the states of Florida, Texas, California, and Arizona.

It can be said that the Disciples is still restructuring its policies to serve minorities in the United States better. While churches of people of color have grown, the Stone-Campbell movement has experienced a significant decline of white members attending its churches. In 1957, a report stated that the Disciples’ membership was 1,951,820

¹⁹⁶ See Cummis, *The Disciples*, 182–83; Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 212; and Cummis, *A Handbook for Today’s Disciples*, 13–14; See also “Constitución y Reglamento Internos Obra Hispana,” Confraternidad Nacional Hispana y Bilingüe de la Iglesia Cristiana (Discípulos de Cristo) en los Estados Unidos y Canada, 16-17, accessed March 21, 2018, https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/58184f_ce9663918b5440e0b460b94c9fa5d3b1.pdf

(including both Disciples and independents.) In 2008, the number was about 691,690.

Amid these challenges, the movement adopted the 2020 Vision at the General Assembly in 2001, which focused on four priorities: the formation of 1,000 new churches, the transformation of 1,000 current churches, an anti-racist/pro-reconciliation church, and leadership development. By 2007, 504 new congregations had been established, whether new or adopted ones.¹⁹⁷ After the 1960s, the Disciples embraced a level of racial-ethnic diversity as response to social cultural challenges, but also as a response to the decline of white congregations. Issues concerning social justice have been part of the history of the Disciples as a whole, particularly after the Civil Rights Movement and the social demographic changes with respect to the increase in number of immigrants. In Spring 2012, the Disciples' Justice Table along with the pre-conciliation/antiracism initiative focused on four major areas: women and children, immigration issues, hunger and poverty, and care for the earth.¹⁹⁸

Along the way, the Disciples have had to consider issues of gender equality, LGBTQI communities, abortion, racism, religious pluralism, among other social issues of

¹⁹⁷ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 248, 264–65. See “The Four Priorities of the Church,” Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://disciples.org/our-identity/the-four-priorities-of-the-church/>

¹⁹⁸ Other justice areas where Disciples work are Family & Children Ministries; Coffee (fair trade): Equal Exchange/Disciples of Christ Coffee Project; Displaced persons/refugees: Refugee & Immigration Ministries, Disaster Relief: Week of Compassion, Economic justice: Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR); Ecumenical Poverty Initiative; Ecology/Environment: Creation Justice Ministries; Human trafficking: Disciples Women Breaking the Chains; Legislative (national): Rapid Response; and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Affirming community: Glad Alliance; Health: Pension Fund; Hunger: Bread for the World or Society of St. Andrew; Peace: Disciples Peace Fellowship; Racism/Anti-racism: Disciples Reconciliation Ministry, and War: Conscientious Objectors or Disciples Peace Fellowship, <https://disciples.org/resources/justice/>

the contemporary world. For example, in the General Assembly 2013, a resolution on sexual orientation and gender identity was presented. The resolution called

upon the Christian Church to recognize itself as striving to become a people of grace and welcome to all God's children though differing in ... sexual orientation, gender identity or theological perspective. Be it further resolved that the General Assembly calls upon the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to affirm the faith, baptism, and spiritual gifts of all Christians regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and that neither is grounds for exclusion from fellowship or service within the church, but we celebrate that all are part of God's good creation.¹⁹⁹

Some people in the movement reacted negatively to this resolution. For instance, Obra Hispana circulated a letter declaring that homosexuality was a sin. Many Disciples churches left the denomination because of this resolution. As Williams et al. declared in the past can be applied today:

The challenge now was to see if in addition to adding new African American, Haitian, Hispanic, and Asian congregations, they could become a truly pre-reconciling / anti-racist church and develop the leadership to facilitate the growth of a faithful church that ‘demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice.’²⁰⁰

In the twenty- first century, Rev. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President (2005–17), was appointed by the General Board in July 2006. She accepted the position saying: “The people are crying out, ‘less structure, more mission.’”²⁰¹ Rev. Sharon Watkins proposed a project called Mission First! in the year 2014, a pilot project that states: “We work together across generations to: equip leaders grounded in Scripture,

¹⁹⁹ “2013 General Assembly. Program and Business Docket,” Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, accessed October 15, 2017, <https://disciples.org/our-identity/our-structure/the-general-assembly-and-general-board/past-general-assemblies/2013-orlando/>

²⁰⁰ Williams et al., *The Stone-Campbell Movement*, 236.

²⁰¹ Cummis, *The Disciples*, 270.

centered on Christ, and immersed in the Spirit; create communities of inclusion and care; attend to the needs of the vulnerable; and overcome structural and systemic injustice.”²⁰²

The General Board received a report in 2017 and determined to work on the pilot project for the next two years. A full report on this will be presented at the General Assembly in Des Moines, IA, July 20–24, 2019.²⁰³

In light of this brief account, we can say that the Stone-Campbell Movement is still a movement in a process of restructuration, reformation, and restoration, which has striven to be faithful to one of its founding principles stated in the Declaration and Address: The church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one. The principle of the sixteenth Protestant Reform, *Eclessia Reformata, Semper Reformanda*, may be certainly applied to the Disciples in the twenty- first century.

This sub-section has presented a short history of the origin and trajectory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.) The following one will unfold the history of the ICE/SWGSM, its founder, Pastor Feliberto Pereira, and his relationship to the Stone-Campbell Movement. This will help us understand how ICE, a Hispanic pentecostal church, is related historically with The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ,) a mainline Protestant denomination.

²⁰² “Mission First!” Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, accessed October 18, 2017, <http://missionfirst.disciples.org/>

²⁰³ “The Declaration and Address (September 1809)” History of the Restoration Movement, October 2012, http://www.therestorationmovement.com/_states/wv/declaration.htm

A Historical Encounter

The history of the founder of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE), Pastor Feliberto Pereira, goes back to Cuba around the 1850s when some members of the Pereira family departed from the Canaria Islands to the island of Cuba. Feliberto's father was Juan Francisco, and his mother Hermenegilda Navarro, who came from a strong Catholic tradition. The Pereira family prospered in Cuba. Juan Francisco converted to the *evangélica* faith, and although his family and friends rejected him, his wife and children also became *evangélicos* later. Juan Francisco was a carpenter and built a small school with three female missionaries and thirty students from his ranch. Here the gospel was proclaimed. In 1948, he bought a radio and they all listened to a Christian program called *Alas del Alba* (Wings of the Dawn.)²⁰⁴

Feliberto does not have a clear memory of when he accepted the new *evangélica* faith and became born again, but he grew up reading the Bible, praying, and sharing the gospel with others in the small school. In the summer of 1951, the Pereira family moved from Iguará, a small town in the region of Sancti Spíritus, to Zaza del Medio, located about 365 km east of Havana. Young Feliberto started working in a bakery when he was thirteen years old. After six months of working in the bakery, he became very sick with pneumonia. The physicians could not heal him and told his parents that he would die. Juan Francisco prayed and attended a revival worship service in the city of Ciego de Ávila, about a two-hour (77 km) train ride to the west of Zaza. The preacher prayed and laid his hands upon him. Feliberto mentions that “this was not an ordinary Bible church.

²⁰⁴ Pereira and Kelley, *I was a Stranger*, 3–8.

It belonged to Pentecostals, who believed healing came through the Holy Spirit summoned by prayer and the touch of one anointed by God.”²⁰⁵ Within a few days, he felt better. He stressed: “I am convinced that the Lord healed me.”²⁰⁶

At the age of seventeen, he was admitted to the Seminario Los Pinos Nuevos (New Pines Seminary) on September 15, 1955. Pastor Bartolomé Gregorio Lavastida²⁰⁷ from Cuba, a Canadian named Evelyn McElheran, Isabel Miralles from a Spain (called by the students “la madre Junco,”), and a missionary from the United States, Elmer V. Thompson, established Los Pinos Nuevos Bible School on September 25, 1928.²⁰⁸

According to Octavio J. Esqueda,

Usually, a religious denomination starts a seminary to train its clergy. In the case of the New Pines, a nondenominational seminary became a denomination. The Evangelical Association “Los Pinos Nuevos” [Asociación Evangélica de Cuba de Los Pinos Nuevos] is the only national Protestant denomination in Cuba.²⁰⁹

While attending seminary, Feliberto met Jacqueline Rosales Domínguez, and the two were married on April 16, 1960, the year after their graduation from Los Pinos.

Pastor Feliberto Pereira was ordained in the Asociación Evangélica de Cuba (presently, the Convención Evangélica Los Pinos Nuevos) on May 4, 1960, and was assigned to

²⁰⁵ Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stranger*, 10.

²⁰⁶ Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stranger*, 11.

²⁰⁷ Octavio J. Esqueda, “Theological Higher Education in Cuba: A Case Study of the Eastern Cuba Baptist Theological Seminary,” (PhD diss., Denton, TX: University of North Texas, 2003), 24, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Esqueda writes the first name of the pastor Bartolomé as “Bartolo.” “Bartolo” is a common nickname in Latin America for those who are named Bartolomé.

²⁰⁸ Esqueda, “Theological Higher Education,” 24. See also Manuel de León, “Domingo Fernández y la misión en Cuba.” *Protestante Digital.com*, June 30, 2017, http://protestantedigital.com/blogs/42483/domingo_fernandez_y_la_mision_en_cuba

²⁰⁹ Esqueda, “Theological Higher Education in Cuba,” 23.

pastor a small church in Lugareño, a small town in Camagüey Province, one of the largest territories in Central Cuba.

Fidel Castro (1926–2016) governed Cuba as Prime Minister (1959–1976) and as President (1976–2008). A Marxist-Leninist, he participated in the Cuban Revolution leading the movement with his brother Raúl Castro and Che Guevara against Batista's forces. Allied with the Union Soviet against the United States, he allowed the Soviets to place nuclear weapons on the island. His anti-imperialistic ideology led him to create a Communist Party in Cuba, which was ruled by the State and shut down any type of perceived internal opposition. The political-economic tension between Cuba and the United States was intense, but there was also an internal religious tension.²¹⁰ Pastor Pereira describes it as follows:

The peace that had been felt in the churches, among the people and throughout the country was destroyed by Castro's oppression of Christians. Everything was turning against religion... People were killed just because they believed! After the September 10 march, the Ministry of [the] Interior accused the Roman Catholic Church in Cuba of plotting to overthrow the Castro regime... Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses also became targets of Castro's hate squads.²¹¹

As the political-religious tensions escalated, the small church had to reduce his salary, which forced Pastor Pereira to search for a second job. He was accepted as a teacher of industrial arts –carpentry, electrical repair, and sugar cane production

²¹⁰ For Fidel Castro and the revolution, see Marco Antonio Ramos, *La Cuba de Castro y Después... Entre la Historia y la Biografía* (Nashville, TN: Grupo Nelson, 2007); Fidel Castro & Ignacio Ramonet, *Fidel Castro: My Life* (New York, NY: Scribner, 2007); Julie Marie Bunck, *Fidel Castro and the Quest for a Revolutionary Culture in Cuba* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Juanita Castro Cruz & María Antonieta Collins, *Fidel y Raúl, Mis Hermanos: La Historia Secreta. Memorias de Juanita Castro Contadas a María Antonieta Collins* (Donald, FL: Santillana USA Publishing Company, Inc., 2009).

²¹¹ Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stanger*, 31.

techniques, in a middle school in 1963. While teaching at the school, he continued preaching and sharing the gospel in the small church. He requested a visa to travel to Spain with his family but was denied. An atheist friend who was active in the Communist Party warned him that his life was at grave risk because the leaders of the Party saw him as an opponent of the State. In 1965, he was offered a position as director of a school, but to accept the job he had to sign a document stating that he was atheist. He rejected the job offer.²¹²

In September 1965, news outlets reported that Castro was allowing Cubans to leave the island from the Puerto de Marioca in Matanzas in small boats that were coming from the United States by travelers who would come to pick up their relatives. Almost 3,000 Cubans left Cuba in the 42 days that the seaport remained open.²¹³ But the local Communist Party made public many of names of the schoolteachers and government workers who had requested visas to leave Cuba in order to shame them as traitors. They were treated and insulted as *gusanos* (worms).²¹⁴ *Gusanos* were sent to work in cane sugar fields operated under a rigid military discipline and they were forced to work long hours with only small food rations per day. Pastor Pereira states that

among those sent to the camps were thousands of homosexuals in need of ‘re-education.’ Also, among the detainees were religious leaders, such as Jaime

²¹² Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stranger*, 31–44.

²¹³ Pablo Alfonso, “Camarioca: cuatro décadas de éxodo y dolor.” *El Nuevo Herald*, 26 de septiembre de 2005, <http://www.cubanet.org/htdocs/CNews/y05/sep05/26o6.htm>. See also, Aviva Chomsky, *A History of the Cuban Revolution* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 94–97.

²¹⁴ Miguel De La Torre, *Ajiaco Christianity: Toward an Exilic Cuban Ethic of Reconciliation* (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, Philadelphia, 1999), 2, n. 2. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. De La Torre states, “The Resident Cuban calls you a traitor, a *gusano* (worm), for leaving. The Exilic Cuban calls you a traitor, a communist, for attempting to reconcile... For an Exilic Cuban even to suggest the option of a dialogue with Resident Cubans invites violence.”

Ortega, now a Roman Catholic Cardinal. Hundreds of Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, and Protestants were also banished to the camps.²¹⁵

Pastor Pereira suffered the tragedies of being Christian and not being involved in the Marxist-Leninist ideology. He remained in the camps for more than three years enduring sickness and losing weight. There were moments of desperation, but he always prayed and shared the gospel secretly from a small Bible he kept in his pocket.

While many claimed Fidel Castro as the savior of Cuba, others claimed that Castro had tricked the Cubans and established a totalitarian regime.²¹⁶ Pastor Pereira was one of those who considered the worst days lived by Cubans to have been under Castro's regime. One day, while working in the sugar cane fields, he received a cable dated Wednesday, November 5, 1969, almost four years after he had applied for a flight to leave Cuba, stating that his wife, his two children, his mother-in-law and he had been approved to travel to the United States. Five days later, the Pereira family was in the Varadero airport in Havana, where an immigration officer stamped the word *Expatriado* (Expatriate) on their visas. On November 10, they arrived at the Miami airport and were received by the Church World Service. After being hosted by some relatives of their relatives for a few days in Miami, the Pereira family was taken to New York and stayed in Miguel and Lolita's home, who were Jacqueline's uncle and aunt. Miguel worked as a dishwasher and Lolita as a dress maker. Both served in La Iglesia Cristiana Sinaí ("Sinai

²¹⁵ Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stranger*, 51.

²¹⁶ See Alfonso Mártir Rodríguez Castrillo, *Una Breve Historia de Cuba* (Bloomington, IN: Trafford Publishing, 2013), 97–98.

Christian Church”), affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.)²¹⁷ This was the first connection between Pastor Pereira and the Stone-Campbell Movement.

La Iglesia Cristiana Sinaí welcomed the Pereira family with love and care. Pastor Pereira got two jobs in January 1970: a position as pastor in a small Hispanic church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and a position welding stove parts in a factory in Queens. In March, the office of the Disciples in Indianapolis offered him a position as full-time pastor in La Segunda Iglesia Cristiana (Second Christian Church) in San Benito, TX. When he arrived, there were few members, a very old and destroyed church building, and a parsonage, but the church grew and prospered under his leadership. In 1976, the church bought a land and the following year built the worship sanctuary and the education building. Segunda Iglesia Cristiana changed its name to Iglesia Cristiana Emanuel (Emmanuel Christian Church), and by the 1980s had a membership of roughly 400. The congregation helped provide clothes and food to poor families and sick people in the San Benito area, including refugees that had migrated from Central America.

During the 1980s and 1990s, regional and transnational migration increased immensely due to the civil wars and poverty in some Central American countries.²¹⁸ A

²¹⁷ Pereira and Kelley, *I was a Stranger*, 69–87. La Iglesia Cristiana Sinaí was established on August 15, 1951, in Brooklyn, NY. In March of 1958, the congregation was accepted as a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and became part of the Northeast Region. In 2013, the church joined the Evangelical Disciples of Jesus Christ Church. For more information about La Iglesia Cristiana Sinaí, see <http://www.iedjsinai.org/>

²¹⁸ Statistics are reported in Abelardo Morales Gamboa and Carlos Castro Valverde, *Migración, Empleo y Pobreza* (San José, Costa Rica: FLACSO, 2006), 26, <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/icap/unpan028358.pdf>

massive migration of refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua seeking a safe place to live deeply moved pastor Pereira. He describes the moment like this:

I battle both tears and anger. Tears for the suffering they had obviously endured, anger over the popular terms of the day used to describe these brothers and sisters – “illegal aliens” and “wetbacks.” Upon seeing these photographs, I viewed the refugees not as “illegal” –God does not consider any human being “illegal”—but as gifts brought to us at a most opportune time. It occurred to me that whereas God may have called us at one time to minister to those in foreign lands, the foreigner was now visiting us, challenging all churches near the border with Mexico.²¹⁹

In January 1984, he resigned his position as a pastor and accepted a position as Director of Hispanic Ministries in the Southwest Region-Disciples of Christ. That same year, an independent English-speaking church invited him to start a Hispanic church in Los Fresnos, TX, which was officially inaugurated in 1987 under the name La Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (Ebenezer Christian Church.)²²⁰ In January 1985, the Disciples of Christ conceived El Proyecto Buen Samaritano (the Good Samaritan Project) with the support of Jennifer Biggs, Director of Immigration and Refugees Ministries, and David Vargas, who became President of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.) Pastor Pereira was elected as Executive Director of the project. El Buen Samaritano, as part of the social ministry of ICE, helped refugees with food, clothes, and spiritual counseling. Small dormitories were built on the church’s

²¹⁹ Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stranger*, 111.

²²⁰ “Data USA: Los Fresnos, TX,” accessed Nov 28, 2017, <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/los-fresnos-tx/#economy>. In 2015, Los Fresnos had a population of 6,280, of whom 90 percent were Hispanic, 9.8 percent White, and 0.19 percent Native. In total, 77 percent of the people speak a language other than English, and 24 percent live below the poverty line, a number that is significantly higher than the national average of 14.7 percent. Among racial/ethnic groups, Hispanics are the ones who most often live below the poverty line. Their most common origins are Mexico, Honduras, and Canada. As of 2015, 82.6 percent of Los Fresnos residents were US citizens, which is lower than the national average of 93 percent. Regarding with the most common origins, the closest comparable census data to Los Fresnos, TX is of Brownsville City (North) PUMA, TX.

ground in 1991 to host refugees who were released on parole under the custody of Ebenezer. Through donations and time/talent contributions from mainly Texas churches, a five-acre facility called "Casa Compasión" (House of Compassion) was built in nearby Bayview, seven miles northeast of Los Fresnos, and three miles from the Port Isabel Service Processing Center. Casa Compasión hosts asylum seekers, refugees, and church mission groups who came to the Texas-Mexico border for volunteer projects, such as building housing for the poor. In 1996, a nonprofit organization was established separately from ICE and governed by a different board. The new name of the organization was "Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries," (SWGSM) and has a mission statement that states:

The mission of the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is to teach the love of Jesus Christ by building a renewed wholeness and dignity and by standing with those who are broken, especially, among refugees and those who are disenfranchised and displaced. The Good News of salvation is lived out by addressing spiritual and material needs, including emergency food and shelter, clothing, transportation, legal aid, advocacy and job referral through a cooperative effort with other agencies and religious organizations.²²¹

Today, Casa Compasión is located on the SWGSM grounds and is a building surrounded by food storage facilities, several dormitories, a kitchen, office building, chapel, and recreational areas, among other facilities. The SWGSM has expanded beyond ministering to refugees to include more social programs such as Rice and Beans, Bethel Casa Hogar, and Mike's Kids. Disciples Rice and Beans was founded by Rev. Frank C. Mabee (1925–2004.) The program provides food for the hungry in the Rio Grande Valley and Mexico. Casa Bethel is an orphanage located in a poor neighborhood in Heroica

²²¹ Pereira and Kelley, *I am a Stanger*, 126.

Matamoros, Tamaulipas, MX, across the border of the Rio Grande Valley. The SWGSM provides food and financial aid for children and youth who are pursuing elementary/secondary school studies, as well as those who attend the Bible Institute. Mike's Kids is a social program founded by Mike Slaight. It is an annual Christmas toy drive for poor children on both sides of the border and SWGSM contributes annually with toys and gently used clothes.²²² The 2016 Board meeting report listed 266 refugees as having been helped by this ministry, who were transported to different states. These included: 164 Cubans, 49 Mexicans, 17 Hondurans, 13 Salvadorians, 11 Guatemalans, and 12 from other countries.²²³

In Bethel Casa Hogar in Matamoros, the coordinator of the orphanage has founded a Hispanic Pentecostal Church and a small Bible Institute for lay ministers and pastors who are seeking informal theological studies. The orphanage serves approximately sixty youth and children. Some of the kids who were helped there many years ago now serve as volunteer leaders in both the orphanage and in the church, while some of them are studying at the university. One of these leaders, María Bermúdez, who has been in Bethel Casa Hogar for more than fifteen years, shared her story:

We lived with my mother in a very poor situation and did not know my father. I arrived at this Casa with my two brothers when I was six years old with the help of some pastors who brought us to this place with the authorization of our mother.

In the beginning we were rebel kids, but over the course of time I saw how God

²²² "Feliberto Pereira," Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, accessed Nov 25, 2017, http://www.swgsm.org/Feliberto_Pereira.html

²²³ This 2016 meeting Board was held on October 13–14, 2016. The report was handed out to the researcher by pastor Pereira on December 15, 2016.

responded to the prayers of other kids and how they were living with peace and happiness, and I asked God for that. Life has not been easy for me, but since I accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord, everything has been transformed into a blessing. The support of the leaders of the institution and the good heart of people at El Buen Samaritano sending rice, beans, money, and clothes, moved me to serve as [a] volunteer here. Now I am leading other kids in God's path and cooperate in different areas, particularly, in the kitchen. I have seen firsthand how these boys and girls who come here to this Casa are being changed by the power of the Holy Spirit. I love this place; it's been my home. I also help in the church in the worship team and in other areas of our ministry. We are like a family here! Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer has grown to have almost three hundred members from different Latin American countries such as Mexico, Peru, Salvador, Honduras, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Colombia, and even from the United States. Essentially, the experience of pentecostalization began in Iglesia Cristiana Emanuel, for many members came from pentecostal churches in Latin America and were incorporating their pentecostal character into the congregation. Even though in the beginning a few people were resistant to some pentecostal manifestations, such as speaking in tongues or prophesying, over the course of time the pentecostal spirit and theology have completely permeated the congregation.

This second sub-section briefly told the story of the ICE/SWGSM as background to understanding its historical connection to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In the next sub-section, the purpose is to understand theologically how Iglesia Cristiana

Ebenezer, as a Hispanic pentecostal church, is linked with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.)

A Theological Encounter

Going back to the questions posed in the introduction: How does a predominantly Protestant white denomination embrace Latina/o pentecostals who speak in tongues? How is Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and its social program El Buen Samaritano linked to the Stone-Campbell movement historically and theologically? Historically, this question has been answered by the relationship between the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and its social program the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries. Now a theological answer is needed to understand more completely the connection between these two different movements: The Stone-Campbell movement and the Pentecostal movement.

Timothy Hessel-Robinson stresses that early Disciples “rhetorically rejected formal theology [as] hierarchical, divisive, and unbiblical,” and also argues that they “frequently rail[ed] against creeds, confessions, and other ‘human inventions.’”²²⁴ This argument has been completely true in the history and trajectory of the Stone-Campbell movement, as is also affirmed by Stephen V. Sprinkle:

Disciples have traditionally characterized themselves as indifferent to theology. For example, the church has consciously avoided the use of the term “theology,”

²²⁴ Timothy Hessel-Robinson, “Calvin’s Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper: Modern Reception and Contemporary Possibilities,” in *Calvin’s Theology and Its Reception: Disputes, Developments, and New Possibilities*, ed. J. Todd Billings and I. John Hesselink (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 173.

and Disciples have eschewed creedal formulations in the name of Christian unity. Further, they have never produced a written theology, as such.²²⁵

What can be said is that the Stone-Campbell movement developed its theological perspectives in practical ways that are different from the traditional systematic theology so predominant in other Protestant denominations. The Disciples' official identity statement says, "We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us." This strong sense of welcome is extended to everyone without discrimination and regardless of creed, sexual orientation, gender, or race. The metaphor of the Lord's Table is used in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to signify that everyone is welcome to be seated in a cooperative dialogue.

The Disciples have twelve Principles of Identity that include the priesthood of all believers, covenant relationships, unity among believers, the Lord's Table open for all, ecumenical relationships, and social justice. Practically, the only principle proclaimed unanimously is the first that says: "We confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and proclaim him Lord and savior of the world, requiring nothing more – and nothing less – as a basis of our life together."²²⁶ The theological openness of the

²²⁵ Stephen V. Sprinkle, *Disciples and Theology: Understanding the Faith of a People in Covenant* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999), vii. M. Eugene Boring states, "We claimed to abandon creeds and human tradition for 'just the Bible.' Then during the fundamentalist-liberal controversy, we lost our grip on the Bible." *Disciples and the Bible*, 1.

²²⁶ For a better understanding of the principles, identity, vision, mission, and priorities of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), see www.disciples.org. See also Hampton Adams, *Why I am a Disciple of Christ*, 62–73; Winfred. E. Garrison, *Christian Unity and Disciples of Christ* (St. Louis, MO: The Bethany Press, 1955), Peter Goodwin Heltzel, ed., *Chalice Introduction to Disciples Theology* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2008), and Stephen V. Sprinkle, *Disciples and Theology: Understanding the Faith of a People in Covenant* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999.) The 12 Principles of Disciples' Identity are: 1. We confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and proclaim him Lord and Savior of the world, requiring nothing more – and nothing less – as a basis of our life together; 2. We hold the centrality

Disciples in covenantal relationships with others is evident in its identity, which facilitates ecumenical dialogue with other Christian traditions, spiritualities, traditions, and denominations. The sense of a practical unity among Christians has been one of the main purposes of Disciples, regardless of different theological views.

Disciples proclaim the freedom of the interpretation of the Bible, since every person is capable of reading it and interpreting it individually and in community, without church control or theological hegemony. The emphasis is on the interpretation, not on the authority, as indicated by M. Eugene Boring.²²⁷ In spite of the fact that there is a variety of theological differences among the Disciples' congregations, the emphasis in the Stone-Campbell Movement is "Unity, not uniformity; oneness, not sameness; diverse, not divided." Based on these principles, the Disciples let individual congregations develop their own theology and religious practices, and as a result of this, Iglesia Cristiana

of scripture, recognizing that each person has the freedom – and the responsibility – to study God's Word within the community of the church; 3. We practice the baptism of believers, which emphasizes that God's grace demands a response of faith and discipleship, while also recognizing the baptism performed in other churches; 4. We gather for the Lord's Supper, as often as possible, experiencing at this table the gracious, forgiving presence of Jesus Christ; 5. We structure our community around the biblical idea of covenant, emphasizing not obedience to human authority but accountability to one another because of our shared obedience to Christ, 6. We participate in God's mission for the world, working with partners to heal the brokenness of creation and bring justice and peace to the whole human family; 7. We hear a special calling to make visible the unity of all Christians, proclaiming that in our diversity we belong to one another because we commonly belong to Christ; 8. We witness to the Gospel of God's saving love for the world in Jesus Christ, while continuing to struggle with how God's love may be known to others in different ways; 9. We affirm the priesthood of all believers, rejoicing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit – which include the gift of leadership – that God has given for the common good; 10. We celebrate the diversity of our common life, affirming our different histories, styles of worship, and forms of service; 11. We give thanks that each congregation, where Christ is present through faith, is truly the church, affirming as well that God's church and God's mission stretch from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth; 12. We anticipate God's coming reign, seeking to serve the God – Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer – whose loving dominion has no end. See "Disciples of Christ Identity. Statement and Principles," Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, accessed January 30, 2018, <http://disciples.org/our-identity/identity-statement-and-principles/>

²²⁷ Boring, *Disciples and the Bible*, 3.

Ebenezer has been welcomed to the Lord's Table as part of the body of Christ in unity in Disciples. A great number of the Hispanic churches in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are pentecostals. Disciples values the traditional historical creeds, but have no creeds, and the ecumenical spirit of unity in diversity and diversity in unity remains theologically and historically one of the key aspects of the Design.

As detailed in the previous section, Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer developed a pentecostal character based on the previous indigenous leadership and members from the Iglesia Cristiana Emanuel in San Benito that came from different countries in Latin America with this pentecostal spirit.²²⁸ It is worth mentioning that ICE as a Hispanic pentecostal church does not fit in the classical pentecostal church mold of churches that trace their origins to the Azusa Street Revival. Allan Anderson analyzes the origin of the Pentecostal movement as an American-centered history in the Azusa Street revival "made in the USA." He states, "Without minimizing the importance of Azusa Street, due recognition must be given to places in the world where Pentecostal revival broke out independently of this event and in some cases predated it."²²⁹ Going along with this

²²⁸ Today, pentecostalism is a religious phenomenon that is not overlooked. Pentecostalism is known as the fastest growing Christian movement in the world. In the annual Status of Global Christianity 2015 survey, published by the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, it is reported that there were 981,000 pentecostals in 1900; 460,529,000 pentecostals/charismatics in 2000, 643,661,000 of them today, and there are projected to be 1,091,314,000 in 2050. See Todd M. Johnson, Gina A. Zurlo, Albert W. Hickman, and Peter F. Crossing, "Christianity 2015: Religious Diversity and Personal Contact," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 39, no. 1 (Jan. 2015): 29, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/239693931503900108>

²²⁹ Michael Bergunder, "The Cultural Turn," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, ed. Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van Der Laan, (Los Angeles, CA: California University Press, 2010), 57. A good example that supports Anderson's argument is shared by Ivan Satyavrata, who notes that the pentecostal tradition in India has its roots in 1860 and not in Azusa. *Pentecostals and the Poor: Reflections from the Indian Context* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2017), 2. Multiple origins are significant for Latina/o pentecostal communities, which may not identify themselves with the dominant hegemonic discourse but with more pluralistic postmodern ideologies.

idea, it is better to speak about “multiple origins,” as Anderson would remind us that the history of the pentecostal movement was not just centered in the context of the United States and Eurocentric history. Thus, ICE fits more properly in a community that embraces and values pentecostal manifestations without being attached to a specific pentecostal denomination, and even less to the Azusa Street revival historically.

There are some authors that have presented several taxonomies and categories about the pentecostal movement, among them Walter Hollenweger, Vinson Synan, Allan Anderson, and Amos Amos Yong.²³⁰ For the purposes of this research, Yong’s typology is helpful to understand the ethos and theology of the ICE/SWGSM. Yong identifies three types of pentecostal responses and postures toward socio-cultural engagement. The first is *pentecostal sectarianism*. This group refers to those pentecostals who are separatist, restorationist, perfectionist, and have a millenarian eschatological-apocalyptic vision of the world. They read and interpret the Bible literally. In this category, Yong analyzes the historic-holiness-pentecostals in the West, contemporary Chinese pentecostal house church movements, and sectarianism in the Afropentecostal diaspora. The second group

²³⁰ Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 1. Hollenweger divides the pentecostal movement into three groups: Pentecostal churches (classic), The Charismatic Renewal Movement, and the Pentecostal or Pentecostal-like “non-white indigenous churches.” For Synan, there are five types of pentecostalism: Classical Pentecostals, Historical Charismatic Protestants (neo-pentecostals,) Catholic Charismatics, Independent Groups, and Third World Indigenous Groups. Vinson Synan quoted in Villafaña, *Introducción al Pentecostalismo*, 20. Anderson provides four approaches (social scientific, historical, theological, and typological) as key ways to characterize pentecostalism. These approaches are mutually dependent and are useful information to understand the dynamism and fluidity that characterize pentecostalism. “Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions,” in Allan Anderson et al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism*, 13–27. Yong identifies three types of pentecostal responses and postures toward socio-cultural engagement. *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 26–37.

is *pentecostal conservatism*. What Yong calls conservatism is very similar to the sectarian group, but with more awareness of and counter-cultural and counter-ideological stances on current social problems. Their concern is the secularized world and how to preserve its conservative nature in terms of morality, i.e., rejection of gambling, homosexuality, abortion, alcohol, etc. Finally, the third group is *progressive pentecostals*. This group is focused on social transformation and has developed a holistic soteriology in linking an evangelistic mission that focuses on conversion with community building. Many of these churches are influenced by Liberation Theology and do not make distinctions between material needs and spiritual growth, all the while maintaining a pentecostal spirit. These churches have developed social programs, such as providing food and clothes for people in their communities; helping people with depression, alcohol addiction, or divorce; and with the educational/economic development of their communities. However, these progressive pentecostals rarely are socially engaged in civil protests or political marches that involve radical civil disobedience.²³¹

We can classify ICE as belonging to this third group in Yong's typology. This church and its different social programs (Rice and Beans, Casa Bethel, Mike's Kids, Bible Institutes, and Refugees) contribute to social transformation and benefit the poor in Mexico and the United States, but are not involved in overtly political issues.²³² Besides,

²³¹ José Míguez Bonino, *Rostros del Protestantismo Latinoamericano* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Nueva Creación, 1995), 72. Míguez Bonino recognizes that in Latin America, some sectors of indigenous pentecostalism have participated actively in the social and politics arena, like in Guatemala, Brazil, Chile, and Peru.

²³² Pastor Feliberto Pereira has participated as a member of the commerce council in the city of Los Fresnos, and it is very well known by politicians and key leaders in the community, but his church has not participated or been involved in any socio-political activity.

this church is not linked to the Pentecostal revival movement of Azusa Street. Thus, Bergunder's idea of multiple origins and networks helps us understand how this church has become pentecostal because it has been formed by a network of indigenous leadership and people that come mainly from different Christian pentecostal traditions and countries in Latin American, the Caribbean, and North America.

As for the theology of the church, it is framed within a pentecostal-evangélico theology, without a marked emphasis on the more exotic experiences of the Spirit, particularly the abrupt body movements or exotic manifestations or prosperity theology. The church understands the gifts of the Spirit as virtues for the healthy growth and development of the church and community and does not reject the baptism of the Spirit.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter has been to present a brief history of the Stone-Campbell Movement or the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the history of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) and its social ministry known as the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM), and its historical and theological relationship with the Stone-Campbell movement. It has shown that theologically and historically the Disciples have been open to other Christian traditions and spiritualities, without having particular fixations. Therefore, in conclusion, some key aspects to highlight about the connection between ICE and the Disciples are that: (a) ICE has been integrated and welcomed since its origins into the Disciples as part of the Lord's Table. Without denying or minimizing the importance of the theological aspects of the Stone-Campbell Movement in the search for unity, the most important thing is that ICE members have been welcomed in the body

of Christ as part of the Disciples; (b) ICE/SWGSM's social work approach is transcendental for the Disciples that has as one of its principles the search for social justice. ICE's social ministry fits best in the second and third areas (immigration issues, hunger and poverty) mentioned about in the Justice Table; and (c) ICE's pentecostal-evangelical theology and practice have contributed to the diversity and growth of the Stone-Campbell movement and as an example of reconciliation and fellowship, despite different theological perspectives, within the same denomination.

CHAPTER FOUR: PENTECOSTAL MISIÓN INTEGRAL

Introduction

In the US, Hispanics have experienced segregation, racism, and poverty, among other social inequalities. They have been discriminated against based on their skin color, level of education, language, and accent, and they are also perceived as lazy, criminal, and a threat to the identity and values of this country. Hispanics have been ignored and been treated as invisible in a world of visible dominance and oppression.²³³ All of this indicates that the US Latina/o pentecostal mission cannot be understood outside of the frame of oppression and marginalization experienced by this largest minority in the US. Neither can the Latina/o pentecostal mission be understood without examining the trajectory and history of conquest, colonization, and neo-colonization they have endured.²³⁴ Several authors have written about Hispanic mission with this view of

²³³ Joanne Rodríguez-Olmedo, "The U.S. Hispanic/Latino Landscape," in *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, ed. Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 124.

²³⁴ It is not the task of this dissertation to examine these historical details but certainly they have to be taken into account to understand the marginalization and oppression experienced by Hispanic Americans and Latin American immigrants. For a comprehensive analysis of the conquest, evangelization and colonization, see Enrique Dussel, *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981); Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, Trans. Richard Howard (New York, NY: Harper Perennial, 1994); Luis Rivera Pagán, *A Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992); Luis N. Rivera Pagán, *Entre el Oro y la Fe: El Dilema de América* (San Juan, PR: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1995); Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of America: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York, NY: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995); Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2014); Juan González, *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* (New York, NY: Penguin Books Ltd., 2001); and Juan Francisco

marginalization and oppression in mind, among them Orlando Costas, Virgilio Elizondo, Justo L. González, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Harold Recinos, María Pilar Aquino and Roberto S. Goizueta.²³⁵

Yet if, with Allan Anderson, we believe that “Pentecostal mission is grounded first and foremost in the conviction that the Holy Spirit is the motivating power behind all this activity,”²³⁶ then we can understand why it is that scholars like Juan Francisco Martínez are writing about how Latina/o pentecostals are changing the way of doing mission by the poor and for the poor in a way that does not require formal education or a lot of money but is “based on the leading of the Holy Spirit.”²³⁷ Anderson’s assertion and Martínez’s explanation make sense for US Latina/o pentecostals, one of whom testifies: “I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells us and gives us the power to testify about Christ,

Martínez, *The Story of Latino Protestants in the United States* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018).

²³⁵ Orlando E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005); Virgilio Elizondo, *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983); Justo L. González, *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990); Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha, In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004); Harold Recinos, “Mission: A Latino Pastoral Theology,” in *Mestizo Christianity: Theology from the Latino Perspective*, ed. Arturo J. Bañuelas (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1995); María Pilar Aquino, *Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993); and Roberto S. Goizueta, *Caminemos con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1995), 77–131.

²³⁶ Allan Anderson, “Towards a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority of the World,” in *Azusa Street and Beyond: 100 Years of Commentary on Global Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement*, ed. Grant McClung (Alachua, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006), 171. According to Amos Yong, Charles F. Parham is the founder of the modern pentecostal movement who had a missionary vision. He also notes that if today pentecostals speak about a “unified experience of the Holy Spirit” and an “evangelism distinctive,” this is due to Parham and his disciple W. Seymour. *The Missiological Spirit: Christian Mission Theology in the Third Millennium Global Context* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 84.

²³⁷ Juan Francisco Martínez, “Remittances and Mission: Transnational Latino Pentecostal Ministry in Los Angeles,” in *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*, ed. Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory (Oxford, UK: Oxford Scholarship online, 2013), 205, DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199920570.001.0001

our Lord. He gives us the sentiment and gives us the capacity to hear and to respond to the need of others.”²³⁸ Here, Lourdes González clearly expresses the mission in the Spirit as a new way of being Latina/o pentecostal whose intent is not only to focus on evangelization, but also on social concerns or how “to respond to the need of others.”²³⁹ From these ways of being Latina/o pentecostal are emerging new ways of doing mission that are revitalizing communities and contributing to social transformation.²⁴⁰ This new way of doing *misión* as *integral* (or wholistic) is focused more on mission theology than a theology of mission.²⁴¹ *Misión integral* emerged as a theological and missiological paradigm that attempted to develop an indigenous methodology that reflected the real social situation of poverty and misery of Latin American countries. *Misión integral* thus aims to analyze and counteract foreign Christian domination and is focused on how the gospel can contribute to the development of God’s kingdom among those who have suffered oppression.²⁴² López confirms this new *misión integral*:

From the world of the poor an integral view of mission which seeks the transformation of all things is weaved, radical discipleship marked by an unshakeable faith in the God of life is articulated, the nonnegotiable value of life

²³⁸ Lourdes González, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, November 11, 2016.

²³⁹ See Martin Lindhart, ed., *New Ways of Being Pentecostal in Latin America* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), viii–ix.

²⁴⁰ See Sherron George, “Constructing Latin American Missiology,” 24–35.

²⁴¹ Yong, *The Missiological Spirit*, 10. Here the researcher follows Amos Yong, who differentiates between the two terms. He states that theology of mission focuses on the “theological dimensions of the Christian mission—its rationale, justification, methods, and relationship to other theological loci,” mission theology “accentuates how the Christian theological enterprise as a whole can be understood in missiological perspective.” In this chapter, the focus is more on mission theology than theology of mission. Mission theology has been shaped by the postcolonial critique and emphasizes elements such as proclamation, dialogue, social transformation, contextual theology, culture, communion, solidarity with the poor, and justice. See Anthony J. Gittings, *Bread for the Journey. The Mission of Transformation and the Transformation of Mission* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1993), 161–63.

²⁴² For a better understanding of *misión integral*, see Chapter 2, n. 60.

as a gift of God is affirmed, peace is built, and the dignity of all human beings as created by God is asserted.²⁴³

Progressive Latina/o pentecostals have expanded their horizons by developing new possibilities for a *misión integral* with the poor. Thus, Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE)'s missionary perspective is focused not only on evangelization but on social transformation rooted in a social ministry.²⁴⁴ ICE's Latina/o pentecostals create and open spaces for human flourishing through the church's social program, the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM.) This chapter presents the key findings obtained from in-depth interviews and participant observations among these pentecostals. The voices of ICE's Latina/o participants reveal how they are doing *misión integral*, as delineated by López,²⁴⁵ integrating their religious experiences as a community of the Spirit, sharing the gospel, and serving refugees and the poorest in society. The key research sub-question that guides this chapter is: What are the outlooks/perspectives of mission that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? Four major findings emerged as essential motivations of these Latino/a pentecostals in their social mission:²⁴⁶ *Misión integral* is associated with past experiences; *misión integral* means change; *misión integral* supplies the needs of the poor; and *misión integral* is about making disciples.

²⁴³ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 28. See also, Wilmer Estrada Carrasquillo, “¿Y los Pentecostales? ¡Presentes!: Public Theological Contributions from Latin America,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 24, no. 2 (2015): 231–240. <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455251-02402009>.

²⁴⁴ Erick Fernando Tuch Tasej, *Misión y Transformación Social: Una Perspectiva Pentecostal* (México: Kerygma, 2017).

²⁴⁵ See López, *Misión Integral*, 28.

²⁴⁶ Saldaña, *The Coding Manual*, 140. This research is focused on “what is ‘essential’ rather than ‘incidental,’” in the studied phenomenon.

Misión Integral is Associated with Past Experiences

“So, I told myself if the shoes that they are wearing to walk, I have used them and have walked with them, how can’t I give these people a hand.” –Ernesto.

In writing about Latin American pentecostals, Lindhart asserts that they still “belong to the lower sectors of society, and many still find new sources of identity, new parameters of social status, and new strategies for coping with difficult life situations.”²⁴⁷ This is the same situation as that of the US Latina/o pentecostals revealed by their *testimonios* (testimonies) collected by Daniel Ramírez in his book, *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century*. One such testimony can stand for many others. Ramírez reports: “Francisco would say to him: ‘I will never return to Mexico; too much poverty, too many plagues and diseases and no doctors.’”²⁴⁸ Most of people who emigrate from their Latin American countries of origin to the United States have lived in conditions of extreme poverty and have lacked the most basic resources,²⁴⁹ or they have come from countries with high incidences of violence or

²⁴⁷ Lindhard, *New Ways of Being*, viii.

²⁴⁸ Ramírez, *Migrating Faith*, 99. Arlene Sánchez-Walsh also writes stories and testimonios about the conditions of poverty of Latina/os. *Latino Pentecostal Identity*, 129. Tony Richie explains that “theologically, testimony is important as it relates to ‘the understanding of one’s faith’, and why or how a particular experience or event is significant.” “Translating Pentecostal Testimony into Interreligious Dialogue,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 20 (2011): 164, 165–72, <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455251-02402009>.

²⁴⁹ “Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Social Panorama of Latin America, 2017,” United Nations (LC/PUB.2018/1-P), Santiago, 2018, 79–80, https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/42717/6/S1800001_en.pdf. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reported that poverty and extreme poverty levels rose in Latin America as a regional average in 2015 and 2016, while it held steady in 2017. In 2015 the poverty level was 29.8 percent (178 million) and it rose to 30.7 percent in 2016 (186 million people). Extreme poverty rose by 0.8 percent in 2015 and by a further point in 2016, representing approximately thirteen million people.

other troubling circumstances such as death threats, gangs or domestic violence that precipitate their travel northward.

In López's words, these economic and social circumstances lived by the disenfranchised impel Latina/os to do pentecostal mission "from the periphery of the world, from the corner of the dead, from spurned Galilee [where] the proclamation of the kingdom began."²⁵⁰ For this pentecostal theologian, "the Galilean Option of Jesus was neither incidental nor circumstantial" and it was an option from solidarity with those who suffered marginalization.²⁵¹ Before López, Virgilio Elizondo wrote about the Galilean Principle in his renowned book, *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise*.²⁵² Elizondo argues that Jesus' ministry was carried out in a peripheral region with the nobodies of his time and paradoxically he compares this Galilean marginalization with the Mexican-Americans who also suffer marginalization. Thus, Galilean identity is "the essential starting point of Christian identity and mission."²⁵³

Research participants shared their experiences, remembering the difficult times in their countries in Latin America, as well as their motivations and inspirations to serve the poorest in the Rio Grande Valley. Carmen Moreno described her experience in Central America and how ICE has helped her since then:

My own experience of having to flee from my country under undesirable and forced circumstances, under threats of death and fear, have led me to understand

²⁵⁰ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 31.

²⁵¹ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 31–32.

²⁵² Elizondo, *Galilean Journey*, 49–58.

²⁵³ Elizondo, *Galilean Journey*, 92.

that every person who comes to this place requesting help deserves a dignified treatment as a human being. Through a medical physician, I was able to meet Pastor Feliberto Pereira, who welcomed me and my daughter and gave us asylum. At that moment we felt some relief in the midst of all the tension in which we had to live. I always prayed and cried out in that time of difficulty, trusting that God would help us. Let me clarify that I was a compassionate person before being involved in this church and its social ministry, but here at the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and the Good Samaritan, this virtue of having compassion for refugees and others has grown significantly.²⁵⁴

Carmen experienced domestic violence while living in a small town in Honduras. She was forced to leave the country when she and her family were threatened by gang members, who raped her daughter. The daughter became pregnant, and she and her family were threatened again by leaders of the gang. The circumstances escalated. The gang set fire to her mother's business and threatened the family constantly. Carmen saw no other option than to abandon all her belongings and come to the United States through Mexico. While in Mexico, she, her daughter and the persons who came with her experienced a great deal of fear. After living in atrocious conditions in a small house in Texas, someone recommended that she call a Hispanic pastor, who arranged to pick up Carmen and her daughter. Since then, they have been serving and living without fear in the facilities of Ebenezer. Carmen firmly believes that God heard her pleas for help.

²⁵⁴ Carmen Moreno, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, November 5, 2016.

Carmen was a Christian woman who attended a pentecostal church and participated actively in a women's ministry there. In an effort to break with the past and reach for the promised future, Carmen served refugees with devotion, manifesting her sense of community, "being involved in this church and its social ministry." Eldin Villafañe highlights this sense of community and pentecostal mission so predominant in Latina/os that immigrate to the United States: "One cannot fathom the growth and depth of Hispanic pentecostalism and its spirituality without coming to terms with the 'Quest for Community.'"²⁵⁵ Carmen's longing for her past is not a sign of her desire to return to her home, but an affirmation of how she has retrieved her identity by compassionately serving others through ICE. It seems that her subjectivity has been integrated and restored by the intersubjective cooperation and interrelations in the community of the church.

Carmen's words reiterate the deep passion for living that characterizes Latina/o communities, as well as the tendency of Latina/os to create spaces of resistance in their search for self-affirmation and self-identification. Quoting La Declaración de Santo Domingo de la Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en Latinoamérica (CEHILA), Bernardo Campos writes about this difficulty, "For 500 years these popular, conflictive, rejected and marginalized identities, yet grow, mature, intertwine, provoke us and constitute us."²⁵⁶ Campos alludes to the long historical trajectory of marginalization

²⁵⁵ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 115.

²⁵⁶ Bernardo Campos, *La Madurez del Hermano Mayor. Los Otros Rostros de Pentecostalismo Latinoamericano: Apuntes sobre el Sujeto de la Producción Teológica Pentecostal* (Lima: Instituto Elías para La Extensión del Reino, 2012), 57, https://www.academia.edu/6327842/Bernardo_Campos_LA_MADUREZ_DEL_HERMANO_MENOR

and colonization Latina/os have experienced, and yet he perceives in these a search for self and a reaffirmation of identity in *Latinidad*:

There is something else in these struggles that needs to be listened [to] attentively and interpreted in the set of *struggles for the affirmation of the Latin American identity* from the utopias of the people ... There is a will to be, a desire to live that ... should not be ignored.²⁵⁷

This “will to be, [this] desire to live” can be seen in the ICE’s Latinos serving in the SWGSM. In M. Álvarez’ words, this desire to live is like “transforming the negative into a positive mentality” since the message of the gospel gives them hope.²⁵⁸ And this desire to reaffirm their identity is a mechanism of survival in the midst of the struggle. In this regard, Latino/as work voluntarily, worship in the Spirit, and live in community with dedication and passion. These motivations to serve are relevant for understanding ICE’s Latina/o pentecostals’ identity. The search for identity in the midst of *la lucha* every day is an ongoing process for US Latina/o pentecostals. Their identity is reaffirmed in their community cooperating and building relationships. These religious experiences of Latina/o pentecostals must not be ignored because their past experiences are strongly linked with their present social struggle in a country where they are still significantly oppressed and marginalized.

A first generation of scholars used the concept of *mestizaje* to describe the identity and situation of US Latina/os. For example, Elizondo sees this search for identity as *mestizaje*. He examines in an analogical way and through the lens of *mestizo* the similarities between Jesus’ Galilean geography and identity and Mexican-Americans’

²⁵⁷ Campos, *La Madurez*, 58.

²⁵⁸ Álvarez, *Beyond Borders*, 48.

experience. Elizondo interprets *mestizaje* as a way of demonstrating that God identifies himself with those who have been rejected and are invisible in a dominant culture. He sees the future as *mestizo*.²⁵⁹ Likewise, Isasi-Díaz makes an important contribution to the discussion of gender and ethnic subjects in US Latina/o *mujerista* theology using *mestizaje/mulatez* as self-identification and self-determination of Latina women in the midst of their *lucha* (struggle). She clarifies that the addition of *mulatez* to *mestizaje* is a way of identifying features of the African, Spanish, and Amerindian race and culture, and has to be understood not as one race or culture oppressing another, but as a way of seeing Hispanic diversity and its enrichment.²⁶⁰ Some Hispanic scholars have raised questions about the use of *mestizaje*, among them, Miguel De La Torre. He states,

Although popular slogans like *mulatez* are constructed to describe the America's multiculturalism, white scholars like Isasi-Díaz romanticize the notion of *mestizaje* and *mulatez*... *Mulatez* as a linguistic sign masks white Hispanics' rejection of *negritude* (black consciousness) as viable ideology. *Mulato* and *Mulatez* seek assimilation, a conciliatory rather than divisive response to racism.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Elizondo, *Galilean Journey*, 91-102, 111, 119-25. Elizondo in the foreword of González's book, *Mañana*, affirms that "Justo opens the way for this new religious *mestizaje*... What today appears to be opposing and contradictory ways will tomorrow be appreciated as elements of the new religious expression. It will be like a new Pentecost, and in Christ we will all be a new creation –*el Cristianismo mestizo de las Américas!*" González, *Mañana*, 20. See also Virgilio Elizondo and David Carrasco, *The Future is Mestizo: Life where Cultures Meet* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2000). Daniel L. Migliore states that for "Elizondo Jesus' origin and formation in Galilee marked by social and cultural *mestizaje* point to the presence of divine grace in and through humanity defined by *mestizaje*: '*Mestizaje* is the beginning of a new Christian universalism.'" *Faith Seeking Understanding: Una Introduction to Christian Theology*, 2ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 213-14. See also Néstor Medina, *Mestizaje: Remapping Race, Culture, and Faith in Latina/o Catholicism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

²⁶⁰ Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha/In the Struggle*, 34, 44-45. For a better understanding of their term *la lucha*, see Ada María Isasi-Díaz, "La lucha," in De La Torre, *Hispanic American*, 335-337.

²⁶¹ Miguel De La Torre, "Rethinking *Mulatez*," in *Rethinking Latino (a) Religion and Identity*, ed. Miguel De La Torre and Gastón Espinosa (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2006), 167 (italics in the original).

The use of mestizaje is a mode of exclusion and detriment to indigenous and Afro-descended peoples.²⁶² The concept mask the history of colonization and makes Latina/os an easy object of assimilation of American culture. That is the way of reading the history of Latina/os not from their own experiences but through the lenses of Eurocentric culture and ideologies.

Alberto Ochoa likewise recalled his experience, speaking about how he and his family lived in poverty in their homeland and how he now serves the poorest, in so doing opening new possibilities for social transformation:

The main reason is because I come from that community. I was raised extremely poor in Puerto Rico. I walked barefoot, with torn clothes. We lived in a small house in the countryside, in the mountains. When it rained, we ran with the pans to stop the leaks. I sometimes went to bed without eating food. I was raised in need. I knew of relatives in New York or Pennsylvania where our family lived, who sent boxes with used clothes and gifts that they gave us every year. Opening those boxes with used or new clothes and wearing them was such a huge satisfaction. As I understand it, Rev. Feliberto had that passion and shared that vision with the church. He outlined and wrote down the vision for the church. The church saw it, accepted it, and walked with him with this vision. In the same church there were immigrants, refugees, who understood that they could help those who came after them. When I traveled in 1994, I saw the poverty on both sides of the borderland. I met the refugees who were arriving. I talked to them,

²⁶² Jorge A. Aquino, "Mestizaje," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, ed. Orlando O. Espín (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015), 285.

listened to their stories, and felt that this was the place where God was calling me to serve. Observing the need of the people at first hand and knowing that from what little I had I could share with them motivated me to serve.²⁶³

While sharing her experience of helping refugees Elena Acosta cried, reminded of the hard situations she faced in her homeland and now how she shows God's love for others:

What motivates us to work with refugees is love, charity, kindness and pain. The experiences and situations that we have lived in our countries and what we have to face every day here impel us to work with the poor in this country. The love of God invites us to see those who are suffering with love. The violence of my country, El Salvador, forced me to leave suddenly everything behind: family, home, friends We have seen people suffering from Central America and South America, and they have told us about the hard situations they have lived coming through Mexico. The Bible says that the pain of others must be our pain, just as their joy should be our joy. When you see people, who come here with nothing, then you cannot be insensitive to their pain. God has had compassion on us, and we should be compassionate to others. These people come from countries where they were raped or experienced hunger.²⁶⁴

There is no doubt that the experience lived by Alberto in his homeland marked him profoundly. Alberto was very sensitive when he spoke about his life in Puerto Rico,

²⁶³ Alberto Ochoa, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, December 3, 2016.

²⁶⁴ Elena Acosta, Interview by the author, November 25, 2016.

tears rolling down his cheeks. Elena likewise expressed her experience using words such as “pain” and “suffering.” She also noted how she was living in tough social circumstances in Texas, referring to “what we have to face every day here.” These were primary experiences²⁶⁵ that marked the lives of Carmen, Alberto, and Elena. Through these experiences, they have come to understand profoundly the experiences of life and humanity. The way they communicate these experiences is through testimonios or narratives of life. Carmen, Alberto, and Elena have been molded and shaped by their tragic experiences. Moltmann, from his own experience as a prisoner of war, states,

The victims’ recollections of suffering are stronger than the perpetrators’ recollections of what they did, because the remembrance of suffering outlasts time, and is not subject to oblivion. So truth is in the hands of the victims, and it is from them that deliverance from delusion to reality comes.²⁶⁶

From these experiences and recollections, ICE’s Latina/o pentecostals have developed a way to be liberated that moves them to serve the poorest in society. Their experience, their memories has released them from the chains of the past without making them sick with amnesia. Their memories now empower them to serve graciously in *lo cotidiano* and in the midst of the daily *lucha*.²⁶⁷ Their experiences of poverty and violence move them to serve refugees who come to the USA with similar stories. What God has done in their present lives is what matters for Latina/o pentecostals, and they

²⁶⁵ For a better understanding of primary experiences and secondary experiences, shared experiences and collective experiences, see Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 17–28. For a better understanding of religious experience of individual subgroups of Latina/os, see Héctor Avalos, ed., *Introduction to the U.S. Latina and Latino Religious Experience* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2004), 11-138.

²⁶⁶ For historical memories, see Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 27.

²⁶⁷ For an interesting article about memory and nostalgia in pentecostalism, see Derrick R. Rosénior, “The Rhetoric of Pentecostal Racial Reconciliation: Looking Back to Move Forward,” in *A Liberating Spirit: Pentecostals and Social Action in North America*, ed. Michael Wilkison and Steven M. Studebaker (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 75–80.

want others to experience God's goodness too.²⁶⁸ That is also why they become involved in social outreach ministries.

In his book, *Pentecostalismo y Transformación Social*, López writes about how Latina/o pentecostal pastors and their parishioners have developed a social concern as their *misión integral*, and notes:

The pentecostal comprehension of this key principle of pastoral work is explained by two closely related facts: First, the pentecostal conviction about the action of the Holy Spirit in the believers' daily life, which gives them power to testify and strength to cope with moments of suffering. Second, pentecostal pastors, who, by their social location share the same situation of extreme poverty and the same daily struggle for the survival of their parishioners— and know more closely the material and spiritual needs of the people, and therefore participate with and accompany them in their various collective efforts to affirm their human dignity.²⁶⁹

López's quotation makes sense of the experiences shared by the ICE's members and its pastors, since they have lived in poverty and difficult social circumstances in their homelands. Eight out of ten participants shared their past experiences in their homelands. Because of those past experiences, they well understand the needs of those refugees who came to the church facilities asking for help. These past experiences of marginalization and oppression now inspire them to serve the poor with love and compassion. The ICE's Latina/o pentecostals therefore have developed a *misión integral* based on their past social experiences. A key aspect in López's quotation for pentecostal mission is the social location for understanding the reality of oppression experienced by Hispanics. This social

²⁶⁸ Jäger, *Pentecostal Aesthetics*, 195.

²⁶⁹ López, *Pentecostalismo y Transformación*, 17.

location plays an important role in developing a pentecostal mission that gives primacy to Latina/os everyday experiences of social struggle, as Ana María Díaz-Stevens notes.²⁷⁰

Finally, Juan Aguilar spoke about his experience and what inspired him to serve the poor, as well as how some members of the church contributed to the well-being of the refugees:

How do I understand the relationship of the church and the social ministry? Well, it has been the vision of the pastor... We were refugees, we understand perfectly what it means to have nothing, just your clothes and shoes. We had to live on the island in conditions that I don't want to remember. I was a little boy. The pastor felt that call from God to find a way to help them, that is, to be a church in the midst of the needs. People are very generous in our church and they help us a lot, as many of them have lived similar stories of pain. Many pick up refugees, host them, feed them, or even offer them some type of work in their homes like cutting grass. They identify with their needs in a very familiar way. It is not difficult for them who have also arrived from El Salvador, Peru, Cuba... in similar conditions of poverty. With the Rice and Beans program, we help the orphanage and even the neighboring churches of Los Fresnos, and others in Mexico. Pastors and customs people connect us with these people who are in need and with the church and Good Samaritan ministry. People come to us by different means.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Ana María Díaz-Stevens, "Identity and Social Location," in Aponte and De La Torre, *Handbook of Latino/s Theologies*, 130–35. Díaz-Stevens states that "social location seeks to place religion within the scope of people's life chances and explore their religious experience in the context of socioeconomic circumstances" (131). See also, Ana María Díaz-Stevens and Anthony M. Stephen-Arroyo, *Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in U.S. Religion* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 49–55.

²⁷¹ Juan Aguilar, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, November 21, 2016.

Note that Juan speaks about his motives to serve the poor using the plural pronoun “we” and using the word “people” to share his experience with the church as part of the collective pentecostal identity. López takes the experiences of Jesus’s disciples—such as Matthew, the publican, and parables such as that of the persistent widow—to illustrate how individual stories are usually connected to collective stories of marginalization. He indicates that the experience of Jesus’ disciples “continues to be the experience of human beings.”²⁷² In this way, Juan, Alberto, Carmen, and Elena’s stories of joy and sorrow as individual testimonios testify to how they collectively understand and integrally live the mission of Jesus, helping the poor and their church for the well-being of all. In López’s words:

Missional practice, in order to be contextual, and therefore committed, must sink its roots into the temporal setting in which the marginalized experience their joys and sorrows, construct their dreams and hopes, fight for each day’s bread, create new forms of social communication, and express their incorruptible faith in the God of life, defending the cause of the destitute and the needy.²⁷³

These past experiences lived by members of ICE are a circular process of moving back and forward, taking their individual past experiences to develop community and cooperation in the present and future. Their sorrows and joys have been like a springboard that motivates them to help others that are facing similar social conditions of marginalization and to construct new dreams and hopes for their human flourishing.

²⁷² López, *The Liberating Mission*, 115.

²⁷³ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 49.

Misión Integral Means Change

“If a person comes to church or comes here as a refugee and seeks God genuinely, that person will be changed.” —Gladys

Writing about pentecostal theology and mission, M. Álvarez observes that

Historically pentecostals had the tendency to stress a dichotomy between the church and the world, Christ and society, and the spiritual and the material. Due to their theological approach to mission, pentecostals have rejected the present order of things on account of the anticipation of the new world that is going to be established by Christ upon his return.²⁷⁴

Latina/o pentecostalism puts more emphasis on individual than collective aspects of life, since traditionally pentecostals have believed that a spiritual change in their lives as born-again persons will influence their communities socially. This dichotomy or binary system has been predominant in Latina/o pentecostalism. We see it in the binaries of sacred/profane, good/evil, church/society, spirit/flesh, individual/collective, and so on.²⁷⁵ However, even though there is still some evidence of this theological dichotomy in ICE, Latina/o progressive pentecostals have made a theological and missional connection in evangelization and social ministry, linking the spiritual aspects and social needs of refugees in one social program. Parishioners of ICE have developed a model of *misión integral* that is transformative and theologically pentecostal. To understand this *misión integral* better as a theology of transformation, Rollin G. Grams sees it as an integration of the whole person in the whole community focused on the whole gospel. He defines it as an “Evangelical mission theology that embraces social transformation as equally a part

²⁷⁴ Álvarez, *Misión Integral*, 53. Álvarez clarifies that this dichotomy was inherited from the North American denominations and the influence of the Catholic tradition.

²⁷⁵ Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms, of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1995), 33–39. Durkheim writes about the sacred and the profane in this book.

of the Gospel as personal transformation (repentance and conversion) –a holistic theology.”²⁷⁶

Yet there is one theological component missing in Grams’ definition of this Evangelical theology of mission: The Spirit. What is important to stress and differentiate between an Evangelical theology of mission and a pentecostal mission theology is that the pentecostal experience of the Spirit is crucial to understanding Latina/os’ spirituality. The presence of the Holy Spirit is fundamental when someone is born-again (converted) and, particularly, in understanding how the Spirit empowers Latina/o pentecostals to do mission. Paul Pomeville critiques the Protestant-Evangelical theology of mission for failing to understand this Spirit-mission-orientation of pentecostalism. He claims that the emphasis of a concept centered in the obedience of the Great Commission has neglected the importance of the Spirit that is one of the main contributions of pentecostalism to the theology of mission.²⁷⁷

In members of ICE this misión integral is evidenced by change inspired by the Spirit and revealed in three principal characteristics: a) a pentecostal conversion, b) an

²⁷⁶ Rollin G. Grams, “Theology: Its History, Theology and Hermeneutics,” *Transformation*, 24, no. 3/4 (July/October 2007): 193, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43052710>. A consultation on a mission theology of transformation was articulated at Wheaton College in 1983. C. René Padilla was at this consultation, one of the founding members of Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, which developed the concept of *misión integral*. See Chapter 1, n. 23. See also Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, eds., *The Church in Response to Human Need* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987).

²⁷⁷ Paul Pomeville, “Pentecostalism and Missions: Distortion or Correction? The Pentecostal Contribution to Contemporary Mission Theology,” (PhD diss., The School of World Mission and Institute of Church Growth, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena CA, 1982), 314–35. Pomeville believes that this emphasis on “Great Commission missions” has resulted in “humanization” that neglects the “mediate redemptive activity of God.” Pentecostals’ emphasis is on the biblical concept of the kingdom of God, i.e., the dynamic presence of the Spirit. For a comprehensive understanding of Pomeville’s perspectives on the Great Commission, see pages 229–33, 284–97. In the same vein, Amos Yong clarifies that a distinctive hermeneutic, method, and imagination can be generated focusing on the encounter of God of Jesus Christ through the Spirit. He states that this encounter “has the potential to revitalize and renew Christian theology for the third millennium.” *The Missiological Spirit*, 11.

authentic Christian testimony, and c) a sharing of the gospel's good news and helping the marginalized.

Latina/o pentecostal mission places a strong emphasis on the power of the Spirit to change lives through a person being born again. It is a pneumatocentric integral mission of conversion.²⁷⁸ "Conversion is perhaps the entrance for most Pentecostals to the particularity of [the] Pentecostal experiences,"²⁷⁹ according to Vondey. Practically, conversion as a Spirit-event is associated with salvation in the pentecostal world.²⁸⁰ It is important to highlight that for Latina/o pentecostalism, the stories recounted in the books of Luke-Acts and Paul's letters are particularly significant for what they convey about conversion.²⁸¹ Verbal expression in prayer is traditionally how Latina/o pentecostals urge others to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord, based on Romans 10: 9–10.²⁸² Two testimonios

²⁷⁸ See Anderson, "Towards a Pentecostal Missiology," 171. Jäger argues that traditionally pentecostal theology is focused on pneumatology, and "it is typically approached through the hermeneutical perspective of Luke-Acts. Luke-Acts makes way for a Christocentric-Pneumatocentric theology that is pragmatic and emphasizes the core motifs of Pentecostalism." *Pentecostal Aesthetics*, 55.

²⁷⁹ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 20.

²⁸⁰ Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 163.

²⁸¹ See Martin William Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts in the Pentecostal Tradition* (Cleveland, OH: CBT Press, 2010), 106–110. See also John Michael Penney, *The Missionary Emphasis of Lukan Pneumatology* (New York, NY: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); and Jäger, *Pentecostal Aesthetics*, 55.

²⁸² Rom 10:9–10, "9 If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved." All biblical texts have been taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.®, <https://www.biblegateway.com>. Byron Mazariegos warns about the difference in theology that can be seen in the author of the book of Acts and Paul's letters in "La teología medular del pentecostalismo latinoamericano," in *Voces del Pentecostalismo Latinoamericano: Identidad, Teología, Historia*, ed. Daniel Chiquette and Luis Orellana (Hualpén, Chile: RELEP, 2009), 131.

attest to this pentecostal conversion. Elena spoke about a woman who remained in the church's facilities and was converted:

There was a woman who was raped in her country and applied for asylum. There were evenings in which our pastor had to come and pray for her. She lived with fear and anxiety most of the time. She was young and was suffering a lot. She was a sweet person when she was not crazy. She was transformed by the power of the Spirit as a new person. How can we live and serve this type of people? We try to put ourselves in the shoes of those who have been rejected. We try to understand their emotional and physical condition. But it is the love of Christ through his Holy Spirit who has transformed us to serve with compassion. We plant seeds of love and care, and then we can see the harvest. I have witnessed how God cares for those who care about others. We give to these people who are in need and tomorrow God will provide for us through others when we are in a similar situation.²⁸³

Javier, a refugee who left his country in Latin America to pursue the American dream, expressed his Christian conversion as follows:

When I left Guatemala, I never thought about the hard road that was awaiting me in Mexico. There I got very sick and had to stay in Matamoros for almost three months. An old woman hosted me and cured me and brought me food every day. My recovery was very slow and there were many days I cried like a little boy. At least I was not married or had kids, but I wanted to provide a better life for my

²⁸³ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

mom and brothers... In this church, a woman talked to me about Jesus, but I was rebel and refused to hear the message until one day the Spirit touched me in the worship service and everything has changed since then. It is something you can't describe with words, but I cried again like a little boy hugging a brother who prayed for me, and this time it was not sadness but joy that I felt. And let me say that here in this country, cops and white people treated us like garbage, but I know now who I am serving.²⁸⁴

Luis León attests that pentecostal conversion like Javier's, and also Elena's story of a woman, describe a social process: "a transitional passage, from one life state to the next, that is marked by crisis, separation, and modified reintegration."²⁸⁵ This state of separation is a liminal state, according to Victor Turner, in which people experience a strong sense of *communitas*.²⁸⁶ He explains that these bonds of community underline the egalitarian aspects and union between members of a group.²⁸⁷ For instance, men hugging

²⁸⁴ Javier Hernández, Fieldnotes notebook, Los Fresnos TX, December 10, 2016.

²⁸⁵ León, *La Llorona's Children*, 238. See Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969), 95–96, 131–65. Turner employs the concepts of "liminality" and "*communitas*." Liminality comes from the Latin word *limen* (threshold). The liminal is the second phase of a three-stage ritual process: separation, margin (or *limen*), and aggregation. The first phase (preliminal) marks symbolic behavior or separation from previous identity. It is a combination of both egocentric and sociocentric aspects. The liminal is the state in which the subject is between two social categories or forms of existence. In this situation, people are in an intermediate position in which they assume particular characteristics. Liminality is an uncomfortable state since those who are in this state of identity do not fit into the established cultural rules. A subject in this state is ambiguous and not quite in society, and the subject might be more able to experience the supernatural world. The last phase (postliminal) is incorporation into the new identity. The ritual subject, individual or corporate, is in a stable state and has rights and obligations. The subject has to live according to certain ethical norms and rules established by the structure. Turner defines *communitas* as "a relational quality of full unmediated communication, even communion, between definite and determinate identities, which arises spontaneously in all kinds of groups, situations, and circumstances" (47).

²⁸⁷ See Néstor A. Gómez Morales, "Pentecostales Latinos en los Estados Unidos: Ritualismo en un Estado Liminal Permanente," *Kronos Teológico*, 3 (June 2012): 15.

men and crying in the worship service, as Javier does, break the stereotype of *machismo* so predominant in Latina/o culture.²⁸⁸ In pentecostal churches, this sense of affection in *communitas* is expressed with hugs, smiles, prayer, worship, respect, joy, and camaraderie. Lois Ann Lorentzen and Rosalina Mira reaffirm these emotional expressions of Latina/os sharing their research at Buen Samaritano in San Francisco. They consider that pentecostal women and men are “feminized and privatized, escaping to a ‘heaven of emotions in a rationalized and bureaucratized world’ in a dominant culture in which they have little voice.”²⁸⁹ In Latin American culture, it is common to be raised in a family where little boys are constantly told: “Los hombres no lloran” (Men don’t cry), as Juan, a forty-five year-old-man, noted when he was touched by the Spirit and was converted: “When I was inside, in the worship service, suddenly I started crying and thought: Why am I crying? Men don’t cry, men don’t cry.”²⁹⁰ As regards gender issues about women, men, and sexuality, Latina/o pentecostals follow the teachings of Paul, but “even here too power and subjection are dialectical and spiritual priorities that often trump too literal reading of the scriptures.”²⁹¹

²⁸⁸ Fernando A. Ortiz and Kenneth G. Davis “Machismo,” in De La Torre, 339–40. Both authors clarify that *machismo* has been identified with hypermasculinity, misogyny, aggressiveness, and control. The term is traditionally applied to Latino men as “machos,” but can also be applied to women as “marimachas.” See also Matthew Guttman, *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996); Alfredo Mirande, *Hombres y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); and Néstor A. Gómez Morales, “Can the Subaltern Speak? The Active Silent Voice of the Pentecostal Women,” in *Revista Camino: Pensamiento Bíblico & Cultural* 6 (2018): 62–66.

²⁸⁹ Lorentzen and Mira, “El Milagro Está en Casa,” 66.

²⁹⁰ Martin Lindhart, “Poder, Género y Cambio Cultural en el Pentecostalismo Chileno,” *Revista Cultura y Religión* 3, no.2 (2009): 99, <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=3088695>

²⁹¹ León, *La Llorona’s Children*, 239.

Elizabeth Brusco examines the role of pentecostal men and gender issues and notes how conversion changes them and has positive effects: often, men stop drinking or gambling and play a more active role as husbands in their families.²⁹² According to Brusco, there is a domestication of men and a redefinition of the roles of men and women in the public and private spheres after conversion. This male conversion often leads to the promotion of “female interest and [it] raises the status of women,”²⁹³ although women still submit to their husbands. By replacing violence, aggression, and self-interests with humility, peace, and common interests, a communitarian relationship is constructed for the benefit of women and men, as well as children.²⁹⁴ Brusco recognizes the participation of women in this macho masculinization:

The female counterpart to machismo, *marianismo*, is in every way machismo’s mirror image. Arrogance and intransigence in the male are mirrored by self-abnegation and submission in the female. A double standard of extreme proportions awards all the spoils to men and reduces women to little more than domestic slaves.²⁹⁵

Perhaps one of the weaknesses of Brusco’s conclusions about male conversion in pentecostalism is the reality that women still depend on men to make decisions. Men hold the master keys and women continue to serve them as inferiors, even if not quite so inferior as before. This mimics the pattern of colonization.²⁹⁶

²⁹² Elizabeth Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin, TX: University of Austin Texas, 1995), 5, 122–23, 128.

²⁹³ Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo*, 136.

²⁹⁴ Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo*, 137–38. Perhaps, one of the weaknesses of Brusco’s conclusions is that women still depend on men for their determinations and decisions. Men hold the master keys while women are still serving them, albeit in a less inferior position than Catholic women.

²⁹⁵ Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo*, 79 9*italics in the original*).

²⁹⁶ Cecilia Loreto Mariz and Maria Das Dores Campos, “Pentecostalism and Women in Brazil,” in *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*, ed. Edward L. Clearly and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino

James R. Goff explains that “conversion absolved the guilt of past short comings.”²⁹⁷ The pentecostal individual’s conversion through being born-again as an experience of the Spirit is a “way of understanding appropriately the intermediate state of every *historical experience* between remembered past and expected future.”²⁹⁸ Many members of ICE shared their tragic stories from the past in their present as experiences of the Spirit, and did so with a vision toward a different future which they understand in eschatological terms. Michael Luna puts it this way:

Now, compassion is what encourages us to do this kind of work. It is like an achievement and a testimony for the Christian to help others. It is the way we respond and obey God’s call to love one another; to help the stranger, the evicted. These people flee from their country for many reasons. They are sometimes forced and do not find another possibility to survive. They do not find a future; they see no way out. Some come to help their parents: papa, mama; others arrive with their entire family.²⁹⁹

Michael was born-again and looking back he had many memories about how he had lived in his homeland. But now he serves the poor with courage to build a different future for those who have been marginalized. He has seen these tragedies every day while

(Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 41–52. The author observes the same problem analyzed in Brusco in Loreto Mariz and Campos Machado. For example, “It is for this reason that Pentecostalism seems to be so appealing to women, who, upon conversion, acquire greater autonomy in relation to their husbands and families while avoiding direct confrontation” (52). In fact, this “avoiding direct confrontation” is a way of controlling pentecostal Latina women and forcing them to submit, without opening spaces for her total autonomy and liberation.

²⁹⁷ James R. Goff quoted in Petersen, *A Pentecostal Theology*, 36.

²⁹⁸ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 17 (italics in the original).

²⁹⁹ Michael Luna, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, November 25, 2016.

serving voluntarily in the church: “They do not find a future, they see no way out,” he notes above. Therefore, he serves with compassion as a witness who testifies about who he is in Christ. His *historical experience* of being born-again in the present yet remembering his own past empowers him to work socially to help others and see an expected future.

Conversion is intimately related to a spiritual life as expressed by Trinidad Méndez: “The conversion is a fundamental step to the development of a spiritual life and a relationship with the Spirit.”³⁰⁰ This spiritual and social change or transformation through being born-again experienced by Latina/os is also related to the emphasis on evangelization that predominates in pentecostal churches and as a witness of Christian faith.³⁰¹ M. Álvarez observes these three interrelated aspects in the *misión integral*: conversion, evangelization, and testimony. He stresses that pentecostal conversion and the baptism of the Spirit together enable believers to walk in a “newness of life,” to testify about Christ to make disciples, and to serve the poor for social justice.³⁰² Trinidad also mentions some of these ideas:

The Lord adds to his church new people without evangelizing door-to-door. We do not evangelize house-to-house because here in Los Fresnos that is difficult.

What we do is that many members of our church call us to pray for them or other people contact us to provide a service or help with a need. We visit them, pray,

³⁰⁰ Trinidad Méndez, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, October 26, 2016.

³⁰¹ Jäger, *Pentecostal Aesthetics*, 192. Jäger states that “a missional ecclesiology claims the purpose of the entire church is to join God in God’s mission of global transformation.”

³⁰² Álvarez, *Integral Mission*, 77, 121–22. See also López, *The Liberating Mission*, 4–5, 51.

and help them and many end up attending our church. Others arrive voluntarily through a member who invites them or on their own. We are open witnesses to the world, and we must live our lives ethically, being examples by what we do. Many people tell us their stories and we know their lives, and we must keep that information confidential, secret. Others ask for prayer for specific needs and those needs are not made public; other requests are shared with the community as testimonio or to seek help among ourselves. We are a visible community and living a moral life as a Christian, is key to our mission to the world. That is why we speak of the fruit of the Spirit emphasizing joy, love, patience, kindness, and justice as fundamental ethical values for our social work, our social ministry.³⁰³

Similarly, Juan spoke about how people needed the gospel to be born again and how hosting refugees was an opportunity to share the good news:

People respond, they are thirsty. There is not only a physical need, but also an internal spiritual need. The experience of the Spirit changes and transforms lives. They come with needs of all kinds, but the Spirit works for their good. They arrive stripped, with nothing. They have left family and homeland, and the Spirit fills them and renews them. Compassion is born of the Spirit. It's faith in action, it's getting rid of what you have: clothes, money... They, the refugees, are transformed, but so are we. Hosting a stranger at home is an opportunity that provides an opening for both the refugee and the host, without knowing it. God uses those moments for our own growth. The Bible says that giving, not only

³⁰³ Trinidad, Interview, Dec. 3, 2016.

economically, but giving of what the Spirit has given us, is part of the life of the believer. Even more the scripture says that whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, knowing that we will receive the reward from the Lord.³⁰⁴

Archer claims that in pentecostalism “witness is the responsibility of the eschatological missionary community in ministry to the world.”³⁰⁵ Costas emphasizes that since Jesus died outside the gate, the nature of mission changed the community from the center to the periphery of the world. Crossing walls and borders and moving from the zone of comfort as a witness of Jesus and sharing in his suffering for those who have been rejected is the way of doing mission.³⁰⁶ As part of ICE’s social program of *misión integral* focused on conversion, evangelism, and Christian testimony, this Latina/o pentecostal community has subverted the traditional Protestant mission transferring from the dominant center to the periphery, in the margins where the depreciated of society lives. In these margins, they seek a total change in people, that they live according to the message of Jesus in the Bible.³⁰⁷ These experiences of the Spirit of being born-again are so different and are so particular to each person that cannot be generalized. Every person that accepts the faith in Christ to be born-again experience a transformation in all aspects of her life. As witnesses of faith in Christ, Latina/o pentecostals in ICE serve the poor as

³⁰⁴ Juan, Interview, Nov. 21, 2016. Juan is quoting Colossians 3:23-24, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

³⁰⁵ Kenneth J. Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 62.

³⁰⁶ Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate*, 192.

³⁰⁷ See Raúl Zaldívar, “Where are the Evangelists? The Phenomenon of Evangelism in Latin American History,” in Álvarez, *The Reshaping of Mission*, 263–80.

part of their social ministry. The ICE's Latina/o pentecostals encourage those whom they are serving to be born again. They live as a testimony of Christian life, sharing the gospel for spiritual and social change. The SWGSM's social program seeks to help the poor holistically by studying the Bible, attending worship services, working in the SWGS's facilities, as well as providing for their spiritual and material needs.

Misión Integral Supplies the Needs of the Poor

“Then I said to myself: How do I take the last part of Mathew 25, and put that into operation?” —Michael

“In addition to the material need, we see the spiritual need. When I have to speak to them about the Lord, I do it with a great pleasure,”³⁰⁸ declares Omaira Castillo avidly. Omaira's words condense what *misión integral* means for ICE's Latina/o pentecostals. For them, there is no separation between the spiritual aspects and the material social needs of life, because most of them have experienced the thirst of both. Hence, they seek a holistic ministry that both carries out the Great Commission³⁰⁹ and at the same time feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and gives water to the thirsty. Serving people spiritually and materially stimulates them to continue working voluntarily in the SWGSM. The ICE's members have developed a pentecostal social spirituality for the poor.³¹⁰ López describes social spirituality as follows:

It is understood that for a Spirit-filled disciple, there is no dichotomy between the spiritual and the material, the religious and the secular, the private and the public, because the purpose of God points to a reconciliation of all things. Consequently,

³⁰⁸ Omaira Castillo, Interview by author, Los Fresnos TX, November 3, 2016.

³⁰⁹ See Allan Heaton Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 198–99.

³¹⁰ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 193–94.

"non-traditional" ways of doing mission, such as the defense of the human dignity of the poor and the excluded of the world, as well as the fight against poverty, in its diverse aspects ... are an evangelical requirement and a concrete way to live in the Spirit.³¹¹

Lourdes observed that there is not this dichotomy: "The mission of the church and our social work, both are fundamental and inseparable."³¹² She integrated the spiritual and material aspects in her testimonio as a concrete way to live in the Spirit—what we might call social spirituality. She recounted:

What motivates me is the love for those refugees who are in need or in the case of the orphanage the needs of those children who have nothing, materially speaking. No money, no shelter, no food... since I have the chance to see the needs firsthand every day, particularly elders and children have touched my heart deeply. The Spirit is going to lead us towards those who have the necessity of something material, or perhaps, the need of prayer or the need to talk and be heard. I understand the mission of our church as loving our neighbor as ourselves. That implies that if I have a conflict with someone, I should forgive and offer apologies to that person. We must share the gospel, the peace of God. We must show that we are Christians who live based on God's Word. If we do not love ourselves and love others, it would be almost impossible to talk about God's love.³¹³

³¹¹ López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral*, 12.

³¹² Lourdes, interview, Nov. 11, 2016.

³¹³ Lourdes, Interview, Nov. 11, 2016.

Likewise, Ernesto Robles made this clarification, integrating both aspects in the Spirit:

The Christian Disciples of Christ Church works for social justice. This for me has a great value. Spiritual values are fundamental, but that does not mean that they are distinct from the physical ones. That is to say, the marginalized, the poor, the persecuted, the nameless. Disciples of Christ Church without knowing me embraced me and made me feel like a family. So, that for me has a great value. People come broken spiritually and materially, and here we are to help in any area to serve with our gifts to the needy. Service and mercy go hand in hand. Faith is what drives us to believe in Christ and to follow him. You must be well convinced. If you talk about Christ and you do not live it, it does not work.³¹⁴

Misión integral incorporates elements of pentecostal spirituality, such as Bible study and prayer. Many biblical texts were cited by the participants as having encouraged them to serve unconditionally. The participants also emphasized that they shared those texts with refugees when they were feeling down. Villafañe and Kärkkäinen recognize that reading the Bible and praying are part of pentecostal spirituality and theology³¹⁵ Praying and reading biblical texts show a serious commitment to God's kingdom and to seeing that his justice is established in an unjust world. This eschatological urgency is what mobilizes Latina/o pentecostals in the ICE to share the gospel and to serve the

³¹⁴ Ernesto Robles, Interview by author, November 30, 2016.

³¹⁵ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 205; and Veli-Mati Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, Intercultural, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 15. Chapter 6 of this dissertation examines a pentecostal theology of the Spirit including reading the Bible and praying as part of pentecostal spirituality. In this fifth chapter, my purpose is to examine these aspects as part of ICE's social ministry. That is the link between Bible and prayer and misión integral.

poorest of the poor. Through reading the Bible and praying, they come to believe that the Spirit is leading them to serve the poor spiritually and materially. They read the Bible prayerfully and literally, believing that the Spirit will guide them.³¹⁶ Álvarez indicates that pentecostals depend on prayer and fasting to undergird most of their actions, and that this alignment with the baptism of the Spirit and a sanctified life enable them to serve the poor effectively in their communities.³¹⁷ These multiple combinations of Spirit-prayer, reading, and meditation in an existential-spiritual way of approaching the Bible is unique to pentecostals, and here we can identify a significant difference between pentecostal hermeneutics and other Christian hermeneutical perspectives observed in Protestants and Catholics.³¹⁸ In other words, the pentecostal community is defined in terms of “being Spirit-driven, Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered to accomplish God’s purposes for and through the community, a community that is to be Spirit-governed, Spirit-supported and Spirit-propagated.”³¹⁹ Interestingly, the biblical texts that predominated in the dialogues with the participants were Matthew 25: 35–36 and John 3:16.³²⁰ The first refers to the

³¹⁶ See Marius Nel, “Attempting to Define a Pentecostal Hermeneutics,” *Scriptura* 114, no. 1 (2015): 4, 12, <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/scriptur/v114/06.pdf>

³¹⁷ Álvarez, *Beyond Borders*, 51–52.

³¹⁸ For a better understanding of the ways in which pentecostal hermeneutics differs from the hermeneutics found in other theological traditions, such as the Catholic, Eastern, and Reformed traditions, see Marius Nel, “Attempting to Define,” 3–6.

³¹⁹ Nel, “Attempting to Define,” 4.

³²⁰ John 3:16 says: “¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ; and Matthew 26: 35–36, “³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.””

material needs of the poor, and the second, to spiritual needs. Carmen's testimonio is a good example of this amalgamation of biblical texts in pentecostal mission:

When someone is afflicted, I like to share biblical texts with them like Psalm 37: 4, " Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Likewise, John 3:16, " For God so loved the world..." Our favorite text is that of Matthew 25 where God talks about helping the needy and hungry. Thus, our mission seeks to help the needy and show them that we are people with Christian love and that we live correctly.³²¹

Juan also highlighted these two biblical texts, and linked them to the Great Commission:

The command in Matthew 28:19 to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," and the text of John 3:16 which says that "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life," give us the guidelines to understand the plan and purpose of God—that he wants no one to be lost, but to have eternal life, as the John text also says. Making disciples is helping the needy in this society, as stated in Mathew 25.³²²

The pentecostal misión integral and the emphasis on the Bible are evident in Carmen and Juan's words. Latina/o pentecostals supply the needs of the poor spiritually when they share biblical texts with refugees, as well as when they pray for their needs.

³²¹ Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

³²² Juan, Interview, Nov. 21, 2016.

M. Álvarez states that pentecostals “are also practicing an intelligent reading and interpretation of the Scriptures”³²³ that develops a serious commitment with the Great Commission and a strong relationship with the Holy Spirit to be focused on their mission. Curiously, López asks some questions about the misunderstanding of Latina/o devotion to the Bible and social action:

Are most [...] pentecostals only concerned about teaching to love the Bible, neglecting the understanding of it from their reality of misery, oppression, and exploitation? Is it true for all sectors of people that conform the heterogenous pentecostal family? Do pentecostals who have lived and live in extreme situations, such as temporary political violence and economic crisis, only read the Bible "devotionally" with almost no concern to understand its message and apply it to the historical conjuncture of violence, oppression and death in which they testify to their faith in the crucified and risen Lord?³²⁴

Clearly the answer to López's questions is a resounding no. The Latina/os of ICE have integrated their social actions, the passion for the Bible, and prayer in a pentecostal *misión integral* that serves refuges, orphans, and the poorest in their community.³²⁵ Latina/o pentecostals place a strong emphasis on prayer, fasting, and miracles as part of their conversion, mission, and evangelism, according to Wilma Wells Davies.³²⁶ Likewise ICE's members firmly believe that God hears their prayer requests, and they have also experienced miracles of healing, as Elena confirms:

³²³ Álvarez, *Beyond Borders*, 54.

³²⁴ López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral*, 17-18.

³²⁵ For specific cases that illustrate prayer, Bible reading, and social action among Latina/os, see Elizabeth D. Ríos, “‘The Ladies Are Warriors’: Latina Pentecostalism and Faith-Based Activism in New York City,” in Espinosa et al., *Latino Religions*, 197–214; and Jill De Temple, “Chains of Liberation: Poverty and Social Action in the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God,” in Espinosa et al., *Latino Religions*, 219–30. For ecumenical prayer among Hispanic Catholics and Protestants and social action, see Miguel De La Torre, “Pray for Elián: Religion and Politics in Miami,” in Espinosa et al., *Latino Religions*, 249–59.

³²⁶ Wilma Wells Davoes, “La naturaleza de la conversión pentecostal en la Argentina: Implicaciones misiológicas,” in Chiquette and Orellana, *Voces del Pentecostalismo*, 157–79.

I have been in this church for seventeen years and have seen many miracles and healings. We have prayed for people who needed documents to live legally in this country and God has answered our prayers. We fasted and prayed for Nancy's sister, Elodia, along with her family, who had asked for political asylum, but they had been denied it, and God answered our prayers and requests. The judge said he was wrong and gave them the papers. Now they are pastors in a church in New York and their children have already completed their university careers. A year later Nancy arrived here. I think it was in 2007. Healing of cancer, conversion of lesbians, and many other miracles we have seen in our church.³²⁷

Gladys Romero likewise spoke of this need for prayer as a key component of the social mission:

When a person tells us his story of suffering and pain; that he was robbed, assaulted and beaten, well, over the course of time that person leaves this place renewed, restored, and changed. The person who leaves is not the same person that arrived. Knowing what our spiritual gift and our call are, we must seek God in prayer. I pray for refugees and for all the petitions that are presented in the church. I pray in my home, but also each person must pray to God. The Scripture says we should ask God, and he will hear our prayer. Communion with God and prayer go together. This makes me feel more useful with the encouragement to work harder in this type of ministry. That is, it feels good to see a person who arrives sick, with diarrhea, vomiting, because he did not eat well on the road or

³²⁷ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

because of the weather changes —cold or heat—and give him refuge, support.

They come with infections and even coughs, and here they get better little by little until they are healed. To see these situations and help them makes me excited to continue working and helping people who really need a hand.³²⁸

We see here that ICE's members have understood perfectly that providing for the needs of the poor is not only a matter of material help but also spiritual help, or what Villafañe has defined as social spirituality. They support refugees spiritually by praying for them and reading biblical texts in community to show their love and compassion toward them. The call to love your neighbor is a daily reality when serving the poor. Villafañe identifies US Latina/o pentecostalism as having an individualistic ethics. He therefore insists that in order to develop an emergent social ethics it is crucial to expand this perspective to a social spirituality that incorporates the virtues of love and justice. Villafañe does not deny the relevance of the various aspects of an individual spirituality and ethics, but he includes these aspects into an extended social spectrum. The question to be posed is how to define a pentecostal spirituality? Villafañe constructs his definition from a trinitarian theology with the help of three Catholic authors: George A. Lane and his notion of spirituality as a relationship with God; Gustavo Gutiérrez and his notion of spirituality as what followers of Jesus do; and Frances X. Meehan and his idea of spirituality as living the life of the Spirit. Thus, Villafañe defines pentecostal spirituality as being to live “in obedience to God, ... following ... Jesus in the power of the Spirit.”³²⁹ His definition is very similar to Lane's broad definition: “Spirituality may be

³²⁸ Gladys Romero, Interview by the author, November 2, 2016.

³²⁹ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 165.

described as a way of holiness. More precisely, spirituality is humanity's possession by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit."³³⁰

Misión Integral as Making Disciples

"The mission is clear in the Bible: making disciples.

Matthew 28, the Great Commission, is central."—Alberto

Besides providing for the spiritual and materials needs of those who live on the margins of society, this social spirituality is also understood to be about making disciples, as Juan mentioned: "Making disciples is helping the needy in this society." Several pentecostal authors have observed this theological and missional aspect of making disciples (discipleship) in pentecostalism, among them Albrecht, Barton, López, C. Álvarez, M. Álvarez, Sánchez-Walsh, Qualls, Villafañe, and Yong.³³¹ Writing about Victoria Outreach Church, Sánchez-Walsh describes how in the rehabilitation home there is strong discipline and discipleship of those who participate in the social program.³³² Likewise, as part of the discipleship social program at ICE, Juan noted that refugees receive a series of instructions "such as no smoking, no alcoholic beverages, no drugs,

³³⁰ George A. Lane, S. J., *Christian Spirituality: A Historical Sketch* (Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2004), viii.

³³¹ Daniel E. Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 138; Paul Barton, "¡Ya Basta! Latino/a Protestant Activism in the Chicano/a and Farm Workers," in Espinosa, *Latino Religions*, 135–36; López, *The Liberating Mission*, 44–58; Carmelo Álvarez, "Hispanic Pentecostals in the US," in *Pentecostal Power: Expressions, Impact and Faith of Latin American Pentecostalism*, ed. Calvin L. Smith (Boston, MA: Brill, 2011), 79; Álvarez, *Beyond Borders*, 52; Sánchez-Walsh, *Latino Pentecostal Identity*, 104, 110; Joy E. A. Qualls, *God Forgive us for Being Women: Rhetoric, Theology and the Pentecostal Tradition* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2018), 180; Eldin Villafañe, *Beyond Cheap Grace: A Call to Radical Discipleship, Incarnation, and Justice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), and Yong, *The Missiological Spirit*, 12.

³³² Sánchez-Walsh, *Latino Pentecostal Identity*, 110.

good behavior, respect, attending church services and Bible studies, working a few hours, not generating conflict or lawsuits, and using moderate language.” Disruptive behavior is not allowed while the person is participating in the social program. C. Álvarez further recognizes that “sustainable growth and the need for a process of integration for new converts, as well as a call to discipleship”³³³ is central for the life of Hispanic pentecostal churches. Thus, such churches’ interest is not just in converting people, but also in leading them to be mature disciples of Christ as part of the Christian mission developed in ICE, as is articulated by Michael:

The mission as I understand it is to make disciples. That is, building community then automatically this vision of making disciples transforms the world, not according to our plan, but God’s plan. In terms of understanding the mission, making disciples for Jesus Christ is the centerpiece for me. In addition is the social ministry.³³⁴

In the same vein, Ernesto understands the church’s mission not only as evangelization, conversion, and testimony, but also as making disciples who can then share the gospel:

As the Lord says, we are called to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” and “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.”³³⁵ If the church were more evangelistic, we would have more disciples. Today we have focused on

³³³ Carmelo Álvarez, “Hispanic Pentecostals in the US,” 79.

³³⁴ Michael, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

³³⁵ Mark 15:15, and Rom. 1:16.

sociological, philosophical sermons, and we have forgotten the central message, that is the Bible. God allowed many missionaries from this country to travel to other places sharing the gospel of grace. We knew the gospel through them... Now, the roles have been reversed. Those of us who were evangelized there are now evangelizing here. You cannot imagine how many have been converted in this borderland and left as male ministers and female ministers of the gospel. They were in our ministry and left for other places. We are a missionary church.³³⁶

Israel Ortiz observes that the transformation of the world by the *missio Dei*³³⁷ includes both spheres of God's kingdom: proclamation of salvation in Christ and social concern. In this sense, he believes that the formation of disciples and life in the community of believers are both fundamental for being agents of God used by the Spirit for social change.³³⁸ Evangelization, conversion, Christian testimony, and discipleship are all intimately interrelated in the *misión integral* of ICES's Latina/o pentecostals.

The above-mentioned aspects of pentecostal mission (evangelization, conversion, discipleship, and social ministry) are mostly carried out by Latinas who have made a serious commitment to follow Christ and serve in God's kingdom, as mentioned by

³³⁶ Ernesto, Interview, Nov. 30. 2016.

³³⁷ For a better understanding and development of *missio Dei*, see David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 20th ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 398–402. One of the ways in which Bosch understands the *missio Dei* is as “the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus, waging on a future that verifiable experience seems to belie. It is the good news of God's love incarnated in the witness of a community, for the sake of the world” (532).

³³⁸ Israel Ortiz, “Beyond Numerical Growth: The Challenge of Transformation in Guatemala,” in Álvarez, *The Reshaping of Mission*, 166, 170.

Elizabeth Conde-Frazier.³³⁹ Almost 70 percent of the people who attend pentecostal churches and support them with volunteer work and money as pillars are women, according to Cecilia Castillo Nanjarí.³⁴⁰ However, Estrela Alexander argues that in spite of the fact that many observers have considered pentecostalism to be a movement of “women’s religion” because historically women have participated more than men, women are still struggling to be recognized as equals and have been “resistant to any genuine elevation of the status of women.”³⁴¹ Several women have written about the struggle that women face in the pentecostal world, among them Sánchez-Walsh, Flora, Alexander, Miskov, Figueroa Aponte, and Pérez.³⁴²

³³⁹ Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, “Being Gospel Together: The Marks of an *Evangélica* Ecclesiology,” in *Latina Evangélicas: A Theological Survey from the Margins*, ed. Loida I. Martell-Otero, Zaida Maldonado, and Elizabeth Conde-Frazier (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), 91.

³⁴⁰ Cecilia Castillo Nanjarí, “Imágenes y Espiritualidad de las Mujeres en el Pentecostalismo Chileno,” in *Voces del Pentecostalismo Latinoamericano III: Identidad, Teología, Historia*, ed. Daniel Chiquette and Luis Orellana (Hualpén, Chile: RELEP-Trama Impresores S.A., 2009), 187.

³⁴¹ Estrela Alexander, “Introduction,” in *Philip’s Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, ed. Estrela Alexander and Amos Yong (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009), 2.

³⁴² Arlene Sánchez Walsh, “Normal Church Can’t Take Us’: Re-Creating a Pentecostal Identity among the Men and Women of Victory Outreach,” *Journal of Hispanic / Latino Theology*, 9, no.2 (Nov 2001): 48–78; Cornelia B. Flora, “Pentecostal Women in Colombia: Religious Change and the Status of Working-Class Women,” *Journal of American Studies and World Affairs*, 17, no. 4 (Nov 1975): 411–425; Estrela Alexander, *Limited Liberty: The Legacy of Four Pentecostal Women Pioneers* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2008); Jennifer A. Miskov, “Giving Room to the Anointing: Carrie Judd Montgomery’s Influence on Women in Ministry,” in *Women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministry: Informing a Dialogue on Gender, Church, and Ministry*, ed. Margaret English de Alminana and Lois E. Olena (Boston, MA: Brill, 2016), 143–54; Miriam E. Figueroa Aponte, “Hacia un Modelo de una Teología Pastoral de la Mujer Pentecostal Puertorriqueña: Un Análisis Documental y Etnográfico del Conflicto del Ministerio Pastoral de la Mujer en la Iglesia de Dios Mission Board en Puerto Rico” (PhD diss., Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico (Recinto Metropolitano), Programa Doctoral de la Escuela de Teología, Puerto Rico), 2013; and Verónica Pérez, “Mujeres y Pentecostalismo: Repensando el espacio sagrado, la iglesia” *Revista Cultura y Religión*, 3, no. 1 (2009): 129–137, (<https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2952621>).

Many female authors have also written about the struggle that Latina women face every day, among them Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books, 1999); Ivone Gebara, *Out of the Depths: Women’s Experience of Evil and Salvation* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 2002); Chela Sandoval, *The Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha, In the Struggle: Elaborating a*

Paradoxically, all men who were interviewed answered the question of the need to make disciples as being a key component of their social work, but no woman answered using those words. It seems that men conceptualize making disciples but do not practice it, while women do the reverse. Women are more active in leadership and in social ministry than men. Six out of ten research participants were women and they predominated in ICE's volunteer work. Women served in the kitchen preparing meals; cleaning the auditorium, tables, offices, and classrooms, and teaching Sunday School classes, among other tasks. Women also participated in prayer and worship more than men. Peter Althouse highlights this theological aspect of prayer in pentecostal churches: "Christian Healing Ministries... is an interesting ministry for understanding the embodiment of prayer because women are predominantly the leaders in the practices of prayer at CHM and... the recipients of healing prayer."³⁴³ Women in ICE participated actively in the life of the church and community prayer. For example, the associate pastor was a Latin American woman who had been working with Pastor Pereira for more than ten years and was seeking ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She began every worship service with prayer and her ministry was fully accepted and recognized by women and men in the church.

Espinosa assures us that although women have struggled against gender discrimination, they have been accepted in the Latino districts of the Assemblies of God

Mujerista Theology (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004); Elsa Támez, ed., *Through Her Eyes: Women's Theology from Latin America* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006).

³⁴³ Peter Althouse, "Women Praying for Women: Christian Healing Ministries and the Embodiment of Charismatic Prayer," in *Women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministry: Informing a Dialogue on Gender, Church, and Ministry*, ed. Margaret English de Alminana and Lois E. Olena (Boston, MA: Brill, 2016), 370.

more than in Anglo-American pentecostalism due to institutional acculturation, education, and cultural orientation.³⁴⁴ He also asserts that “pentecostal women have practiced a kind of paradoxical domesticity whereby they are exhorted to be end-times prophetesses in the public sphere and devoted mothers and good wives in the private sphere.”³⁴⁵ It is in this “paradoxical domesticity” that the issue of power (Foucault) lies between Latino men and Latina woman in pentecostal churches. Women do not always fully participate and determine business in the church or at home. Usually, men hold the authority and final word. Women have to negotiate to have their voices heard and find space in a patriarchal structure.

Tito Madrazo writes about this paradoxical domesticity and observes that pentecostal churches accepted the ministry of women earlier than Protestant churches due in part to the pentecostal experience and testimony, and the eschatological urgency of being in the last days “in which sons *and daughters* will prophesy.”³⁴⁶ The scripture that Madrazo mentions is Joel 2:28–29,³⁴⁷ and based on it, many pentecostal churches like Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer allow women to serve as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and teachers. Maduro ponders that Latin American immigrant women find in the pentecostal churches one of the very few places where they are treated with respect and

³⁴⁴ Gastón Espinosa, “‘Third Class Soldiers’: A History of Hispanic Pentecostal Clergywomen in the Assemblies of God,” in Alexander and Yong, *Philip’s Daughters*, 98.

³⁴⁵ Espinosa, “Third Class Soldiers,” 98.

³⁴⁶ Tito Madrazo, “Profeta Ana Maldonado: Pushing the Boundaries of Paradoxical Domesticity,” *Perspectivas*, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 14 (Spring 2017): 144 (italics in the original), http://perspectivasonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/P-E-R-S-P-E-C-T-I-V-A-S_Spring_2017.pdf.

³⁴⁷ Joel 2:28–29, “²⁸ ‘And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.’²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.”

support.³⁴⁸ It seems that in ICE, women have to submit to men, as is generally taught in Hispanic pentecostal churches, and that they experience certain restrictions, but certainly they have broken barriers of machismo and patriarchal structures and now participate actively in the church's ministries. Similarly, ICE's women are not just spectators in the church but agents who create new spaces of mission that give them room to use their gifts and open new possibilities for social transformation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to present the key findings obtained from the in-depth interviews and participant observations. The voices of ICE's Latina/o participants reveal the ways in which they are doing *misión integral* integrating their religious experiences as a community of the Spirit, sharing the gospel, and serving the refugees and the poorest in society. López reminds us that:

From the world of the poor an integral view of mission which seeks the transformation of all things is weaved, radical discipleship marked by an unshakeable faith in the God of life is articulated, the nonnegotiable value of life as a gift of God is affirmed, peace is built, and the dignity of all human beings as created by God is asserted.³⁴⁹

From the world of these US Latina/o pentecostals, an integral view of mission, which seeks the transformation of all things, is woven every day to serve refugees and the poor for the transformation of society. Abundant testimonios have been shared in this chapter, testimonios that demonstrate what motivates Latina/os pentecostals to be involved in a *misión integral* that serves the poor. Four major findings emerged as

³⁴⁸ Maduro, "Notas sobre Pentecostalismo y Poder," 29.

³⁴⁹ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 28.

essential in the studied phenomenon of pentecostal social mission to examine what motivated these Latina/os to social ministry, namely: misión integral is associated with past experiences; misión integral means change; misión integral supplies the needs of the poor; and misión integral makes disciples.

CHAPTER FIVE: PENTECOSTÉS AS NARRATIVE THEOLOGY

Introduction

Traditionally, Hispanic theology has drawn upon non-Hispanic sources to develop its own perspectives and ideas about who Latina/os are and what they do.³⁵⁰ De La Torre argues that “since childhood, those of us who resided on the underside of U.S. history have been taught to see and interpret reality through the eyes of the dominant culture, specifically White, heterosexual, middle-upper-class, patriarchal eyes.”³⁵¹ Luis G. Pedraja, in his book *Teología: An Introduction to Hispanic Theology*, corroborates this idea when he argues that history has been written by those who hold the power and who create the systems and structures of society, primarily to serve their own interests and needs. However, the voices of those who have been marginalized rarely write their own history in a dominant society.³⁵² Likewise, Rosario-Rodríguez argues that marginalized

³⁵⁰ Samuel Soliván, “Sources of a Hispanic,” 136. The number of books written about pentecostal theology from different contexts has increased enormously in the last decades. For example, see Frederick Dale Brunner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1997); Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and Christian Spiritual Tradition* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000); Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2008); Sammy Alfaro, *Divino Compañero: Toward a Hispanic Pentecostal Christology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010); Steven M. Fettke, *God’s Empowered People: A Pentecostal Theology of the Laity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2011); Christopher A. Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013); Guy P. Duffield, Nathaniel M. Van Cleave, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma Media, 2008); and Mark J. Cartledge, *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016).

³⁵¹ Miguel De La Torre, *The Politics of Jesús: A Hispanic Political Theology* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 24.

³⁵² Luis G. Pedraja, *Teología: An Introduction to Hispanic Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 15.

theologies have resisted the notion of a singular Christian tradition so predominant in Western theology.³⁵³ It is one thing to take insights from other sources that are useful to understand who Latina/os are and what they do, but quite another to develop a truly authentic theological perspective from Hispanics own experience and culture and *en conjunto* (together).³⁵⁴ Precisely this is one of the objectives of this research study through its qualitative methodology as lived religion. In other words, a pentecostal theology must emerge not from the orthodox doctrines and formulations imposed by the dominant Christian culture, but from the religious experiences as confessions of how Latina/os live the full gospel.³⁵⁵ Robert Menzies states this as follows: “Pentecostés: Esta

³⁵³ Rubén Rosario-Rodríguez, “Sources and *en conjunto* methodologies of Latino/a theologizing,” in Espín, *Latino/a Theology*, 54.

³⁵⁴ Robert Menzies clearly states that pentecostals “need to establish foundations for a Pentecostal theology. They cannot continue borrowing doctrine and theology from the evangelicals.” Quoted in Rigoberto M. Gálvez Alvarado, “A Guatemalan Perspective on Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century,” in M. Álvarez, *The Reshaping of Mission*, 152. Also, Edwin David Aponte states that “there is no such thing as one single, unified Hispanic/Latino/a theology, but rather a multiplicity of perspectives within the diverse Latino/a communities” that encapsulates distinctive and relevant experiences that contribute to Christian theology as a whole. “Theological and Cultural competence *en Conjunto*,” in Aponte and De La Torre, *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, 1. Rodríguez and Martell-Otero explain plainly what *teología en conjunto* (collaborative theology) signifies: “Literally, *en conjunto*, means “in conjunction,” or “conjoined in” ... We use the term *teología en conjunto* to emphasize two fundamental aspects affecting Hispanic theology: Its rich diversity and its integral collaborative spirit.” José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero, ed., *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 1. Hispanic theology has three key features: *lo cotidiano*, *en conjunto*, and movement, according to Robyn Henderson-Espinoza. See “Queer Theory and Latino/a Theologizing,” in Espín, *Latino/a Theology*, 331. Also, K. Archer argues that pentecostalism is an “authentic Christian tradition in action and thought,” very different from Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism. See Archer, “A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology,” 305.

³⁵⁵ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 24. Vondey’s idea of theological narrative as the full gospel and pentecost as the core symbol of pentecostal theology is embedded in the so-called Cleveland school. For a better understanding of this school, see John Christopher Thomas, “Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century,” *Pneuma* 20, 1 (1998): 3–19.

Historia es Nuestra Historia”³⁵⁶ (Pentecost: This Story is our Story). Vondey is also useful here:

Pentecostals speak less about salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, divine healing and the kingdom of God (as the elements of the Pentecostal full gospel) than about being saved, sanctified, filled with the Spirit, healed and on their way to heaven (as moments of the root experiences of Pentecost). The path of Pentecostal theology proceeds from experience to reflection, interpretation and the articulation of doctrine through the manifestation of the underlying experiences in the affections.³⁵⁷

Vondey’s conceptualization of a pentecostal theology rooted in the event of Pentecost is useful to understand how Latina/os pentecostals encounter God playfully not in doctrines but in their everyday social actions as a community of the Spirit. Vondey puts it this way: “In a methodological way, play is therefore a way of engaging the world not exclusively through doctrine but also materially, physically, spiritually, aesthetically, morally and socially.”³⁵⁸ In this sense, examining the affections, convictions, and practices of how Latina/o pentecostals embody God in their social actions toward the poor is fundamental to understand what motivates the members of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) to do social ministry and help the poor. Instead of collecting a package of doctrines, this research is interested in analyzing the material, moral, physical and social aspects that move Latina/o pentecostals to serve refugees.

In this study, these confessions of religious experiences are taken from the Latina/o people who have been struggling to be recognized as fully human. In a country where they have all too often been treated as objects and invisible human beings, this

³⁵⁶ Menzies, *Pentecostés*, 2.

³⁵⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 24.

³⁵⁸ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 13.

research study attempts to hear their voices and treat them as subjects, taking into account the root experiences of pentecostals to examine how they live the full gospel of the Spirit and, specifically, what motivates them to social ministry. While this chapter engages with Wolfgang's theological perspective about the event of Pentecost and with that of other authors, the data presented here comes largely from the everyday experiences of Latina/o pentecostals rather than from their or others' abstract conceptualizations about God.³⁵⁹ Pentecostalism goes beyond doctrine and beyond the orthodox way of identifying a package of beliefs that distinguishes one Christian group from another.³⁶⁰ In Nimi Wariboko's words, pentecostalism "is rooted in the immediacy of lived, experienced reality and intimately knows real, sensuous, physical human activity, practices."³⁶¹ Engaging God in a pentecostal ways entails something beyond orthodox, conservative, or fundamentalist theologies in the sense that Latina/os experience every day the presence of the God that they worship at the altar.³⁶² Hence, this research studies the lives of Latina/o pentecostals as grassroot theologians.³⁶³ For simply put, Latina/o pentecostals "traditionally have not *had* a theology; they have *lived* it."³⁶⁴

³⁵⁹ See Nimi Wariboko, *The Split God: Pentecostalism and Critical Theory* (New York: SUNY Press, 2018), xi–xii.

³⁶⁰ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 11. Vondey argues that placing doctrine first means that "Pentecostals are seen as dogmatically conditioned and that they can be doctrinally compared and assessed, typically in contrast to the doctrines of other traditions."

³⁶¹ Wariboko, *The Split God*, xiv–xv.

³⁶² See Wariboko, *The Split God*, xii.

³⁶³ Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha*, 186–87. Daniel Chiquete insists that formed academic theologians should not only teach members of communities of faith, but should also learn from them, live with them, and share with them organically. Quoted in Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro, "Renewal Across the Americas: Thinking Globally from a Local Context," in Medina and Alfaro, *Pentecostals and Charismatics*, 232.

³⁶⁴ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 14 (italics added)

This chapter presents the key findings obtained from the in-depth interviews and participant observations. The key research sub-question that guides this chapter is: What are the theological perspectives/practices that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? The voices of ICE's Latina/o participants reveal how they are doing theology of the Spirit while serving the poor. Their religious experiences as a community of the Spirit is examined using Vondey's conceptualization of the event of Pentecost as a core symbol of pentecostal theology.³⁶⁵ *Pentecostés* is a search for the *Espíritu* that resonates with the religious experiences and social struggle of Latina/o pentecostals.³⁶⁶ It is about an *Espíritu* that embodies the real experience of Hispanics and has opted for the marginalized and disenfranchised. The *Espíritu* as a main agent of the event of pentecostés disrupts and interrupts the pervasive structural and systemic systems that support the status quo and cause oppression. A brief sketch of Vondey's conceptualization of a holistic anthropology that articulates the human agency of the image of God highlights his relational interpretation: of human agency in relation to God,

³⁶⁵ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 1. In this chapter, the author has opted to use the word *pentecostés* and *Espíritu* in Spanish instead of the English word *Pentecost* and *Spirit* used by Vondey. This concept resonates better with the reality of marginalization experienced by Latina/o pentecostals. The author is also using the word *Espíritu* instead of *Spirit*.

³⁶⁶ See De La Torre, *The Politics of Jesús*, 6. Here, the author is paraphrasing De La Torre's concept of the Hispanic Jesús, who states, "We search for a Jesus that resonates specifically with the U.S. Latina/o community (with the hope that this Jesus will also resonate with other marginalized groups." Here a comprehensive theological conceptualization of the *imago Dei* will not be given since this is not the purpose of this subsection. Basically, one of the theological findings that emerged as essential in the data analysis was the "Image of God." The *imago Dei* is examined here as related to Latina/o pentecostal theological perspective. For a comprehensive understanding of the *imago Dei*, see Ryan S. Peterson, *The Imago Dei as Human Activity: A Theological Interpretation* (Philadelphia, PA: Eisenbrauns Publishing, 2016); Dominic Robinson, *Understanding the "Imago Dei": The Thought of Barth, von Balthasar and Moltmann* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016); and Ismael García, *Dignidad: Ethics through Hispanic Eyes* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997).

self, and others.³⁶⁷ What follows examines the three major findings that emerged as essential in the studied phenomenon of pentecostal social theology about what motivates Latina/os to social ministry, namely: pentecostés theology of *imago Dei*, pentecostés theology of love, and pentecostés theology of Spiritual gifts.

Pentecostés Theology of *Imago Dei*

“A refugee is a creation of God; a human being like me.” –Omaira.

Hispanic Catholics, both evangélicos and pentecostals, profess that there is a description of the creation of humankind in God’s image and likeness in the book of Genesis. This creation of humankind was, they say, a free act of God who made humans with the capacity to obey and the freedom to decide.³⁶⁸ Although pentecostals have not fully articulated a theological anthropology of *imago Dei*, their pentecostal subject is the central object of the narrative of the full gospel, and they also challenge “traditional and theological approaches to human nature,”³⁶⁹ according to Vondey. Michael, one of the research participants, referred to this image of God as a “unique secret value.” He clarified that it is not the social program but faith in Christ that it is his end or goal:

I have seen that a person who comes and wants to transform the community has to leave something behind. Likewise, there are people who come as volunteers and become frustrated because they do not see immediate results or do not see the

³⁶⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 176.

³⁶⁸ Álvarez, *Integral Mission*, 118. The traditional biblical text used for a theology of the *imago Dei* is taken from the first biblical creation account in Genesis 1:26–27. “Created by God, the human being comes into existence in the likeness of God and with the ability to reflect the moral, intellectual, and spiritual character of the creator,” states Vondey. *Pentecostal Theology*, 177.

³⁶⁹ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 175.

result they expected. It is an immense challenge to work with the local church and the social ministry they carry out. Or, for example, you see that someone is engaged in Casa Bethel in Matamoros. A woman in Dallas told me that she did not continue to be the contact between her church and Casa Bethel in Matamoros because some members in the hallway of the church said: "Here comes the Mexican girl." She advocated for the children of Casa Bethel or something else, and she was marginalized and categorized by the members of her local church. I mean you can be a religious person, and your faith is in your social program. But I have faith that God loves us. I have faith he has assigned a unique secret value to each person. Other than that, it could be a government social program, but we do what we do because of our faith in Christ.³⁷⁰

Ricardo, a Cuban refugee, who was in the ICE's facilities some years ago waiting for asylum, expressed his idea of the imago Dei as follows:

It was difficult for me to understand that I was created in the image of God when people here were talking to me about it. You know, they were singing in the temple and preaching and having fellowship and all these things were weird to me. I was raised Catholic. But lately these things have been making sense to me. I was not happy with all these things they were telling me to believe, but the point was that they treated me as a human being. They prayed for me and never rejected me even though I was sometimes angry. I really had a bad temper. In the past few years, I have been living with dignity and got married. I got the documents and a

³⁷⁰ Michael, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

job here. What else could I ask these people to do for me? In this country, gringos treat us like garbage. They do not understand who we are and why we are here. If you speak in Spanish, they get mad and treat us as if we are not human beings. But these people were with me all the time. Some of them are my friends now, including the pastor.³⁷¹

In short, Ricardo speaks about how the dominant culture and society depersonalize Latina/os. They treat them as objects and not subject-persons. Writing about the imago Dei of the Spirit in relationship to the Trinity, Samuel Soliván states,

The depersonalization of the Holy Spirit is important to Hispanic American pneumatology because the relationship of the Spirit to persons, in this case Latinas and Latinos who daily experience treatment as nonpersons, can provide a transformative model of personhood and self-esteem. Hispanics are constantly at the mercy of powers, forces, and influences that serve to further dehumanize and objectify them.³⁷²

Soliván examines this restoration of the image of God through the Espíritu in the event of pentecostés where he sees God's redemptive plan of diversity and inclusivity.³⁷³ What Soliván illustrates with this event and the person of the Holy Spirit, Ricardo lived out in flesh and bone at ICE. Members of the church treated him as a human being created in the image of God and he experienced the transformative power of the Espíritu, who made him a new person (personalization). A new relationship with God and with others in the community transformed him and his environment. They treat every person

³⁷¹ Ricardo Díaz, Fieldnotes Notebook, October 16, 2016.

³⁷² Samuel Soliván, "The Holy Spirit –Personalization and the Affirmation of Diversity. A Pentecostal Hispanic Perspective," in *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Perspective*, ed. José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 53.

³⁷³ Soliván, "The Holy Spirit," 57–61.

as a human being created by God. Members of ICE honor what Michael described as the “unique secret value” assigned by God to each person through their loving social actions. Their faith is not in their social program but in Christ, whom they regard as their savior and Lord.

Ricardo was Catholic before converting to pentecostalism like many Latina/os in the church who have gone through this process of being born again. Some Latina/os still remained in the Catholic church, attending mass in the morning and ICE’s worship service in the evening. In an ecumenical spirit, they participate in the worship service and other church activities. Ernesto visibly manifested this ecumenical spirit:

In our church not all members come from Disciples. Most people have come from Catholic or pentecostal churches. We have people that come to our church and they are not members here. They go to the Catholic mass in the morning and later in the afternoon attend our worship service. They participate in the communion there and in our church. There is a woman who is Catholic, and her son is one of our members. She visits us here from time to time. We seek a different objective and we do not have any problem with people from other faiths attending our church. In this way, we can see the unity of the Spirit and the diversity of spiritual gifts.³⁷⁴

Engaging with both Catholic and Protestant communities, Javier R. Alanís revisits a theological construct of the imago Dei using the term *Diosito* to show that “God as experienced by the Hispanic/ Latino/a community is not an exclusive metaphysical

³⁷⁴ Ernesto, Interview, Nov. 30, 2016.

reality, but a personal and communal God who journeys with the people in daily life.”³⁷⁵ *Diosito* indicates that God is *un buen amigo* and *amante* (a good friend and lover).³⁷⁶

Alanís also stresses that Latina/os are still seen as outsiders or aliens by the dominant culture regardless of whether they were born in the United States or in another country in the Americas, and that they are discriminated against for speaking in Spanish. But it is in the community of the human family where they speak Spanish that they are dignified and humanized.³⁷⁷ The possibility of living in a community that speaks Spanish confers on Latina/os an identity that nurtures their lives in *familia* and *comunidad* (family and community) in a country in which they are discriminated against. The sense of otherness ascribed them by such discrimination is a way to deny the image of God in the Hispanic communities. Therefore, that ICE’s members serve others and communicate with refugees like Ricardo in Spanish exemplifies vividly how they have embraced the other with love in la comunidad of familia. In response, Diosito resists the idea of labeling Latina/os communities as outsiders and welcomes them as human beings created in the image of God. Ricardo has a friendly relationship with Diosito, and in turn he has new friends in the community that care for him just as he is.

Gladys also described her perspective of the image of God as dignifying, specifically as being dignified as “brothers and sisters”:

³⁷⁵ Javier R. Alanís, “Created in the Image of *Diosito*,” in Aponte and De La Torre, *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, 11.

³⁷⁶ Alanís, “*Diosito*,” 14.

³⁷⁷ Alanís, “*Diosito*,” 13–16.

We must look at others, the refugees, with respect and dignity. They are sisters and brothers created in the image of God. Even if they come from gangs or are bad or I don't know them personally, they are children of God, they are human beings. The Bible says that "because you did it to one of them, you did it to me, without knowing it was me." The worst, the vilest, those are who God has chosen. I was not so good or so bad. I believed in God, but I did not follow him as he commanded. The Spirit transforms our reality, our evil. If we devote ourselves to criticizing and judging the condition of people, then we can hardly serve in this ministry and help the people who come to us. God transforms us and changes us if we submit to him with all our hearts. Therefore, patience, compassion, kindness, and love lead us not only to live our faith in Christ as a virtue, but also to grow and mature in faith as a testimony of service to the needy.³⁷⁸

In the images that Gladys enumerates—brothers, sisters, children, the vilest, and the worst— there is a rich theological understanding of the *imago Dei*, an understanding that comes to the fore in the event of pentecostés and the person of the Espiritu. Those who were awaiting the promise of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost were poor people who lived in the margins. Those Latina/o pentecostals who live in the margins are dignified by the power of the Espiritu into the image of God and become brothers and sisters like those who were receiving the promise of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost described in the book of Acts.

³⁷⁸ Gladys, Interview, Nov. 2, 2016. Gladys's words about the *imago Dei* refer to Mathew 25:40 and 1 Cor. 1:27.

Néstor Medina, quoting Neomi De Anda's story of Mary Ann Águeda de San Ignacio (1695–1756), explains that in her pregnancy, Mary, the mother of Jesus, carried, gave birth to, and nurtured the savior with her breast milk. Mary thus reflects the Trinitarian relationship of *imago Dei* and *imago Christi* as “gendering images.” Jesus learned to be imago Christ through his relationship with his mother, Mary. Those who choose *El Camino de la Leche* (The Road of Milk) can become imago Christi and know God and be in relationship with Jesus.³⁷⁹ Mary, a poor young woman from the margins, was chosen by God to conceive the savior in the power of the Espíritu. This echoes Gladys' words of dignity and respect for everyone, and especially for those who live in the margins. Unfortunately, the story recounted in the book of Genesis about humankind created in the imago Dei is not lived out equally by Latinas because they are still treated as inferior in the context of both Hispanic churches and culture. Loida Martell-Otero clarifies this idea, stating that Latinas from the margins know perfectly well from childhood on what it is to die since they are denied the right to dream because they are women of color; they are not part of the dominant culture.³⁸⁰

Medina examines women's situation by stating that De Anda interprets this metaphor of El Camino de La Leche in Mary by attributing it to the Espíritu, the “sustainer and preserver of everything,” and says that women's experiences and the story of Maria Ann associated with Mary, mother of Jesus, resembles the maternal and females

³⁷⁹ Néstor Medina, “Theological Musings toward a Latina/o Pneumatology,” in Espín, *Latino/a Theology*, 179. Neomi De Anda reflects in the work of Sor María Anna Águeda de San Ignacio (1695–1756), who was a Mexican author.

³⁸⁰ Loida Martell-Otero, “Neither ‘Left Behind’ nor Deciphering Secret Codes: An Evangélica Understanding of Eschatology,” in Martell-Otero, Maldonado, and Conde-Frazier, *Latina Evangélicas*, 116.

aspects of the Espíritu as women care, sustain, and “dan luz” (give birth) to the Spirit through a “gendering” of the divine. He argues that it is through *convivencia* (living together, communal living) that women break these barriers in community by caring for, sustaining, and *sobre-viviendo* (surviving) for each other in the midst of violence and discrimination.³⁸¹ In short, Latinas resemble the Espíritu in relationship with the Father and the Son as persons-in-community giving birth, nurturing, and empowering themselves in *convivencia* in order to *sobre-vivir* (survive) in the midst of the challenges they face in *la lucha* and *lo cotidiano* amid a patriarchal society.

Elena likewise saw this image of God in those who treated others justly and equally:

God loved us and gave himself for us on the cross, so, we work and move forward by God’s love and those who need Jesus. Now, justice means that we all have rights, that we are equal, that we deserve respect, and above all that we want to live happily and with the joy that God gives us. I do not understand why there are people who reject others, either because of their skin color or simply because they are Mexican or Guatemalans. The Bible says that we must seek God and His righteousness. In my opinion, God does not reject anyone; He created us all equal, women and men. People fight because they have money or because they live better, they are citizens or illegals ... I do not understand that, I honestly do not understand it. What kind of justice do we speak of if we do not follow the just

³⁸¹ Medina, “Theological Musings,” 180–81.

God? Jesus did not reject anyone. We live fighting and rejecting each other, and we want to live in peace. So explain that to me...³⁸²

Gladys and Elena's words about justice, dignity, and equality resonate with Michelle A. González's thoughts on the manner in which gender functions in the Christian interpretation of the imago Dei in her book, *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology*. González acknowledges that a full humanity is a normative principle for feminist theologians as the way to create resistance and develop humanization amid women's struggles, as well as a more authentic and egalitarian Christian vision that privileges women's experiences. It is not a way in which to replace male normativity with female normativity but more like a theological therapy of "curing" a history and tradition that have privileged men's experiences.³⁸³ Central to her theological view of imago Dei is women's bodies since historically they have been devalued, sexualized, and objectified. To put it in another way, women's bodies have been associated with the physical as bad while the soul as good. González's feminist anthropology is focused on the bodies of women and men as an egalitarian creation in the image of God, and as an inclusive love in the radical message of Jesus in a trinitarian relationship with God and others in community.³⁸⁴

³⁸² Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016. Elena refers to Matthew 6:33, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

³⁸³ Michelle A. González, *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 108.

³⁸⁴ González, *Created in God's Image*, 121–24, 161–63.

While having lunch and sharing with other refugees, Javier, who had been in the church's facilities for several months, and who had a limp ever since he had an accident in Mexico, spoke up on this topic of inclusive love: "Aquí lo atienden a uno, así uno venga mocho de una pata" (Here they take care of one, even one who comes walking with a limp).³⁸⁵ In this colloquial comment made by Javier about the social ministry carried out by members of the church, we recognize the profound meaning of the imago Dei for a theology of disability. Amos Yong, a pentecostal theologian, problematizes the traditional anthropological-theological manner of understanding and conceptualizing the imago Dei. Those made in the imago Dei are understood as human agents who reflect the character or attributes of God (the substantive view), or what human beings do (the functional view), or their relationship with God, self, and others (the relational view). This relational view is key for Yong in speaking of Jesus Christ as the disabled God in connection with a liberation theology of the cross as the nature of the redeemed social order. He suggests that the imago Dei refers not so much to constitutive elements of human beings but rather to God's revelation in Christ. Jesus is an example of full human being that, through the Holy Spirit, is enabled and empowered to live out full humanity in relationship to his embodied self, others, and God in an atmosphere of friendship.³⁸⁶

Vondey also problematizes the traditional anthropological theological manner of understanding the imago Dei. He criticizes the dominant and polychotomous (soul, body,

³⁸⁵ Javier, Fieldnotes, Nov. 24, 2016. "Mocho de la pata" is very colloquial Spanish and shows how people express their ideas. Javier, a man from Guatemala without any education, was nonetheless a smart man who was very grateful to the people of ICE.

³⁸⁶ Amos Yong, *Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 172–91.

spirit) interpretations in pentecostalism for compartmentalizing human nature and fellowship and for spending more time talking about what human beings *have* than what they *are*. These dominant perspectives suffer from “a dualistic perspective with regard to gender, race, and disability or obscure the communal dimensions inherent in the redemption of all creation.”³⁸⁷ Even though these polychotomous and traditional views persist in Latina/o pentecostalism, the Espíritu of pentecostés speak of humans as a whole, relationally. The ICE’s pentecostal social concern reminds us of the theological imago Dei and God’s intention for an egalitarian society in which refugees and all people who participate in this social ministry look at their and others’ lives in a new light.

Research participants deemed that seeing everyone as made in the image of God was one vital aspect in their humane service of the poor and needy. The depersonalization of the Espíritu, the Diosito, El Camino de la Leche, the Latina feminist perspective, and theology of disability are all helpful in understanding the different pneumatological account of the imago Dei held by pentecostals that results in understanding marginalized Latina/o pentecostals and others as created in the image of God and for relationship: human agency in relation to God, self, and others.

Pentecostés Theology of Love

*“God loves me and in the same way commands us to love
our neighbor as we love ourselves.” –Ernesto.*

Members of ICE noted that seeing the other as created in God’s image and likeness was a unique motive that prompts them not only to serve the poor, but also to

³⁸⁷ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 179.

love the other unconditionally. As a matter of fact, pentecostal theology of the *imago Dei* has been intimately connected with theology of love and theology of the Spirit.³⁸⁸ Elaine

Padilla acknowledges this connection:

The main premise is that to be like God is to love in the flesh. An embodied love, often forgotten in relation to the doctrine of the *imago Dei*, turns the attention to the entire human—mind, soul, spirit and flesh—as theological locus for the manifestation of divine love.³⁸⁹

This embodied love in the *imago Dei* was not unfamiliar to Christians who served in ICE, as Gladys showed:

God is love, and if we imitate God, we must show that love. If someone arrives with a need, I should help that person. If I say that I am with God, but insult, offend, or scream at others, what kind of love do I have?... We must look at others, the refugees, with respect and dignity. They are sisters and brothers created in the image of God.³⁹⁰

The image of God and the divine love can only be fully understood through the relationship of love we see among the persons of the Trinity, states Augustine.³⁹¹ It is the Holy Spirit who makes human beings participate in the trinitarian experience of the redemptive history in the experience of divine love, asserts Vondey.³⁹² The image of God

³⁸⁸ See Amos Yong, *Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 3–4.

³⁸⁹ Elaine Padilla, “Embodied Love: Explorations on the *imago Dei* in the Caribbean Latina Theology of Ada María Isasi-Díaz,” *Perspectivas*, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 13 (Spring 2016): 67, http://perspectivas.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/P-E-R-S-P-E-C-T-I-V-A-S_Spring_2016.pdf

³⁹⁰ Gladys, Interview, Nov. 2, 2016.

³⁹¹ *Obras completas de San Agustín. Escritos Apologéticos*, Tomo V (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos de la Editorial Católica, S. A., 1985), 381–83.

³⁹² Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 180, 259–60.

and the love of God the Father is embodied in Christ and embodied by the entire human nature of Latina/os —mind, soul, spirit and flesh—, through the Espíritu of pentecostés. The image of God then is understood in the divine love for others, particularly for those who have been marginalized and treated with non-love. That is why Gladys asks, “What kind of love do I have?” Gladys’s question shows a love that is not egoistic and is not only focused on self or on the other’s soul, but on the entire human, who is created in the image of God.

Gladys’s question about love can also be asked in another way: What kind of love does God have? Is God impassible and apathetic to the needs of those who are suffering? Whereas David Bentley Hart writes that “a God, who can, in his nature as God, suffer cannot be the God who is love even if at the end of the day he should prove to be loving,”³⁹³ Justo González in his book *Mañana*, insists that quite the opposite is the case: “God is love. Thus if there is any sense in which the God of the Bible can be described as ‘immutable,’ this has nothing to do with impassibility or ontological immobility, but rather with the assurance that God’s ‘steadfast love endureth forever.’”³⁹⁴ Elena, for example, referenced this love of God that is capable of suffering: “The love of God invites us to see those who are suffering with love.”³⁹⁵ Even though Latina/o pentecostals

³⁹³ David Bentley Hart, “No Shadow of Turning: On Divine Impassibility,” *Pro Ecclesia*, 11 (2002): 191. For a better understanding of the impassibility of God and his capability of suffering, see James F. Keating and Thomas Joseph White, eds., *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009); and Rob Lister, *God is Impassible and Impassioned: Toward a Theology of Divine Emotion* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

³⁹⁴ González, *Mañana*, 92. González refers to Psalm 136:1 that says, “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.” Moltmann also states, “The one who is capable of love is also capable of suffering, for he also opens himself to the suffering which is involved in love.” Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 40th ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 338.

³⁹⁵ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

in ICE profess a sovereign God, they firmly believe that in their experiences of sorrow and pain the God of love is intimately related to them through the Espíritu. If these Latina/o pentecostal minorities are being oppressed and marginalized by the dominant forces of evil structures, then “God is [a] minority” too.³⁹⁶

In the foreword of the fortieth anniversary edition of Moltmann’s book, *The Crucified God*, Miroslav Volf states,

[This book] introduced the notion of a God who suffers in solidarity with afflicted creatures and redeems them through suffering. This simple and profound thought lies at the heart of the book –difficult and unacceptable to many, especially among trained theologians committed to God’s impassibility, and hopeful and comforting to many more, especially among the afflicted, whether they live in fear for life in war torn cities, eke out a miserable existence in shantytowns, wait for death in the belly of cruel prisons, or struggle against an illness eating away their body or soul.³⁹⁷

Or, I could add, whether they live in the margins of a dominant society that labels them as “criminals” and treats them cold-heartedly as objects. For such Latina/o pentecostals who suffer marginalization every day it is difficult to believe that God is apathetic, impassible, and dispassionate. In fact, not a single participant omitted the word “love” when talking of others, and even more so when talking of God. Some examples are: Trinidad: “Looking at all those changes in the refugees gives me courage and hope to continue the journey. God comforts them and fills them with love.”³⁹⁸ Omaira: “What inspire us to do this type of work is the love for our neighbor.”³⁹⁹ Alberto: “There are

³⁹⁶ González, *Mañana*, 93.

³⁹⁷ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, ix.

³⁹⁸ Trinidad, Interview, Oct. 26, 2016.

³⁹⁹ Omaira, Interview, Nov. 3, 2016.

people who come with false stories and when they are touched by the Spirit of the love of the Lord, they change and confess; and we give them our hands and support them with rice and beans.”⁴⁰⁰

From the perspective of pentecostal mission (the Gospel as truth) and theology (the Gospel of love), the love of God and the love for others together motivate Latina/o pentecostals to serve with passion in the midst of their suffering. To know the truth and be born-again (“they change and confess”) is to love (“fills them with love”), and to love is to speak about and live the truth (“support them”). There is no room for hatred when this happens.⁴⁰¹

The commandment to love one’s neighbor as oneself is an everyday reality lived by the members of the church in Los Fresnos. This commandment is at the heart of any pentecostal theology of grace: The Spirit of love.⁴⁰² Wariboko paraphrases this biblical commandment of the theology of grace as follows:

The commandment says: “Love your neighbor!” But I say unto you: You shall not love your neighbor without loving the uncanny strangeness, the impenetrable, mysterious core in him or her. If you love your neighbor without loving his or her unfathomable monstrosity, you are already guilty of hatred and you are angry with him or her and you shall be in danger of judgment.⁴⁰³

This paraphrase is stunning and articulates the core of the meaning of Jesus’ commandment. A “life without love is a life without God; and if this is a sharing love,

⁴⁰⁰ Alberto, Interview, Dec. 3, 2016.

⁴⁰¹ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 134.

⁴⁰² See Amos Yong, *Spirit of Love*, 147–60.

⁴⁰³ Wariboko, *The Split God*, 191.

such as we see in the Trinity, then life without sharing is life without God,”⁴⁰⁴ affirms J. González. For Latina/o pentecostals who serve in SWGSM, love is not just an emotion; it is part of who they are in the world of pentecostal affections and spirituality.⁴⁰⁵ Latina/o pentecostals have been labeled as “emocionalistas” (emotionalists), but as Land clarifies, “There is no mere balancing of head and heart, of thought and feeling; rather it is an integration, an affective understanding which is essential to Christian existence.”⁴⁰⁶ Land also writes about the affections in pentecostal spirituality as having an object-subject: God (the objective), building relationships with God and neighbors (the relational aspect) through love as the core characteristic of Christians in community.⁴⁰⁷ This intersection of God, others, and self that helps Latina/o pentecostals through love to construct a different world was clearly observed in the words and actions of the members of the church in their everyday activities and in the worship fellowship. Carmen presented this intersection in her testimonio:

In this place, people are given shelter, and food stamps. They also receive food from the Arroz y Frijoles (Rice and Beans) program. In general, we share with the one who needs. Someone can stay for a few days or months, depending on the situation. This is a mission that supports people even with clothes and other

⁴⁰⁴ González, *Mañana*, 115.

⁴⁰⁵ Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit*, 23. Albrecht understands pentecostal spirituality as “*lived experience* which actualizes a fundamental dimension of the human being, the spiritual dimension, namely ‘the whole of one’s spiritual or religious experience, one’s beliefs, convictions, and patterns of thought, one’s emotions and behavior in respect to what is ultimate, or God’” (italics in the original).

⁴⁰⁶ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 133.

⁴⁰⁷ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 134–36. Vondey succinctly states, “From a soteriological perspective, the affections should have ‘their source and object in God’ and thereby ‘dispose the person toward God and the neighbor in ways appropriate to their source and goal in God.’” *Pentecostal Theology*, 184.

material things. I do my work with the church because I live with great gratitude to God for what he has done in me. Each person who arrives is almost a miracle of God, and I respond by helping them in whatever way I can. The love of God and the love for the neighbor compels me to do so. Here the gifts of service, help, and love are very much needed. It would be too hard to do this work without looking at them as brothers and sisters. I serve God and not a man.⁴⁰⁸

Refugees come from everywhere to ask for help from the church. Some come from gangs who have treated them badly or have insulted them or steal their belongings, but the members of the church serve voluntarily, and love unconditionally, as expressed in Carmen's testimonio. Latina/o pentecostals understand love as "God's supreme gift" and as part of God's nature.⁴⁰⁹ God's love has enabled this community of Latina/os to love themselves, their neighbors, and even the enemies with compassion, sympathy and solidarity.⁴¹⁰ They have learned to love the "unfathomable monstrosity" in every person. For these Latina/o pentecostals, love and justice are inseparable.⁴¹¹ Loving the unfathomable monstrosity in others is how Jesus exemplified the profound love for others—curing the woman who suffered from a flow of blood, inviting reviled publicans to follow him, and helping the woman who was caught in adultery, for instance.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁸ Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

⁴⁰⁹ Frank Machia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 259.

⁴¹⁰ Yong, *Spirit of Love*, 103.

⁴¹¹ Ada María Isasi-Díaz, "Un Poquito de Justicia. A Little Bit of Justice: A *Mujerista* Account of Justice," in Isasi-Díaz and Segovia, *Hispanic/Latino Theology*, 338.

⁴¹² Mark 5: 25–34; Luke 5:27–32; John 8:1–11.

Members of ICE exemplify this kind of love with their social service of love and compassion. Elena spoke of her pastor's amazing love as follows:

Our pastor suffered under the Castro regime. He has taught us that we must feed the hungry and give to those who have nothing. He suffered and is an example to us, teaching us how to love with compassion. This is how we show God's love for others. The pastor forgoes food himself in order to feed others. Our pastor goes anywhere to pick up someone who needs help. Immigration officers call him sometimes to pick up undocumented people or people who are in some other kind of need. They say to him, "If you come for person X, we will not send him to *El Corralón*." But he serves others first before satisfying his own needs; he lives by example; he shows the love of God through his actions and words 24/7... That is the great teaching that the pastor has given us all. There is no pastor quite like ours. We see what he does. We have seen other pastors leaving from here and opening their churches with the same idea of helping and giving. God has put our pastor before important people like judges and politicians, but he is still the same: humble, simple, not arrogant. He has received distinctions, he is the president of the Chamber of Commerce, and he is related to important, learned people, but our pastor remains humble. For him, it is simply a daily routine or nothing that makes him feel superior. No, he remains the same whether you have (much) or not, whether you have expensive clothes or not, whether you have documents or not. He does not change. There have been people who have betrayed or cheated him,

and he continues to give them a hand, while one sees other pastors who are so arrogant that they do not help anyone.⁴¹³

Omaira said almost the same: “Many of them are sincere, but there are others who do not come with good intentions, but to screw us. But we support them and treat them with affection; we see them as equals.”⁴¹⁴ Elena expressed God’s love for her and love for others as unconditional: “You know by the person, or you realize when they give their testimony that every person deserves to be loved.”⁴¹⁵ Whereas Wariboko writes about the “unfathomable monstrosity” of persons, Sixto García writes about the “unfathomable love” of God’s mystery experienced in the presence of the Espíritu in the Hispanic community that “dar[es] to hope for liberation from structures of oppression.”⁴¹⁶ Carmen, Elena, and Omaira’s testimonios clearly show that each one of them loves the unfathomable monstrosity of those they serve. They treat them as brothers and sisters, as persons that “deserve to be loved” in the midst of their suffering. They love the modern Judas, publicans, and sinners. They live a life that practically models the commandment to love one’s neighbors as oneself⁴¹⁷ (“the *imago Dei* as a praxis of love.”)⁴¹⁸

⁴¹³ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016. *El Corralón* refers to Port Isabel Detention Center, about thirteen miles northwest of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer in Los Fresnos. The term *El Corralón* refers to *The Corral* (livestock).

⁴¹⁴ Omaira, Interview, Nov. 3, 2016.

⁴¹⁵ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

⁴¹⁶ Sixto J. García, “United States Hispanic and Mainstream Trinitarian Theologies,” in Figueroa Deck, *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology*, 98, 100.

⁴¹⁷ See Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 184.

⁴¹⁸ This what Vitor Westhelle understand as “the *imago Dei* as a praxis of love.” Javier R. Alanís, “The *imago Dei* as Embodied in *Nepantla*, a Latino Perspective,” in *Perspectivas*, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 10 (Fall 2006), 70, (italics in the original), <http://perspectivasonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2006-Fall.pdf>

Understandably, for these Latina/o pentecostals a praxis of love is centered in the life of Jesus empowered by the Holy Spirit because in the full gospel Jesus is proclaimed as savior, sanctifier, Spirit baptizer, healer, and soon-coming king.⁴¹⁹ It is a praxis of love of the imago Dei in Christ-like fashion (imago Christi) loving God, themselves, and others that motivates them to serve selflessly.

Pentecostés Theology of Spiritual Gifts

*We prayed at 6 a.m. in the morning, and there was a word from
God every time. The Spirit moved! –Elena*

Vondey's conceptualization of a relational interpretation, meaning human agency in relation to God, self, and others, has been fundamental for understanding the world of affections observed in Latina/o pentecostalism. But how do Latina/o pentecostals build these relationships with God, themselves, and others? Besides what has been mentioned in this relational view of Latina/o pentecostals as treating others as being created in the imago Dei with a theology of love, the event of pentecostés also illustrates their life of prayer, worship, meditation on the Bible, and Espiritu's gifts.

This world of affections observed in Latina/o pentecostals is linked to a life of prayer and reading the Bible, which helps them to build an intimate relationship with God, themselves, and others. As was mentioned in Chapter 5, prayer and reading the Bible is part of the daily devotional life of Latina/o pentecostals. Unfortunately, biblical texts have been used to justify wars, genocide, crusades, colonialism, conquests, slavery,

⁴¹⁹ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "The Pentecostal Understanding of Mission," in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, ed. Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 34.

and other atrocities, states De La Torre.⁴²⁰ It is in response to such abuses of Scripture that progressive pentecostals attempt to read the scripture through Hispanic eyes, through the lens of powerlessness, and through the lens of the poor because in this way the biblical narratives, poems, legends, and so on, become texts of hope and salvation, a hope in a liberative God, whose essence is the liberation of those who struggle to survive at the margins of society.⁴²¹ In this sense, ICE's Latina/o pentecostals in reading the event of Pentecost in the book of Acts "search for fresh insight from the biblical text in order to speak life"⁴²² to those who have been denied such well-being.

Carmen spoke of this connection between prayer, Bible, and Spirit saying: "Part of the commitment to be here is to attend worship services with the hope that with prayer, preaching, and sharing with the church, people will be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit."⁴²³ Prayers of all kind are performed by Latina/o pentecostals at ICE, among them: private prayer, communal prayer, healing prayers, and public prayer. Vondey affirms that

Persistent prayer for the gift and the gifts of the Spirit is the heartbeat of the Pentecostal movement ... Praying through, in this sense, is not so much a conscious ritual [as] an embodied affection that is carried out as much in a mode of celebration as in contemplation, penitence, ceremony, ecstasy, pragmatism, or spontaneous improvisation.⁴²⁴

⁴²⁰ Miguel A De La Torre, "Scripture," in *Handbook of U.S. Theologies of Liberation*, ed. Miguel A. De La Torre (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004), 88-89.

⁴²¹ Miguel A. De La Torre, *Reading the Bible from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 4, and González, *Mañana*, 85. González invites Hispanics to read the Bible in Spanish, meaning reading it as members of an excluded group, asking pertinent political questions: "Who in this text is in power? Who is powerless? What is the nature of their relationship? Whose side does God take?"

⁴²² Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 114.

⁴²³ Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

⁴²⁴ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 86.

Rosa María Icaza puts it this way: “Prayer and worship within Hispanic contexts often manifest this appealing rhythm that integrates earthly and supernatural life with so much naturalness.”⁴²⁵ For Latina/os reading and meditating on the Bible and praying for the gifts of the Spirit, it is not only an issue of personal and communal devotion, but “a spiritual call, a sourcing of grace to reconfigure the existing praxis for the sake of human flourishing in history.”⁴²⁶ In point of fact Latina/os have “a noninnocent reading of the Scriptures,” as highlighted by Alfaro.⁴²⁷ Praying and reading the Bible by Latina/o pentecostals who live in the margins is thus an embodied affection of persistent prayer to reconfigure a different present and future. “So every prayer is a protest against the ambiguities, distortions, and poverty of the present,”⁴²⁸ notes Wariboko. And if every prayer is a protest against the social evils that pentecostal Latina/os face in the present, then every prayer for the impoverished and every social action for the poor carried out by members of ICE may be considered as a prayer for a new life, a new possibility, a new community in the future. The crisis of this present with an attitude of prayer and hopeful biblical reading creates new opportunities for human flourishing.

Latina/o pentecostals at ICE pray, worship, and read the Bible en conjunto in their main weekly worship service known as *el culto* or *el servicio* (worship service). El culto

⁴²⁵ Ross María Icaza, “Prayer, Worship, and Liturgy,” in Figueroa Deck, *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology*, 149. Icaza writes about U.S. Hispanic Catholics liturgy, prayer, and worship, but her conclusion can also be seen in the Hispanic pentecostal world.

⁴²⁶ Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 115.

⁴²⁷ Alfaro, *Divino Compañero*, 133.

⁴²⁸ Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 116.

or servicio is a *fiesta* (party) at which they celebrate by dancing, singing coritos, hearing the passionate sermon, sharing testimonios, and having fellowship.⁴²⁹ In this culto, the Espíritu's gifts and the baptism of the Spirit are manifested individually and collectively. At ICE, this pentecostal fervor was observed more in Sunday evening worship services than Sunday mornings. Perhaps the reason for this is that the former was more focused on the educational aspects of the Christian life while the latter was focused on its evangelistic aspects. Ernesto spoke of this fervor and how the church was transformed by the ethos and spirituality of pentecostalism:

The pentecostalization of our church was gradually being incorporated into the life of the church. While we were looking for God, we realized that some things that were taught in the theological seminary, or when we read and studied the Bible and based on our own experiences of life, we understood that the pentecostal manifestations were not necessarily the dogmatism that I had in mind. From my dogmatic point of view, playing drums, playing guitar, or clapping in the worship service was horrendous. But many people who were attending to the church in San Benito brought that spirit, that way of worshiping and a way of living their faith. Most people in San Benito came from a Presbyterian tradition, very formal, like Omaira, who is one of those. But new people were arriving who

⁴²⁹ Latina/o pentecostals use the word *culto* or *servicio* to refer to the worship service. Culto is more used in Latin American churches while servicio in US pentecostal churches. *Fiesta* connotes the celebration of meeting together, singing, dancing, and all the characteristics around the worship service. For a better understanding of the words *culto*, *servicio*, and *fiesta*, see Edwin David Aponte, "Protestant Ecclesiology," in Espín, *Latino/a Theology*, 206–209. López articulates four distinctive features of the pentecostal worship celebrated as La Fiesta del Espíritu (The Feast of the Spirit), namely: A fervent and spontaneous prayer, a joyful and festive song, the daily testimonio and the passionate preaching. Darío López R., *La Fiesta del Espíritu: Espiritualidad y Celebración Pentecostal* (Lima, Perú: Ediciones Puma, 2006), 26.

had lived that [pentecostal] kind of experience and we saw their faith, so we could not despise them. And at the same time, we recognized that in our journey of discovering the presence of the Lord, we could not oppose a spiritual experience that is biblical. I do not speak in tongues, but I respect the one who speaks in tongues, and I respect their experience. In the face of a genuine experience of the Spirit, I cannot oppose it.⁴³⁰

Ernesto accurately expressed the ecumenical spirit of fiesta in the congregation. Although he does not speak in tongues, he participated actively in the life of the church, serving with his gifts and talents. The Espíritu of fiesta has brought new life to the church. This “pentecostalization,” as he called it, has brought new life and a new spirit to the congregation. J. González states,

Latino worship is a fiesta. It is a celebration of the mighty deeds of God. It is a get-together of the family of God. It is important to remember this in order to understand some of the features of our worship that sometimes disconcert or even upset those of the dominant culture. . . . But in most cases the difference between our worship and that of the dominant culture is that we think in terms of planning a party more than rehearsing a performance. Certainly, choirs and bands rehearse; but the service as such is never rehearsed.⁴³¹

The family band that plays at the ICE came from Matamoros, MX crossing the border every Sunday morning. In the worship service, participants of el culto sang “Donde está el Espíritu de Dios hay libertad”:

⁴³⁰ Ernesto, Interview, Nov. 30, 2016. For a better understanding of the term *pentecostalization*, see Henri Goore, “The Pentecostalization of Religion and Society in Latin America,” *Exchange*, 34, 4 (2010): 355–376, https://brill.com/abstract/journals/exch/39/4/article-p355_4.xml

⁴³¹ Justo L. González, “Hispanic Worship: An Introduction,” in *!Alabadle!: Hispanic Christian Worship*, ed. Justo L. González (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 20–21. See also Daniel Castelo, “*Diakrisis* Always *En Conjunto*: First Theology Understood from a Latino/a Context,” in *Constructive Pneumatological Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Christianity*, ed. Kenneth J. Archer and William Oliverio, Jr. (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 207.

Donde está el Espíritu de Dios,	Where the Spirit of God is,
hay libertad, hay libertad.	There is freedom.
Donde está el Espíritu de Dios,	Where the Spirit of God is,
Allí siempre hay libertad.	There is always freedom.
//Libertad, libertad//. ⁴³²	//Freedom, freedom//.

While singing this fervently, many of the worship participants were dancing, smiling, clapping, raising their hands and moving them from right to left and vice versa in an attitude of devotion and adoration. Usually, women participated more in these bodily movements than did men. What is important to highlight is that this carnivalesque character of Latina/o pentecostalism in ICE is a protest against the structural systems that suppress their life and freedom. Though these people cannot live freely en lo cotidiano on the streets or in their places of work, el culto is a collective act of resistance in familia and a clamoring for life, life in the Spirit, “that sometimes disconcert[s] or even upset[s] those of the dominant culture.” Paul Alexander also writes about how makes some *gringos* feel uncomfortable, because they believe that spontaneous music and laughter “degenerates into vice.” He reminds us that broadly speaking, Protestant hymns and songs are is dichotomy splitting “the body from the soul and focused on heady, brainy, disembodied singing [while] the indigenous (Latino) musical styles embraced the whole body and all the emotions of human experience.”⁴³³ Latina/o pentecostals recognize that

⁴³² This corito is based on 2 Cor. 3:17: “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” Most of these coritos are anonymous.

⁴³³ Alexander, *Sings and Wonders*, 33. Alexander writes, “This emotional music was condemned because some *gringos* claimed that music and easy flow of merry words and laughter degenerates into vice. The dancing girl and the wine cup are star attractions [among] pleasure-loving Latinos.” Alexander states that this quote from 1920 reflects the prejudices against the spirit of fiesta in Latina/o pentecostal that continues to this day.

the freedom and peace of the Espíritu is an opposition to the “principalities and powers” that dominate and subjugate, which cause misery and hunger everywhere. Even in the midst of the oppressive and discriminating life they face, church members celebrate the freedom of the Spirit in an atmosphere of fiesta.

The day of Pentecost narrated in the book of Acts occurred at a time when the believers were all together praying and sharing. Those who were awaiting the promise of the Holy Spirit were, perhaps, sharing food, talking with one another, worshiping, and praying. It was not a theological-academic debate about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit or about Christology, it was a day of celebration. Suddenly, the Spirit erupted noisily, and the people saw what seemed to be tongues of fire, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues. Solivan, Vondey, and López agree that the starting point and nucleus of pentecostal spirituality is read, interpreted, and lived from the event of pentecostés in Acts 2. It is not read as a single historical circumstance but as a continuous event, that is, it extends to generations and even to the present day.

Pentecostalism is characterized by being the only Christian movement that emphasizes the Spirit baptism.⁴³⁴ Research participants shared their experience of the baptism in the Spirit in different ways: As indispensable for recognizing the needs of the poor: “We

⁴³⁴ Many authors consider Spirit baptism as a pentecostal’s theological distinctives. See Machia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 20–22. Speaking in tongues or *glossolalia* is not the only distinctive characteristic of pentecostalism, but also the so-called the fourfold- or fivefold-gospel: Jesus as savior, healer, baptizer, coming king, and sanctifier. Initially in its origins, the movement was called pejoratively the “tongues movement.” See Amos Yong, “Poured Out on All Flesh: The Spirit, World Pentecostalism, and the Renewal of Theology and Praxis in the 21st Century,” *PentecoStudies* 6, no.1 (2007): 18, <https://www.glopent.net/pentecostudies/online-back-issues/2007/yong-2007.pdf/view>. For a comprehensive study on glossolalia, see Watson E. Mills, ed., *Speaking in Tongues: A Guide to Research on Glossolalia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986).

need to have an experience of the Spirit. We need the power of the Spirit to see the immense need, scarcity, misery and to live with hope;”⁴³⁵ to be obedient to God and to be able to communicate with him: “I deem that with the fullness of the Spirit, speaking in tongues, is when you get ready and submit yourself to God, and so the Lord begins to speak to you”⁴³⁶; and as giving one the power to testify about Christ:

There are so many people that they do not know the Lord and have not experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the spiritual gifts are relevant for the mission of the church. One can speak to them about that power that has transformed our lives; i.e. the testimony of the Holy Spirit in us.⁴³⁷ Moreover, this experience of the Spirit baptism is fundamental to being able to face the challenges of life: In the flesh, a person who does not have that kind of experience, it becomes more difficult. That person can break down and even throw in the towel because the work is arduous.⁴³⁸

By “in the flesh,” Alberto is referring to people who do not have the Spirit in them, i.e., they have not accepted Jesus as savior and Lord; they are not yet born again.⁴³⁹ What is relevant in his words, and also in Trinidad and Lourdes’s, is that in times of serious difficulty, it was common to see members of ICE praying to God in their

⁴³⁵ Alberto, Interview, Dec. 3, 2016.

⁴³⁶ Trinidad, Oct. 26, 2016.

⁴³⁷ Lourdes, Interview, Nov. 11, 2016.

⁴³⁸ Alberto, Interview, Dec. 3, 2016.

⁴³⁹ See chapter 5, “Pentecostal Misión Integral,” under the subheading “Misión Integral Means Change.”

hearts like Hannah in the book of Samuel: They were moving their lips, but their voices were not heard because they were speaking in tongues.⁴⁴⁰ Latina/o pentecostals believe that when they pray intensively in tongues, crying out to God, the Holy Spirit helps them in their weakness, and although they do know what they are saying, they trust that the Spirit intercedes for them “through wordless groans.”⁴⁴¹

Research participants also commented about the Espiritu baptism as giving them a sense of power and relief:

I feel very grateful to God, and although I am sometimes tired the Holy Spirit encourages me to continue and do this work with love and dedication. I speak in tongues and I feel that the Spirit gives me the power, the strength to continue without having to complain or feel bitter about the difficulties I have to deal with. Being in communion with the Holy Spirit is my relief and my strength.⁴⁴²

López highlights this Spirit experience: “The experience of Spirit baptism demands that we be incarnate in the context of mission, and from that concrete reality we give testimony of the whole counsel of God to all human beings.”⁴⁴³ Here López’s

⁴⁴⁰ 1 Samuel 1: 13–14, “Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, “How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine.”

⁴⁴¹ Romans 8:26–27, “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”

⁴⁴² Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

⁴⁴³ López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral*, 12. For an interesting work of Spirit-baptism, see Daniel Castelo, *Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017), 126-157.

asseveration is nicely summing up ICE's social ministry: a pentecostal faith accompanied with deeds is not a dead faith, it is a "integral spirituality" that benefits the whole community, including those outside the church.⁴⁴⁴ In the Espíritu baptism, research participants observed that the Spirit empowered them to deal with their everyday challenges. While they are relatively powerless in society, the experience of the baptism of the Espíritu and the exercise of their spiritual gifts empower them to serve the poor and build unity in the body of Christ. Now Wariboko's idea of "prayer as a protest" matches Archer's thought that "the prayerful tongues speech of the community offers praise to God [and is] a *protest* to the forces of evil."⁴⁴⁵ Participating in el culto and in the church's activities as well serving in the SWGSM by using their talents and spiritual gifts and praying in tongues, members of the church break the barriers that prevent them from speaking up and disrupting the systems that oppress them. In this sense, pentecostés typifies a new encounter with the God of creation in a mutual relationship with men and women.⁴⁴⁶ In the God of Spirit baptism, the divine interaction is not an abstract debate, but manifests the God who embraces humanity with abundant life; it is a loving embrace that does not oppress or annihilate others but creates spaces of communion and freedom.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁴ C. René Padilla, "Preface," in López, *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral*, 7. James 2:17 says, "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by actions, is dead."

⁴⁴⁵ Archer, *The Gospel Revisited*, 54, (italics added).

⁴⁴⁶ Archer, *The Gospel Revisited*, 54.

⁴⁴⁷ Machia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 56, 264. See John R. Levison, *Filled with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 281, 374; and Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out*, 49.

Key biblical texts used to speak about the Spirit's gifts are 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, Romans 12:6–8, Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Peter 4:10–11.⁴⁴⁸ Some pentecostals consider the list of nine gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 to be exhaustive while others include those gifts found in other biblical texts.⁴⁴⁹ In the case of ICE, it seems that research participants saw these lists as representative rather than exhaustive since they mentioned other gifts not mentioned in the Bible. Besides, they considered themselves equal as created in the image of God, for which any spiritual gift was not superior to another.⁴⁵⁰ Trinidad commented about the spiritual gifts in this way:

But for me, speaking in tongues is not a primary factor in starting to help others, because I know people who speak in tongues and do not have that gift of service and helping and showing mercy. In many cases, they destroy rather than being compassionate... Regarding other gifts of the Spirit, it is indispensable to have spiritual discernment and wisdom to be able to communicate with all types of people, those who are educated and those who are not. People arrive who do not know how to read, but so do the well-educated. Other key gifts in our social

⁴⁴⁸ For a comprehensive understanding of the Spirit's gifts, see Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: In the New Testament Church and Today* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988); and Keith Warrington *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2008).

⁴⁴⁹ The gifts are: knowledge, wisdom, prophecy, faith, healing, miracles, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation. For a discussion of the different viewpoints about the spiritual gifts, see Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, 74-77.

⁴⁵⁰ Yong states that "once tongues and healings are no longer the most important charisms, then the list in 1 Corinthians 12 becomes representative rather than exhaustive... Expanded in this direction, a charismatic ecclesiology emphasizes the wide range of spiritual gifts, always undergirded by love." See Yong, "Poured Out on All Flesh," 19. See also Douglas A. Oss, "Definition and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts," *Enrichment Journal* (Jul. 2013): para. 4, http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm?targetBay=1b574def-b227-4617-bfc7-a02cdb926902&ModID=2&Process=DisplayArticle&RSS_RSSContentID=26126&RSS_OriginatingChannelID=11170&RSS_OriginatingRSSFeedID=4486&RSS_Source=

ministry are serving, management, helping, giving, and mercy. All are gifts of the Spirit essential for carrying out the social work that we have developed in all the areas of the Iglesia Ebenezer.⁴⁵¹

Alexander stresses that some pentecostals see themselves as superior for speaking in tongues,⁴⁵² however, it is interesting that Trinidad deems speaking in tongues not to be above other spiritual gifts. She thought that service was a greater gift. Alexander emphasizes that pentecostals believe that this type of prayer in tongues is still valid for this time. They think that the Spirit literally intercedes for them.⁴⁵³ Omaira also shared her thoughts about this issue, highlighting the unity in diversity of the church:

I would say that before the church was founded in Los Fresnos, there were certain features of pentecostalism in San Benito since the beginning of the '80s. It was like half pentecostal. And the church has been pentecostalizing more and more through time. In this church no one is rejected because that person speaks in tongues; we respect everyone as sisters and brothers in Christ. From my viewpoint, one receives the Holy Spirit the moment one accepts Jesus as Lord and Savior. The Lord sets his seal on us through the Holy Spirit. In a general sense, in our church there are people who are pentecostal and others who are not, but we accept and love each other as one body in Christ. If someone wants to raise their hands during the service, they can do it. It reflects how each person feels the

⁴⁵¹ Trinidad, Interview, Oct. 26, 2016.

⁴⁵² Alexander, *Signs and Wonders*, 44.

⁴⁵³ Alexander, *Signs and Wonders*, 46.

Spirit in their life. There are people from our church who have come from the Assemblies of God, and they attend and serve even with children, like our children's pastor. This man sees me as his spiritual mother. To carry out social work with refugees, the gifts of faith, love, mercy, evangelism, ministry, and compassion are fundamental. Without them we would not be anything. We would not exist as a church and as a community that serves others. But the gift of service is paramount in this type of social ministry. Our ministry requires people who deny themselves and serve others in love.⁴⁵⁴

Omaira's testimonio is helpful for integrating several aspects discussed in the previous paragraphs: the ecumenical spirit, unity in diversity, the pentecostalization of the church, church growth, theology of love, equality and justice, and the diversity of spiritual gifts. In a condense way, Archer summarizes these aspects of pentecostalism in the Scripture, Spirit, and community "in a dialogical interdependent interpretive process."⁴⁵⁵ In a sense, the Espiritu baptism and the Espiritu's gifts are not just ecstatic experiences but are incarnational, transformational, supernatural, sacramental, and communal experiences that are lived every day by members of the church.⁴⁵⁶ Praying for refugees, being with them day and night, providing food, clothes and shelter, and sharing God's word is an embodiment of faith in words and actions for the well-being of the whole community. They live and experience the Espiritu of pentecostés in real life in

⁴⁵⁴ Omaira, Interview, Nov. 3, 2016.

⁴⁵⁵ Kenneth Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 1-5.

⁴⁵⁶ Tony Richie, "Transposition and Tongues: Pentecostalizing an Important Insight of C. S. Lewis," *Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 13, no. 1 (2004): 117-137.

their flesh and bones. They understand that they serve in God's kingdom: "I serve God and not man."⁴⁵⁷

López also captures perfectly how these Latina/o pentecostals are engaged in social ministry using their spiritual gifts:

The expressions, "to every man to profit withal," "for the common good," and "for the good of all," are related primarily to the common good of the entire church, rather than the common good referred socially and politically to all citizens of the *polis*. Having said this, it can be also be affirmed that the churches, as the first fruit of the new humanity in Jesus Christ and as concrete signs of the reign of God, are called to utilize the capabilities with which God has gifted her member[s] in order to weave better conditions of life for all citizens.⁴⁵⁸

Here, López has captured the spirit of progressive pentecostals, who as faithful followers of Christ are empowered by the Espíritu with different gifts to serve all citizens of the church and society in order to develop better conditions for all who are in need. Is this what members of ICE are doing everyday with their spiritual gifts? Of course. They are motivated to use their capabilities, talents, and gifts to serve the poor regardless of race, ethnicity, skin color, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or creed. They serve with love, compassion, and self-sacrifice.

Soliván asserts that a "life in the Spirit is characterized by the exercise of a variety of spiritual gifts and the fruit of the Holy Spirit exhibited in one's daily life."⁴⁵⁹ Every person is treated like a *hermano* (brother) and a *hermana* (sister) in the *familia* (family) in el culto. The dishwasher and the maid have different spiritual gifts and talents and can

⁴⁵⁷ Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

⁴⁵⁸ Darío López Rodríguez, "The God of Life and the Spirit of Life: The Social and Political Dimension of Life in the Spirit," *Studies in World Christianity*, 17, 1 (2011): 2, <https://doi.org/10.3366/swc.2011.0002>

⁴⁵⁹ Soliván, "Sources of a Hispanic," 143.

exercise them freely.⁴⁶⁰ Juan expressed this life in the Spirit as follows: “This experience of the baptism of the Spirit helps us to develop who we truly are in Christ,” and regarding the Spirit’s gifts, he stated:

Helping the needy, the evicted brings us blessing. The scripture says that whoever is kind to the needy lends to the Lord and that God rewards us not only with money, but with health and other forms of prosperity. We have to exercise our faith, our convictions; we have to protect those who are in need, clothe the one who has nothing to wear. For this reason, the gifts of the Spirit are important, among them, the discernment of spirits, helping, service, faith, evangelism, and *ministrar*. Not all people are the same here. Some come with good intentions, others with misconceptions and dangerous ideas, so the gift of discernment is important. Now, people need a *ministración* from God, they need someone to give them the good Word, pray with them, be heard and share with them the message of God, the plan of salvation (the gift of evangelism). If someone needs encouragement, faith, because Christians have different flavors, different gifts, that can be put to use according to the need.⁴⁶¹

Ministración refers to when they are touched by the Espíritu. In ICE’s worship service, the pastors and leaders *ministran* in prayer to the needed community. They pray

⁴⁶⁰ Soliván, “Sources of Hispanic,” 143, (italics in the original).

⁴⁶¹ Juan, Interview, Nov. 21, 2016. Juan refers to Prov. 19:17, “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.” The researcher has opted to use the Spanish words *ministrar* and *ministración* instead of the English translation *minister* and *ministration*. In Latina/o churches these words are used when a leader is laying hands on someone to *ministrar* the baptism of the Spirit or to pray for someone who is sick. If someone is praying and crying, Latina/o pentecostal may say that the Holy Spirit is *ministrando*, meaning that the Holy Spirit is touching the person and she is very sensitive to that touch, metaphorically speaking.

for healing, miracles, provision, health, among other needs. In the worship service, Latina/o pentecostals communicate with one another in an interesting language that represents their love and communion. When they greet someone or are greeted by someone, or someone asks how they are, they might say: “Dios le bendiga” (God bless you), “Lo recibo en el nombre del Señor” (I receive it in the name of the Lord), “Por la gracia de Señor, bien” (By God’s grace, I am OK). Every day, while spending time with members of the church and refugees, it was common to hear people say: “Dios le bendiga.” In fact, they added the word “hermano” or “hermana” (brother or sister) as a prefix to any first name. For example, “hermano Néstor” or “hermana Claudia.” What Latina/os express and live in lo cotidiano Erving Goffman calls “theologies of the everyday” and Wariboko calls “microtheology.”⁴⁶²

It has been the focus of this research not so much to define or categorize every spiritual gift, but to examine how the praxis (pneumapraxis) of these Espíritu’s gifts and the Espíritu baptism contribute to the transformation of the church and community socially and spiritually. In this respect, members of ICE “make the road by walking” in a relationship with God, themselves, and others.⁴⁶³ This Latina/o community understands that these spiritual gifts are relevant for the purpose of serving and helping the poor, but they are aware that the most important gift is the gift of love, as clarified by Elena:

Ana’s husband, Fernando, plays the guitar and speak in tongues. Sister Jiménez speaks in tongues while Gladys interprets. Every time more and more people

⁴⁶² Wariboko, *The Split God*, 177–78.

⁴⁶³ To understand this Latin American proverb “Se hace camino al andar” (Make the road by walking), see Brenda Bell, John Gaventa, and John Peters, eds., *We Make the Road by Walking: Myles Horton and Paulo Freire. Conversation on Education and Social Change* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990).

come here moved by the Holy Spirit. If we did not have these spiritual gifts, there would be no fruit of the Spirit as kindness, patience, meekness; there would not be a spirit of service. If there is no love, spiritual gifts serve for nothing.⁴⁶⁴

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to present the key findings obtained from the in-depth interviews and participant observations. The voices of ICE's Latina/o participants reveal the ways in which they are doing theology by integrating their religious experiences as a community of the Spirit. The key research sub-question that guided this chapter was: What are the theological perspectives/practices that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to be socially engaged? Through their testimonios and experiences of life, this chapter examined what motivates Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry with the poor and marginalized. Three major findings emerged as essential in the studied phenomenon of pentecostal social theology about what motivates Latina/os to social ministry, namely: pentecosté's theology of imago Dei, pentecostés' theology of love, and pentecostés' theology of Espíritu's gifts. Vondey reminds us that "Pentecostals traditionally have not had a theology; they have lived it."⁴⁶⁵ Members of the Iglesia Cristana Ebenezer through its social ministry El Buen Samaritano have lived "theologically" in lo cotidiano. Their social actions and the way they love God, themselves, and their neighbors is the way in which they celebrate the life in the Espíritu as a theology of life.

⁴⁶⁴ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

⁴⁶⁵ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 14.

CHAPTER SIX: PENTECOSTAL SOCIAL ETHICS

Introduction

In his book, *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins*, Miguel De La Torre argues that “All too often, ethics, as presented by the dominant culture, explores the Christian virtues without seriously considering the existence of the oppressed majority of people.”⁴⁶⁶ How is it possible that some people who call themselves Christians are socially blind to the reality of oppression and marginalization that US Latina/os experience? José Míguez Bonino responds by stating that, “Neither the belief in God nor the intensity of faith constitute a guarantee. Actually, what matters is precisely what God we believe in, and what is the content of faith.”⁴⁶⁷ Míguez Bonino clarifies the problem that De La Torre notes: many tragedies in the history of humanity have been carried out by Christians who “believed with all their hearts, and even had the conviction they were serving God.”⁴⁶⁸ And likewise, today there are Christians with good hearts who worship God and attend church on Sundays, who support the structures and systems of oppression that marginalize Hispanic communities.

⁴⁶⁶ De La Torre, *Doing Christian Ethics*, 6. De La Torre specifies that by dominant culture, he means White, heterosexual, middle- to upper-class, patriarchal eyes. See also, De La Torre, *The Politics of Jesús*, 24.

⁴⁶⁷ José Míguez Bonino, *Espacio para Ser Hombres: Una Interpretación del Mensaje de la Biblia para Nuestro Mundo* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Sierra Nueva, 1975), 12.

⁴⁶⁸ Míguez, *Espacio para Ser Hombres*, 11–12. See also De La Torre, “Scripture,” 88–89.

For this reason, it would be like walking by on the other side of the road if I were to write about Hispanic ethics without considering the economic, politic, and religious struggle that this community faces in the context of the United States. Writing about ethics without hearing the voice of marginalized would be unethical. Maria Teresa Ávila explains it as follows: “To speak of Latino/a ethics as a distinct discipline is both impossible and disingenuous... Latina/o theology is interdisciplinary in its methodology as well as justice-seeking in its epistemology.”⁴⁶⁹ Likewise, pentecostal Latina/o ethics contemplates the “matters of justice, inequality, marginalization, class, race, otherness, politics, or poverty.”⁴⁷⁰ Without considering these issues, it would be a decontextualized ethics that privileges those dominant ones who hold the power in society.

A Christian ethics that claims to be universal, hegemonic, and pretends to rule over others all while ignoring the cries and everyday social struggles of US Latina/os is bound to be detrimental for these communities.⁴⁷¹ Yet many years ago, Paul Lehman criticized this universal, generalized and abstract ethical form:

The fact is that the dynamics of the divine behavior in the world exclude both an abstract and a perceptual apprehension of the will of God. There is no formal principle of Christian behavior because Christian behavior cannot be generalized. A Christian behavior cannot be generalized because the will of God cannot be generalized. A generalized persuasion of the will of God may have a mystical or emotive intensity but is devoid of ethical content and behavioral significance.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁹ María Teresa Ávila, “Latino/a Ethics,” in Espín, *Latino/a Theology*, 249.

⁴⁷⁰ Ávila, “Latino/a Ethics,” 249.

⁴⁷¹ De La Torre, *Social Latina/o Ethics*, ix–xi.

⁴⁷² Paul Lehman, *Ethics in a Christian Context* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 77.

Hence it is important to recognize again the social location of those who have been marginalized and have been oppressed for years and years. De La Torre explains why:

Any ethical framework that is to be indigenous to the Hispanic community must therefore be unapologetically anchored in the autobiographical stories and testimonies of the disenfranchised. The testimonies of attempting to survive as undocumented immigrant, as physically and/or sexually abused spouse, as a laborer relegated to the most demeaning and menial employment, or as second-class citizen who every day is reminded she or he doesn't belong become the bases on which God is understood, God's presence is experienced, and God's will for justice is implemented.⁴⁷³

Precisely this is the purpose of this research study: to articulate a pentecostal social ethics that emerges from the experiences and stories of those Latina/os that live on the margins of US society. This chapter therefore searches for “another possible ethics, an ethics that is not universal, that is not based on universal truths, and therefore, not deontological,”⁴⁷⁴ as Roy H. May, Jr., describes it. This other possible pentecostal ethics is based on real stories, interviews, and participant observations collected in the field in Los Fresnos, TX, where Latina/o pentecostals are living in precarious conditions near the borderland with Matamoros, MX, while serving refugees in the facilities of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer (ICE) and its social program the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries (SWGSM).

This chapter examines the voices of the Latina/o pentecostals in dialogue with two pentecostal theologians/ethicists, namely: Daniel Castelo's moral theology of an

⁴⁷³ De La Torre, *Social Latina/o Ethics* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 71.

⁴⁷⁴ May Jr., *Ethics without Principles*, xii.

epicleptic community, and Eldin Villafaña's call for an ethics of pneumatology. The work of both authors is helpful in analyzing the findings of the data collected in the ICE/SWGSM to see how these Latina/o pentecostals are involved ethically in their social ministry with the poor. The key research sub-question that guides this chapter is: What are the ethical practices/perspectives that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? After analyzing the data, three major findings emerged as essential in the studied phenomenon of pentecostal ethics about what motivates Latina/os to social ministry: Pentecostal ethics as virtues of the Espíritu; pentecostal ethics of acompañamiento; and pentecostal ethics for a dignification of life.

Pentecostal Ethics as Virtues of the Espíritu

*“Patience is such an important virtue to carry out this social ministry
and do the mission that God has entrusted to us.” –Alberto*

In Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics: The Epicleptic Community, Daniel Castelo

ponders these questions:

For all the gravitas that virtue theory has in terms of its history and influence upon Christian moral reflection, why should Pentecostals care? Would not a proposal for virtue ethics within Pentecostalism be an artificial imposition, one with little by way of convergence?⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁵ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 75. Other sources are: Ian Gibson, “Pentecostal Peacefulness: Virtue Ethics and the Reception of Theology in Nepal,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 23 (Dec 2017): 765-782; Paul W. Lewis, “A Pneumatological Approach to Virtue Ethics,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 1 (1998): 42-61; Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (New York, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014); Nimi Wariboko, *Economics in Spirit and Truth. A Moral Philosophy of Finance* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 13. In this last book, Wariboko affirms that the work of pentecostal ethics is to think about how the charismatic city develops people with the indispensable virtues to contribute to human flourishing. People who are genuine witnesses of the truth of God, who understand themselves as created in the image of God, and who seek the development of freedoms as an ethical principle. Ismael García makes a significant contribution from Hispanic social context related to virtue ethics: “For many of us the root of the lovelessness and violence our comunidad must confront day-in and day-out reveals an individual and collective defect in moral character. This signifies a commitment to character formation and the development of moral virtues among our people.” See his book, *La Dignidad: Ethics through Hispanic Eyes* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), 44.

Castelo indicates that the revivalist model so embedded in religious affections in American Pentecostalism is limited in terms of moral formation. A human life is not only marked by these moments of affections, but also by the ups and downs of an ordinary life. For this reason, another model is necessary that complements the religious affections. He sees that complement in virtue ethics: “Related to this need, the virtue may be a way of opening the traditional Pentecostal purview of the Spirit’s work within creation, and such a venue could be promising for constructive moral reflection by Pentecostals.”⁴⁷⁶

Castelo’s perspective on virtue ethics related to pentecostalism is relevant for understanding Alberto’s words and for realizing how Latina/o pentecostals in ICE see the fruit of the Spirit as *virtues* of the *Espíritu*: “Patience is such an important virtue to carry out this social ministry and do the mission that God has entrusted to us. It is a fruit of the Spirit about which we rarely think.”⁴⁷⁷ Latina/o pentecostals in ICE are motivated to serve the poor when they are using their spiritual gifts and see how the fruit of the *Espíritu* is developed on them and the refugees. Gladys gives another example of this perspective:

We must look to others, to refugees with respect and dignity. They are sisters and brothers created in the image of God. Even if they come from gangs or are bad or I don’t know them personally, they are children of God, they are human beings.

The Bible says that because you did it to one of them, you did it to me, without

⁴⁷⁶ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 76.

⁴⁷⁷ Alberto, Interview, Dec. 3, 2016.

knowing it was me. The worst, the vilest, those were who God chose. I was not such a good or so bad person. I believed in God, but I didn't follow him as he commanded. The spiritual transforms our reality, our evil. If we were to criticize and judge the condition of the people, then we could hardly serve in this ministry and help the people who come here. God transforms us and changes us if we submit to him with all our hearts. Therefore, patience, compassion, kindness, and love lead us not only to live our faith in Christ as a virtue, but also to grow and mature in faith as a testimony of service to the needy.⁴⁷⁸

Some aspects studied in previous chapters, such as theology of the image of God, Christian testimony, conversion, and pentecostal spirituality, are integrally interconnected with the virtues of the Espíritu in Gladys' testimonio. Indeed, Castelo's work, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics* recognizes this when it builds on the work done by Steven J. Land. Writing about Christian affections in pentecostalism as a distinct configuration, Land proposes the term *integration* instead of *balance* because although the latter is used in the broader culture and Evangelical/Protestant churches to refer to a certain imbalance in emotions or mental health among lower class pentecostals, it does not grasp the fundamental ethos and spirituality that these religious experiences play, for example in the theological/pneumatological interpretation of Latina/o pentecostalism. Land stresses,

Integration in certain crises of oppression, domination and breakthrough may be more like the fusion of a hydrogen bomb. Western society, especially in its white, middle and upper classes, *values control and quietness in matters of religion* (though not, of course in sports, political campaigns, discotheques, rock concerts and so on). In contrast, when those oppressed by demonic forces and/or violated or defiled by humanity catch the vision of a kingdom that liberates, sanctifies and empowers a new existence, there is often, indeed almost inevitably, intensity of

⁴⁷⁸ Gladys, Interview, Nov. 2, 2016.

response. The joy and exuberance, the depth sorrow and longing, the courageous witness of millions of such persons cannot simply be written off as hysteria, mass psychosis or cheap escapism.⁴⁷⁹

Thus, balance means that Latina/o pentecostals lose their minds in ecstasies and emotional experiences that make no sense to the Western rational mind. It can be said that this way of thinking is rooted in the prevalent idea of reason inherited in the Enlightenment era in line with the traditional systematic theology of Protestantism.⁴⁸⁰ Balance in the Western perspective “values control and quietness in matters of religion,” whereas integration refers to the fusion of all the elements of pentecostal spirituality to reflect on the richness of the religious experiences observed in the Latina/o pentecostal world. Pentecostal spirituality integrates the living emotional experience of sanctification as moral integration in the apocalyptic tension of spiritual transformation in line with their Wesleyan roots in a non-systematic theological tradition.⁴⁸¹ Integration in Latina/o pentecostal spirituality *values spontaneity and ecstasy in matters of the Spirit*. In short, Latina/o pentecostalism is a distinct way of being that integrates body, mind, spirit, emotions, good will, intuition, and actions within an apocalyptic sense of urgency for the search of human flourishing.⁴⁸² It is not a way of being other-worldly in heaven. It is here and now on earth.

⁴⁷⁹ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 44–45, (italics added).

⁴⁸⁰ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 152. Concerning the *ardour* as part of the element of the *culto*, Eldin Villafañe states that it is a dominant aspect of worship in Hispanic churches as part of their religious and emotional experiences that require balance and order.

⁴⁸¹ See Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 23, 45–46, 211.

⁴⁸² See Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 41, 130. Here the researcher follows Wariboko’s perspective on human flourishing, which entails a commitment to creating new possibilities for life. Wariboko uses the term *aretē* (excellence), and the philosophical concept of *eudaimonia* (flourishing living, living, and doing well) to articulate his idea of human flourishing related to the pentecostal spirit as a way of going beyond the Aristotelian definitions. Both concepts are integrated and express power,

The articulation of practices, emotions, beliefs, and social actions of members of ICE in an integrative model that embodies the reality of the oppressed and marginalized is fundamental for understanding the ethical values –or fruit of the Spirit– highlighted by this pentecostal Latina/o community.⁴⁸³ It is significant to see these integrative aspects of an embodied pentecostal ethics not “exclusively through doctrine but also materially, physically, spiritually, aesthetically, morally and socially.”⁴⁸⁴ This articulation as an integrative model can be observed in Carmen’s testimonio:

Respect for each person is very important. Here in our church, the emphasis is placed on hard work, cooperation and respect for any person, although there are sometimes conflicts among refugees. Every human being is worthy and deserves to live with dignity, regardless of their social condition. We're all human beings. The love of God is fundamental to carry out this work, which also requires a lot of patience. Living in the same place with unknown people who come from different cultures demands a lot of tolerance to not get out of control. With patience, compassion and kindness many things can be achieved that we do not even think about at times. The interesting thing is that in the midst of any difficulty we are going through, I do not lose my joy in the Lord. An important fruit of the Spirit in this social ministry is truth. People should be honest, just as we serve them with love and fidelity. Many people come with false stories and take advantage of what

vitality, fulfillment of meaning of being, life, and freedom, as well as resisting obstacles and interpretations that undergird and accept the social and political structures that create oppression. See also Nimi Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 25–28; and Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle*, 156.

⁴⁸³ See Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 30.

⁴⁸⁴ Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 33.

little we have and even destroy it. For that reason, part of the commitment to be here is to attend worship services with the hope that, with prayer, preaching and sharing with the church, people will be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸⁵

In Carmen's testimonio, we can see the above-mentioned aspects of pentecostal spirituality and ethos, but also the pentecostal mission, theology of the Spirit, and social ethics framework used in this research within this integrative model. Juan also expressed this model in his testimonio about the ethical aspects needed to carry out the church's social ministry:

Each person that comes to this program brings a story that they want to share and that requires that someone must be patient and spend time with them and listen to them. Compassion is needed to do this ministry. Mainly, the truth is fundamental to build relationships and help each other. A necessary fruit of the Spirit in this ministry is temperance which goes well with patience, and helps to keep balance, control, and goodwill. The Bible says: let us seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, which is to help the needy, clothe the naked, give to the thirsty. It is to fulfill the justice of God.⁴⁸⁶

In a similar way, Samuel Solivan, a Hispanic pentecostal theologian, proposes *orthopathos* as an integrative model and intermediary matrix between orthodoxy and orthopraxis since Protestant and Catholic theology have failed to integrate the poor who

⁴⁸⁵ Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

⁴⁸⁶ Juan, Interview, Nov. 21, 2016.

remain at the margins. Orthopathos shows a concern for those who have been put aside on the margins of society. He claims that “Orthopathos is that understanding of theology as the proper relationship between correct belief (orthodoxy) and proper ethics or action (praxis).”⁴⁸⁷ This author uses this concept to rectify two problems he sees in North America. On the one hand, the use of orthodoxy as a “correct doctrine” has ignored the social struggle of oppression and injustice among Latina/os. Correct doctrine does not necessarily lead to correct social action. On the other hand, orthopraxis is often reduced to a critical reflection that is not directly involved in social actions on behalf of the marginalized.⁴⁸⁸ Solivan observes this failure of orthodoxy and orthopraxis in the context of the United States, but it seems that he overlooks the praxis and emphasis of the preferential option for the poor proclaimed by Liberation Theology.

In terms of virtue ethics and emotions, Brian Stiltner acknowledges that “Virtue depends on appropriate emotions as well as actions... [That means] that the operation of virtue depends on multiple faculties working together.”⁴⁸⁹ In this regard, virtue involves a Latina/o pentecostal person’s reasoning being suffused with feelings and her feelings being guided by emotional intelligence. Actions are not separated from emotions, and emotions are part of virtue. Land argues that “it is crucial for Pentecostals to consider carefully their beliefs, affections and practices before they uncritically accommodate to culture, are assimilated into mainstream denominations, or are co-opted by socio-political

⁴⁸⁷ Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 11, 35–37.

⁴⁸⁸ Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 11–12.

⁴⁸⁹ Brian Stiltner, *Toward Thriving Communities: Virtue Ethics as Social Ethics* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2016), 49.

ideologies.”⁴⁹⁰ It is precisely in this context of ideas that Castelo proposes a theological reflection of affections from virtue theory as an epicletic community within pentecostalism. Castelo sees virtue not only as an acquired quality, but as a practice-virtue oriented to transforming the community socially and spiritually.

Castelo develops his pentecostal ethical task using the rubric of *moral theology* instead of *Christian ethics*. Traditionally, moral theology has been related to the premodern era of moral reflection and Catholicism, while Christian ethics has been related to the modern social reflection and Protestantism. Moral theology studies the journey of a human person made in the image of God based on dogmatic and spiritual theology, experiencing the triune God, and participating in God’s Spirit community and its practices in performance, embodiment, and conditionedness. Christian ethics with its perspectives of global market, nation state, and corporation aims to be more universal and public. While Christian ethics is often focused on the question of “What should we do?” with its emphasis on “right actions,” moral reflection is interested in the question of “What kind of people are we trying to become?” Finally, moral theology is concerned with God’s character and the development of virtues, whereas Christian ethics begins with the commanding God and deontological theories of moral inquiry.⁴⁹¹

Castelo is inclined to moral theology which is focused on human beings’ character. He finds in moral theology the best way to frame a pentecostal virtue ethics in

⁴⁹⁰ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 45.

⁴⁹¹ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 23–25. Castelo considers that these are generalizations and that they are not categories that are mutually exclusive when they are defined in some way. However, Long emphasizes that with these operational definitions, the latter form deontological ideas of moral inquiry that are linked with modernist affirmations, including the universal and general; while the former presents a greater range of possibilities that nourishes the life of the church and testifies of its reality more easily.

terms of an eschatological vision, identity, practice, and mission. Virtue ethics is a morality of happiness whereas deontological ethics is a morality of obligation. The former concerns the performance of ethical actions to inhabit the good and the latter instrumentalizes action to determine what is right or wrong. Reason, deduction, and normativity prevail upon the ethical task in a morality of obligation shadowing the self, but the way in which a person has been formed over time based on her daily experiences is crucial for an ethical action-praxis in a morality of happiness, i.e., that person may get it wrong as a process of learning to do good.⁴⁹² As Spanish liberation theologian José María Castillo points out, people are not interested in duties, but in well-being for themselves and their communities.⁴⁹³

In light of this state of affairs, Castelo's concept of pentecostal virtue ethics goes along with the testimonios collected in the interviews. Latina/o pentecostals are particularly focused on how they can show Christ through their social actions and how they are a living testimony and open letters to the public, as Paul mentions in his epistle to the Romans.⁴⁹⁴ Developing the fruit of the Espíritu as moral virtues is crucial to this Latina/o community, as Omaira notes:

I observe the mission of my church in that we are the people of God, we are called to serve. A church without mission perishes. Therefore, we must live with good behavior showing the world who we are as sons and daughters of God... The

⁴⁹² Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 63–65.

⁴⁹³ José María Castillo, *La Ética de Cristo*, 2ed. (Bilbao, Vizcaya: Desclée de Brouwer, S.A., 2006), 16.

⁴⁹⁴ Concerning “living testimony” and “open letters,” Latina/os pentecostals refer to Romans 8:16 and 2 Corinthians 2:2–3 as biblical injunctions to live correctly.

Bible says that by their fruits you will know them. For others to believe in me, I must live a life of example. Core values in this ministry are love, dignity, and respect. A refugee is a creation of God, a human being like me. My prayer is for peace, peace among all, including Jerusalem. Now, our work is based on love, faith, compassion and justice. These gifts and fruit of the Spirit are necessary to continue with our ministry.⁴⁹⁵

Do we recognize the significant connection between the mission, Christian testimony, and fruit of the Spirit as moral virtues in Omaira's testimony? Latina/o pentecostals in ICE deem it important to develop a character that shows "good behavior" and a "life of example." These aspects are closely interrelated in the pentecostal mission, pentecostal theology, and pentecostal ethics framework analyzed in this research. It is clear that the well-being of people cannot be reduced to a small number of privileged people that establishes the rules of law for everybody at the expense of those who live in the margins of US society. All people, including Latina/o pentecostals who live on the margins, are worthy of a good life and they also can work to reach their potential for the human flourishing of their communities.

Some liberationist ethicists are critical of virtue ethics. De La Torre explicates that theory has predominated in the teaching of ethics in a deductive way in the dominant Western culture. An ethical action is determined by a biblical, philosophical, or theological doctrine, putting more a stronger emphasis on orthodoxy than orthopraxis.

⁴⁹⁵ Omaira, Interview, Nov. 3, 2016.

Ethical response is, thus, a selection of multiple choices based on case studies.⁴⁹⁶ In other words, “Ethics proceeds from doctrine.”⁴⁹⁷ Liberationist ethics places praxis first and meditation (theory) later. Liberation theology puts a emphasis on praxis as a critique of the theoretical and abstract ideas so prevalent in Western theology and ethics. However, a careful consideration of virtue theory in dialogue with De La Torre’s critique can show a different perspective. This a two-way street. If theory is given priority, then praxis is sacrificed, and if praxis is prioritized, theory can be unhelpfully disregarded. One is not better than the other; both have weight and importance.⁴⁹⁸ Which one ought to be prioritized depends on the community’s circumstances (social location), people’s skills and abilities, and how they learn, pedagogically and strategically speaking. Both theory and practice work together. In the case of ICE and its social ministry, the researcher deems the better option to be Traci C. West’s ethical idea. She observes that

It is assumed that practical realities are most helpfully examined as case studies, while conceptualization of what should be considered virtuous and nonvirtuous social behavior is seen as a distinctly different, more theoretical task. Some social ethicists emphasize concrete practices because theory seems tedious and irrelevant. Others emphasize theory because concrete practices seem too idiosyncratic and transitory. I contend, however, that both theory and practice and

⁴⁹⁶ Miguel A. De La Torre, *The U.S. Immigration Crisis: Toward an Ethics of Place* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016), xvi–xvii.

⁴⁹⁷ Miguel A. De La Torre, “Ethics,” 337–38. De La Torre criticizes Stanley Hauerwas’ ethics of virtue, asserting that “He confuses an unapologetic conviction about the truth of the Christian narrative with a Eurocentric interpretation of what that truth might be, thus converting his truth claims into a façade masking a power that reinforces Eurocentric Christian dominance in ethics as well as in the culture.” Enrique Dussel also criticizes Hauerwas: “Hence neither does the theological attempt of Stanley Hauerwas manage to so much as surmise the remote legitimacy of criticizing the capital system, being enveloped by it and presupposing it as a totality.” See his book, *Ethics and Community*, trans. by Robert Barr (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), 237, <http://biblioteca.clacso.or.ar/clacso/otros/20120216095358/ethics.pdf>

⁴⁹⁸ For a better understanding of theory and praxis, see Elizabeth Philips, “Liberation theology: A virtue’s ethicist response,” in Vic McCracken, ed., *Christian Faith and Social Justice: Five Views* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc., 2014), 105–106. For a comprehensive understanding of how people can disagree religiously using virtue theory, see Olli Pekka Vainio, *Disagree Virtuously: Religious Conflict in Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017), 138–86.

a fluid conversation between them, are most fruitful for conceiving Christian social ethics. Theory needs practice in order to be authentic, relevant, and truthful. Practice needs theory that so that practices might be fully comprehended.⁴⁹⁹

The data collected in the field through participant observations and interviews have provided good examples of ethical practice and theory in dialogue with the research participants. Given that these Latina/os serve the poor while speaking with them indicates that praxis and theory are given almost the same weight. Many of those committed Latina/o pentecostals have learned to serve during their daily work (praxis), while others have taken some training (theory) before working in social ministry. Praxis often begins when someone is asking about the crisis of a certain community, about their struggle and suffering. What is first in this case: theory or praxis? This a two-way street and perhaps even a circular track. It is also a contextual ethics that is constructed based on the social location of the Latina/o pentecostals' experience at the micro level.

Although Latina/o pentecostals are more involved in social activities than in the political arena, as confirmed by Espinosa,⁵⁰⁰ they preach and teach to be submitted to the law and political and military authorities because they believe that these leaders have been established by God. Those who do not obey these authorities are against what God has constituted.⁵⁰¹ Those who obey this commandment are following God's will. But

⁴⁹⁹ Traci C. West, *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women's Lives Matter* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), xvii. Elizabeth Philips states that "Theological inquiry and praxis must be pursued equally in an ongoing back-and-forth in which each continues to shape and revise the other." That is to say that praxis requires a careful theological inquiry and any theology cannot be disconnected from praxis because it can be dangerous either way. See Elizabeth Philips, "Liberation Theology," 106.

⁵⁰⁰ Gastón Espinosa, "Latino Clergy and Churches," 301.

⁵⁰¹ This belief is based on Romans 13:1–2, "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ²Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."

paradoxically, one of the leaders interviewed about the ethical values needed to do the social ministry, responds:

Patience is such an important virtue to do this social work and carry out the mission that God has entrusted to us. It is a fruit of the Spirit about which we rarely think. There are very difficult cases that we have faced with people who are almost crazy. Nobody receives them, and we have embraced them. With love and patience, we take care of them. Courage, the virtue of justice, is equally important. I do not like injustice in any form. Without justice, how does one live, how does one preach the gospel? *La verdad es importante, aunque con estos asuntos de inmigración no se sabe. Muchas veces hay que hacerle la curva* (Truth is important, although with these immigration issues it is difficult to know. We have many times to go in another direction.)⁵⁰²

“Hacerle la curva” means to deceive the system and do things that are not “legal.”

There is a contradictory message in Alberto’s words: He writes about “truth as an important” ethical value in their social ministry, but he also insists on the need to trick the system when things do not work for the benefit of the Latina/o community. Is this not like the trickster figure mentioned by De La Torre? Writing about social Latina/o ethics, this author suggests that tricksters are rule breakers that disrupts the established norms and uses deceptive methods to dismantle the dominant moral rules imposed on those who live in the margins. In doing so, these liminal tricksters create new possibilities to

⁵⁰² The researcher has added this emphasis in the sentence in Spanish to highlight the words of *hacerle la curva*. One example is that if someone is driving a car and has a fine that she has not paid, and sees a police officer, that person turns right or left (hace la curva) to avoid being stopped by the police. In this way, the person is tricking the system to avoid another infraction.

empower the poor and marginalized.⁵⁰³ As regards needing to lie or deceive in order to survive, Dietrich Bonhoeffer provides some interesting thoughts when he writes about ethics and responsible action, in so doing challenging Kant's principle of truthfulness. Illustrating his arguments with Jesus as a man with a free conscience who broke the law in the service of God and the neighbor, Bonhoeffer opens the possibility that occasionally we need to lie in order to do what is convenient in a difficult situation.⁵⁰⁴ For Latina/os who live in la lucha every day, it seems that there is no other option than to trick the system when there is no justice. Latina/os pentecostals in ICE are living in a liminal space where they must trick the system to survive in the midst of their lucha.

One of the refugees shared his story saying, "You can be honest and work hard every day, but in this country, they have screwed us, that's why we have to screw them too."⁵⁰⁵ In these words, there is an interesting point to be analyzed from the perspective of virtue ethics. A reconceptualization of virtue from people in the margins is needed. A virtuous person is always seen as a good citizen who contributes to social order. Is it

⁵⁰³ De La Torre, *Social Latina/o Ethics*, 105–118.

⁵⁰⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ética*, trans. Lluís Duch (Madrid, España: Editorial Trotta, 2000), 220–22. Bonhoeffer deems grotesque this principle of truthfulness and Kant's example that if a murderer asks for a friend who is hidden in his house that he should answer honestly based on this principle. Bonhoeffer deems this case and the principle of truthfulness to be legalistic and self-righteousness when he refuses to become guilty of violating this principle and lying for the well-being of his friend. For Bonhoeffer, the responsible action surpasses the established law because the law of love of God and the neighbor is founded in Jesus Christ and this law is superior when life is transgressed. For a better understanding of Bonhoeffer's thoughts about truth telling and lying, see Christopher O. Tollefsen, *Lying and Christian Ethics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 63–70. See also, Jean-Michel Rabaté, *The Ethics of the Lie*, Trans. Suzanne Verderber (New York, NY: Other Press, 2007). Liberation theologians have explored Bonhoeffer's theology, and his influence in this movement is well known; however, Latina/o pentecostalism has rarely engaged with Bonhoeffer's theology and ethics. This German author was fully committed as a theologian and pastor against the Nazi regime.

⁵⁰⁵ Javier, Fieldnotes, Nov. 24, 2016.

possible to think in an opposite way? Wariboko provides this possibility in his redefinition of virtue:

I argue that virtue cannot be interpreted as supporting a stable social system, but as transformative and liberatory. It is about an ardor, energy, force, or drive to move society forward toward justice and not as an affirmation of a system... In that 2009 study, I attempted to liberate the concept of virtue from being tied to excessive concern with order and good citizenry, so it can serve as a liberatory principle for interrogating all present social organizations in the name of a better future.⁵⁰⁶

Wariboko's interpretation of virtue rejects the McIntyre definition so prevalent in the academy.⁵⁰⁷ In fact, Enrique Dussel states that McIntyre's work is stuck in an abstract world and rarely proposes a social ethics.⁵⁰⁸ What Wariboko clarifies in McIntyre's definition is that the term *virtue* has been used in Western society with some moralistic

⁵⁰⁶ Nimi Wariboko, *Economics in Spirit and Truth*, 166. See also his book, *The Charismatic City and The Resurgence of Religion: A Pentecostal Social Ethics of Cosmopolitan Urban Life* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 13. But mainly Wariboko reconceptualizes virtue as liberatory in his book, *The Principle of Excellence*, 2, 166–67. See also Jean-Luc Nancy, *Adoration: The Deconstruction of Christianity II* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2012), 47, Proquest. Wariboko cites Jean-Luc Nancy who articulates a similar definition of virtue. In his book, *Adoration: The Deconstruction of Christianity II*, he proposes an understanding of virtue as drive. Nancy argues,

The word virtue bears within it, not only in its Latin etymology—*virtus*, virile quality—but also in all the signification that has remained attached to it, even though a certain moral—and moralistic—representation tends to cover it over. Often “virtue” is taken to mean a disposition that conforms to some contrastive distribution into “virtues” and “vices,” which is to say, a fixed definition of “good” and “evil.” Being “virtuous,” as used to be expected of a “pure” young girl or as is today of a “good” trader, consists in respecting values and norms that one is able to define. Even if one does not worry about searching after ultimate justifications, such definable values and norms are offered at times by a given state of mores, at others, by a demand to be prudent, balanced, wise.

⁵⁰⁷ Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 166–68. Wariboko asserts that MacIntyre is right when he argues that social practice expresses ethics and in turn ethics is cultivated in relation to social practice. However, the problem with his position is when that ethics has to do with excellence. And par excellence, he refers to approved standards of good behavior or so-called internal goods. This is problematic because this ethics is based on the complete and the rational, while the incomplete and unresolved is discarded, and it is precisely from the uncompleted and unresolved depths that social practice arises.

⁵⁰⁸ Enrique Dussel, *Ethics and Community*, 237.

representation (“moralina”)⁵⁰⁹ that fixed the self of all human beings to be obedient and to be engaged in certain moral values established to be a good citizen by the dominant culture. Every person in society, including underrepresented communities, are taught to follow the same values to fit in the traditional moral orthodox society. Therefore, the trickster figure can be a virtuous Latina/o pentecostal who develops her character to *joder* (screw) the system and who creates a social disorder. To put it another way, Latina/o pentecostals should develop *la virtud de joder* (the virtue of screwing).

The word *joder* has been used by De La Torre in his proposal of ethics *para joder*.⁵¹⁰ The term fundamentally connotes an individual or community that causes trouble and who persistently disturbs others to catch their attention and disrupt the dominant moral system. A good example to illustrate this concept is the “Parable of the widow and the unjust judge” (also known as the “Parable of the persistent widow” or the “Parable of the importunate widow”). The parable relates that a judge (dominant culture) who lacks compassion is persistently disturbed by a poor widow (marginalized woman) who seeks justice. For some time, he refuses her, but she never stops coming to him with her plea. He finally says to himself: “Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!”⁵¹¹ This poor widow represents someone who

⁵⁰⁹ Adela Cortina, “El quehacer ético: Una guía para la educación moral.” *Diálogo Filosófico*, 1 (1985): 35–44. This moralistic representation is analyzed as “Moralina” by the Spaniard ethicist philosopher, Adela Cortina.

⁵¹⁰ De La Torre, *Latino/a Social Ethics*, 92. The researcher is borrowing the word *joder* from De La Torre’s proposal ethics *para joder*. De La Torre clarifies that *joder* is a Spanish verb, a word that a person would never use in polite company. The term is sometimes considered somewhat vulgar, but basically, it is translated as “to screw with.”

⁵¹¹ Luke 18:1–8.

has developed *la virtud de joder*. Even though De La Torre rejects virtue ethics, linking his ethics para joder with the redefinition of virtue given in this chapter, the Hispanic pentecostal proposal in this research would be an ethics as *la virtud de joder*.

In light of this idea, the virtues of the Espíritu proposed here follows Wariboko's critique of MacIntyre's traditional standard approach to virtue ethics that look for "the ethical element in a social practice only in the approved standards of performance (behavior) or so-called good internals."⁵¹² Wariboko clarifies that there are two frameworks for understanding how a social practice comes to express an ethics: the priestly and the prophetic. The priestly one *rationalizes* the social practice and discard passions, emotions, or impulses, and is focused on the principle of ordering that imposes authority, pattern, citizenship, order, and moral perfection. The second one, the prophetic does not seek perfection but interaction in the encounter with others to potentialize their capacities for the well-being of all in community. The social practice, then, is not only moral but also religious. It includes what it is excluded and unfilled.⁵¹³ That is to say that what is uncompleted and excluded in a society must be integrated in what is so-called Christian ethics. Simply put, MacIntyre's emphasis in priestly ethics is harmful for Latina/o pentecostals. "The excluded by definition is resistant to social control and thus when by some prophetic action a portion of it is corralled and released it becomes subversive to established order," claims Wariboko. The emphasis on perfection, complete, order and authority that imposes authority and control to support the status quo

⁵¹² Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 166.

⁵¹³ Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 166–68.

is a disadvantage for those at the bottom of society. Thus, a prophetic spirit looks for resistance and creativity for a more abundant life. This prophetic spirit sees virtue as “the holy [that] emerges from social practice.”⁵¹⁴

The social practice that comes to express a pentecostal ethics in members of ICE is absolutely prophetic. Their social actions, their prayer for the poor, their communitarian development, and their solidarity are practices of protest against the evil structures that have imposed on them virtues of perfection to support those at the top of society at the expense of their lives being marginalized, abandoned, and oppressed. These pentecostals are prophets that subvert the dominant system and are always a “danger to the system.”⁵¹⁵ Their social actions using their spiritual gifts and the virtues of the Espíritu to support the poor (the excluded) are always a danger to those who hold the power and establish the norms and rules in church and society.

We come to understand Latina/o pentecostal ethics not from the theological orthodox concepts but from the experience of the Spirit, from the social actions that are integrated as part of the pentecostal community. The motivation to serve and help others, then, is born from the experiences of the Spirit where love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are seen. And there is no law that can cripple such social actions of the Espíritu that generates life and life in abundance, because, against these actions there is no law.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁴ Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 170, 168–70.

⁵¹⁵ Wariboko, *The Principle of Excellence*, 164.

⁵¹⁶ Galatians 5:22-23.

In this way, there is a need in the United States for more and more Latina/os to play the role of the trickster figure, and to develop moral virtues not to become good citizens that support the social order, but to become “good citizens” that screw with the dominant system. Some Latina/o pentecostals in ICE have played this role as tricksters “*haciéndole la curva*” to the political, economic, and religious structures that cause oppression and marginalization. In short, as tricksters these Latina/o pentecostals have developed the needed virtues to mock and disobey the dominant moral system in order to accompany and support those who are invisible in a visible world of discrimination and marginalization.

Pentecostal Ethics of Acompañamiento

“I would say that they are like a guest in this country. If the policy makers think about that for a second: can we think of them as guests?

How will this change the way we talk about them?” –Michael

Hispanic ethics is not made in isolation or in a vacuum. It is not an egoistic ethics that is focused on the individualism so predominant in the Western world. Latina/o pentecostals think *en conjunto* and live *en comunidad* as a familia. The emphasis of Hispanic ethics is in *nosotros* (we) not in the *yo* (I.) What motivates Latina/o pentecostals to serve refugees can be examined as an ethics of *acompañamiento* (accompaniment). Alberto testified about this *acompañamiento*:

Doing nothing, then, is a sin and that is not acceptable to me. Social justice is a voice for those who cannot speak or defend themselves. Christian ethics and our social mission helping refugees, the homeless, go hand in hand; they are inseparable. The hope and satisfaction of knowing that we can do something is

more than compelling. We have had pregnant girls, and children who come with families. If children arrive alone without adult company, we do not receive them because immigration has special rules for those cases. If someone gets sick or needs legal advice, we have people who help and support us. In this ministry, patience is key. Patience to listen, patience to wait without rushing to see the change in people, patience to remain silent and listen to them. Although there are people who have deceived and lied to us, we have learned to differentiate them through our experience in this work. There are people who come with false stories and when they are touched by the Spirit of love of the Lord, they change and confess; however, we give them our hands and support them with rice and beans. Those who are transformed by the Lord, they leave us with gratefulness. In this ministry it is difficult to determine if people's gratitude is greater than their contempt. That is not important! We do it without expecting anything in return. If someone calls us and tells us his story, we celebrate it and share it with the board and the church. We have a history of people who passed by here and now they are God's ministers serving in other places; others have opened their own businesses as mechanics; others have finished their professional careers. In short, it is a ministry that gives us joy. It is a victory in Jesus!⁵¹⁷

Alberto speaks about the mission of the social ministry, evangelization, and of ethics when he shares how they are helping those refugees who remain in the church facilities. He explains how they accompany these refugees without discriminating against

⁵¹⁷ Alberto, Interview, Dec. 3, 2016.

or among them, although some of these refugees have lied to them. They accompany the poor, not only by providing food and shelter but by listening to and praying for them. Alberto emphasizes the term *nosotros* and why these Latina/o pentecostals do this social labor ethically and selflessly: “It is a victory in Jesus!” They serve Jesus Christ honoring him as Savior and Lord. De La Torre explains it succinctly: “To do ethics is to be *acompañado* by Jesus and, in turn, to imitate Jesus by accompanying our neighbors, specifically, our neighbors who are disenfranchised.”⁵¹⁸

Several images of Jesus have been developed in the Hispanic community by various scholars, namely: Virgilio’s Mestizo Christ, Isasi-Díaz’s Jesús mío, Maldonado Pérez’s Cristo Tenedor, Martel-Otero’s Jesús Sato, De La Torre’s Ajiaco Christ, among others, all of which reveal the way in which Hispanic communities construct their identity in light of their understanding of the life of Jesus.⁵¹⁹ These images of Christ also reveal the fluid and complex identity of this Hispanic community, as well as the way in which they resist the hegemonic theological and ethical discourse imposed on them by the dominant Christology.

In the US Latina/o pentecostal world, Sammy Alfaro presents an image of Jesus as *El Divino Compañero* (The Divine Companion). For Hispanic Pentecostals see Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit-baptizer, Healer, and Coming King (known as the fivefold Christological model.) They experience and live their faith in Jesus in el culto in community and fellowship. They sing coritos, share testimonios, and hear the sermon.

⁵¹⁸ De La Torre, *Latino/a Social Ethics*, 78 (italics added).

⁵¹⁹ For a better understanding of these images of Christ, see Harold J. Recinos and Hugo Magallanes, ed., *Jesus in the Hispanic Community: Images of Christ from Theology to Popular Religion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009).

Testimonies, sermon, and song are thus the main means by which Latina/o pentecostals understand Spirit-Christology, according to Alfaro. And even all these three elements of pentecostal spirituality is observed in the experience of Latina/os who live in the margins.⁵²⁰ Alfaro then attempts to connect the social struggle of Latina/o pentecostals with the so-called pentecostal fivefold Christological model pondering: “What sort of Christology can we glean from these songs, testimonies, and sermons, sources of the main theological expressions of Hispanic Pentecostals?”⁵²¹ He sees this connection in Jesus as *El Divino Compañero* (Divine Companion), the one who provides for their needs and walks with them in midst of their everyday pain through his Spirit⁵²² This particular Spirit-Christology is focused on the liberative ethics and praxis of Jesus’ mission on the Spirit. One song that grasps this idea of Jesus as *Compañero*, who is with Latina/o pentecostals in all their good and bad times is *Dulce Compañía* (Sweet Company):

Sweet are all the moments when you are here
 That make full of joy all my existence
 And the dark becomes clear
 The heavy is already light and is for you.

Sweet are when I feed myself from your words, Lord
 You heal the wounds of my heart
 With your love and your tenderness
 Your consolation and the sweetness of your Spirit

⁵²⁰ Alfaro, *Divino Compañero*, 132.

⁵²¹ Alfaro, *Divino Compañero*, 132.

⁵²² Alfaro, *Divino Compañero*, 134.

Lord Jesus, I have never felt like that before—a great love
That captivates my life
Oh please, without you, I do not know how to live,
Being with you has given life to my life

Chorus

// Sweet company Lord in my nights and my days
Spring in my summers and in winter my warmth//
// Sweet company Lord in my nights and my days
Spring in my summers and in winter my warmth will always be//⁵²³

In Alberto's words and in *Dulce Compañía*, we can see a journey of experiencing Jesus' presence through the Spirit and how these Latina/o pentecostals live in lo cotidiano. La lucha never stops but they feel empowered knowing that Jesus is their friend and companion. It is in the other, the refugee, where the Latina/o pentecostals find the way to themselves.⁵²⁴ It is in a mutual accompaniment that life makes sense and is integrated into the community of the freedom of the Spirit. Latina/o pentecostals and refugees become one in the Espíritu.

Eldin Villafañe, a pentecostal ethicist and theologian, sees Jesus' ministry as the "Charismatic Christ" who is anointed and empowered by the Spirit to confront the evil powers.⁵²⁵ Villafañe constructs his social ethics as pneumatology for US Hispanic pentecostals engaging with pentecostal theology and liberation theology.⁵²⁶ His

⁵²³ Omar Herrera, *Dulce Compañía*. ReyVol Records 880880001416. US CD. 2005.

⁵²⁴ Moltmann, *El Espíritu de la Vida*, 39.

⁵²⁵ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 184–85, 195.

⁵²⁶ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 193. Villafañe is influenced by Liberation Theology, particularly, in his concern for the poor and the way he interprets the Scripture from the perspective of the preferential option for the poor. Some of the Liberation theologians/ethicists that he engages in his work are: Elsa Támez and

pentecostal social ethics' perspective is that Hispanics should actively participate in the eschatological historical project of the Spirit, namely, the kingdom of God. Obviously, this kingdom of God is seen in Jesus Christ and his gospel.⁵²⁷ In short, God calls Latina/o pentecostals to participate politically and socially as a community of the Spirit "in the world and for the world, even if it is not of the world."⁵²⁸

Villafañe recognizes that US Latina/o pentecostalism is marked by an individualistic ethical aspect. Therefore, he insists on developing an emergent social ethics as fundamental to expand the understanding that they have about the spiritual warfare against the flesh, the world, and the devil into their "*social correlates* – namely, sinful social structures, the 'world' (*kosmos*), and 'principalities and powers.'"⁵²⁹ By a way of explanation, Jesus' actions and words have to be understood within a social spiritual framework in the Hispanic community that has to fight against the evil structures that dehumanize and oppress the lives of those who live in the margins. Villafañe analyzes sin as personal and social:

All social structures and institutions have moral values embedded in them. They can be good or evil. What is significant to note at this time is that the texture of social existence reveals the presence of institutions and structures that regulate life, that seem to have an objective reality independent of the individual, and thus

Ruben A. Alves, *Against Machismo* (Yorktown, VA: Meyer-Stone Books, 1987); Enrique Dussel, *History and Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976); Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1973); James Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, 1970); José Míguez Bonino, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1982); Juan Luis Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976); Leonardo Boff, *Church: Charism and Power* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1979); Luis N. Rivera-Pagán, "La Cristianización de América: Reflexión y Desafío" *Apuntes*, 7 (1987): 16–17; and Rubén Alves, *Protestantism and Repression* (New York, NY: Orbis Books, 1985).

⁵²⁷ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 184–85, 195.

⁵²⁸ Eldin Villafañe, *Introducción al Pentecostalismo*, 134–35

⁵²⁹ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 162, 163, (italics in the original.)

can become oppressive, sinful or evil. We are all part of this texture of social existence and our spiritual living is impacted by this complex web.⁵³⁰

For Alberto, Villafañe's analysis is clear: "Doing nothing, then, is a sin." Because of these evil institutions, Latina/o pentecostals have to "hacerle la curva" to the system and play the role of trickster figures in order to have a dignified life. They are not indifferent to the situation that poor people are living in this country. Their emphasis is on community development more than on individual progress. Through their social actions, they question the morality and ethics of those who diminish the life of the disenfranchised. In this Hispanic church in Los Fresnos, the spiritual gifts of the Espíritu and the virtues of the Espíritu are used for community development as the people work together as *compañeras y compañeros*.⁵³¹ The Espíritu acompañó a Jesús in his passion, and at the same time the Espíritu acompaña to the poor in their struggle.⁵³² This sense of community development and acompañamiento that connects the pentecostal mission, the spiritual gifts and the fruit of the Spirit Lourdes expressed it as follows:

What I want to say is that each person in the church has different gifts that can be used for the growth and development of unity in the body of Christ. There are so many people who have not known the Lord and who have not experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit; therefore, these spiritual gifts are important for the mission of the church. One can speak to them about that power that has

⁵³⁰ Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit*, 175–76.

⁵³¹ Goizueta, *Caminemos con Jesús*, 207. Writing about theology of accompaniment among Catholic Hispanics, Goizueta states, "Thus, when we walk together, our common personhood is affirmed: we become *compañeros* and *compañeras*."

⁵³² See Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 62.

transformed our lives, that is, the testimony of the Holy Spirit in each one of us ... The essential values for carrying out our social ministry in the Good Samaritan are respect for others, the willingness to serve, and give support to those who suffer and are in critical need. We have to look at others (refugees, orphans, anyone) with dignity and respect as creatures created by God. This type of social ministry demands patience, love, and peace. Peace with us first before bringing peace to those in need. Without love for ourselves and others, it would be impossible to speak of God's love.⁵³³

Villafañe's pentecostal ethics is reaffirmed in his assertion of the unique characteristic of pentecostalism, i.e., the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts, as testified in Lourdes' words. May contends that a Christian ethics founded a pneumacentric or even theocentric "greatly risks losing its anchorage in real, material, palpable existence and become gnostic and even ephemeral. Ethics founded in the Son necessarily is material and historical."⁵³⁴ But Villafañe proposes a pneumatological social ethics grounded in the incarnated history of Jesus as narrated in the Gospels. An ethics as pneumatology does not mean either a disconnection from the Trinity nor from the life of Jesus. Even more, a pentecostal ethics must be rooted in the radical message and life of Jesus, as well as in the real life of US Latina/os. It has to be a Christocentric and

⁵³³ Lourdes, Interview, Nov. 11, 2016.

⁵³⁴ May, *Ethics without Principles*, 42.

contextual ethics in the Spirit. In the same vein, Castelo's pentecostal ethics is grounded in a "life in the Spirit" being Christ-like.⁵³⁵

Villafañe writes that the Spirit's strategy is love and justice grounded in God's grace as prophetic action.⁵³⁶ From the three theological virtues –faith, hope, and love (*charitas*)– identified by Thomas Aquinas,⁵³⁷ Villafañe has selected one: love; and from Aristotle's four cardinal virtues –prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance–he has chosen justice. Eric Patterson conveys that pentecostals have in the Scripture, especially in Romans 12–14, a principle of acting in charity, i.e., "*charitas* – love of neighbor," that is mandatory to be a good citizen, as well as a rule to judge the state for caring for the poor – to do justice. He also insists that the principle of "Love-your-neighbor-as yourself" is an open invitation for Christian action, and it has to be seen not as a radical revolution, but as a motivation for pentecostals to care for the poor with regard to justice and equality.⁵³⁸ Paul in his letter of Romans makes it clear that love is above all and that it makes no sense to be Christian and do just actions without the virtue of love (Romans 13).

Several research participants mentioned love and justice as part of the fruit of the Espíritu. Love was mentioned by all and justice by six out of ten. Both were shared not

⁵³⁵ Daniel Castelo, *Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition*, 21, 58. See also Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 3.

⁵³⁶ Eldin Villafañe, *El Espíritu Liberador: Hacia una Ética Social Pentecostal Hispanoamericana* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Nueva Creación, 1996), 181–84.

⁵³⁷ J. Philip Wogaman, *Christian Ethics. A Historical Introduction* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 86–87.

⁵³⁸ Eric Patterson, "First Steps toward a Pentecostal Political Theology: Augustine and the Latin American Context," in Medina and Alfaro, *Pentecostals and Charismatics*, 220.

merely as virtues but also as social and prophetic actions through which to transform their communities. Some examples are: Trinidad: “That is why we speak of the fruit of the Spirit emphasizing joy, love, patience, kindness, and justice as fundamental ethical values for our social work, our social ministry.”⁵³⁹ Michael: “It is the way we respond and obey God’s call to love one another... The Bible says that ‘let us seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness,’ which is to help the needy, clothe the naked, give to the thirsty. It is to fulfill the justice of God.”⁵⁴⁰ Omaira: “Now, our work is based on love, faith, compassion and justice. These gifts of the Spirit are necessary to continue with our ministry.”⁵⁴¹ And Elena: “Justice means that we all have rights, that we are equal, that we deserve respect and above all to live happily and with the joy that God gives us.”⁵⁴²

Villafañe’s ethics as pneumatological focus on the virtue of love is based on St. Augustine's assertion in his seventh homily on the First Epistle of John that says: “Love, do all you will.” Míguez proposes an ethics grounded in the same assertion and in Jesus as the new human being and the point of departure of a new life, a good life.⁵⁴³ Is Míguez giving people license to do whatever people want to do? The answer is No. Míguez is stating that Christians must love first and then do what they want. The root of this assertion is the love in Christ that enables the creation to experience God’s

⁵³⁹ Trinidad, Interview, Oct. 26, 2016.

⁵⁴⁰ Michael, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

⁵⁴¹ Omaira, Interview, Nov. 3, 2016.

⁵⁴² Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

⁵⁴³ José Míguez Bonino, *Ama y Haz lo Que Quieras: Hacia una Ética del Hombre Nuevo* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Editorial Escatón, 1972), 40.

transformational power to re-create a new humankind. The Argentinian writer maintains that in the New Testament, Paul adopted several virtues (love, patience, kindness, etc.) as part of the social life and regulations of his time.⁵⁴⁴ Míguez concludes: “This love that responds to justice and peace, this love that lives in the midst of human relationships, this love that is extended to man and all humankind, this love that conflicts with all injustice –this it is the only behavior [virtue] that has a future.”⁵⁴⁵

The law of love is above any law and social order established to maintain the status quo. Latina/os pentecostals in ICE are re-creating a new humankind when they imitate Jesus loving themselves and their poor neighbors, when they love without conditions and do justice on behalf of the poor. They are very creative in how they love and develop social actions for surviving in the midst of their daily struggles. In Dorothee Sölle’s words this can be described as Latina/o pentecostals in ICE having a *creative disobedience*. Sölle asks her readers three key ethical questions: “What does it mean to be a Christian in these times? Is it the tradition of obedience or the tradition of resistance we are choosing? Is there anything that goes beyond mere obedience in the Christian faith?” She responds: “Imagination is needed, and new forms of disobedience are required for the struggles to come,” since “obedience works for death and resistance for life.”⁵⁴⁶ Being an obedient Latina/o to the religious and political status quo does not always guarantee that there will be social justice. Obedience, submission to the law, and its

⁵⁴⁴ Míguez, *Ama y Haz lo Que Quieras*, 69.

⁵⁴⁵ Míguez, *Ama y Haz lo Que Quieras*, 93–94.

⁵⁴⁶ Dorothee Sölle, *Creative Disobedience*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), xvi. The original book was published in Germany in 1968, and the first English edition in 1982 with the title, *Beyond Mere Obedience* (New York: The Pilgrim Press).

emphasis on social order have been harmful for those who claim justice and equality for those who are marginalized. De La Torre is correct when he states, “Whenever ethics is reduced to maintaining law and order, justice is sacrificed.”⁵⁴⁷ Submission and obedience are synonymous with a Christian faith that sacrifices justice. Hence, Sölle critiques obedience as a predominant Christian virtue and proposes *creative disobedience* as a revolutionary alternative to develop the virtue of imagination, that is, phantasy.

Sölle examines this virtue of phantasy and its truth fulfillment in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus was a man who was not on the side of those who held the religious, economic, and political status quo. He questioned the social order established by the authorities of his time and promoted the virtue of phantasy to change the world. “Obedience in the sense of maintaining an established order was not sufficient for Jesus,”⁵⁴⁸ she argues. Wariboko reaffirms Sölle’s idea when he states: “Theological ethics has concerned itself too much with order and less with disorder; [it has been] too attracted to *consensus* and less to *dissensus*.”⁵⁴⁹ Now the virtue of fantasy should not be understood as being the same as dreaming about something otherworldly or escaping reality. Phantasy is a “completely awakened self-consciousness and a completely open acceptance of others.”⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁷ De La Torre, *Social Latina/o Ethics*, 17. De La Torre writes this asseveration against Niebuhr’s pragmatism.

⁵⁴⁸ Sölle, *Creative Disobedience*, 51.

⁵⁴⁹ Wariboko, *Economics in Spirit and Truth*, 159, (italics in the original).

⁵⁵⁰ Sölle, *Creative Disobedience*, 50.

In Ebenezer, this virtue of phantasy of the Espíritu is manifested through the members' social actions of love and justice toward those who are rejected. It is a form of freedom that opens new possibilities for creativity and community development. Like Jesus, Latina/os pentecostals in ICE offer a strong sense of fulfillment to those they meet along the way. Like Jesus, they are not focused on duties, but on the practical virtue of phantasy to change the social and spiritual conditions of those marginalized who come to see them as being without hope. Their phantasy helps the hopeless and marginalized, the sick and the poor. It is an ethics of acompañamiento that motivates Latina/o pentecostals to serve refugees in the Rio Grande Valley. It is an acompañamiento in lo cotidiano and in the midst of la lucha that these pentecostal communities face every day. Latina/o pentecostal walk together as compañeros y compañeras.

Pentecostal Ethics for a Dignification of Life

*“Here we provide everything they lack,
what they need to start living a life with dignity.”* –Gladys

Chapter five discussed dignification from the theological perspective of the imago Dei. The theological view of the image of God and the ethical perspective of the dignification or humanization of life are intimately connected. While Liberation Theology emphasizes the preferential option for the *poor*, the disruptive pentecostal ethics of la virtud de joder examined in this chapter resonates with Sölle's preferential option for *life*, “a preference for life over against death.”⁵⁵¹ Castillo makes a similar viewpoint when he states that the nucleus of the gospel is not the institutionalized

⁵⁵¹ Dorothee Sölle, *Theology for Skeptics: Reflection on God*, Trans. Joyce L. Irwin (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 111.

religious doctrines and normative ethics so predominant in western theology, but the nucleus of a Christian spirituality is life, the defense of life, respect for life, and dignity for every life, not just for those who are privileged.⁵⁵² López outlines a similar idea:

From the world of the poor an integral view of mission which seeks the transformation of all things is weaved, a radical discipleship marked by an unshakeable faith in the God of life is articulated, the non-negotiable value of life as a gift of God is affirmed, peace is built, and the dignity of all human beings as created by God is asserted.⁵⁵³

Latina/o pentecostals in ICE have learned to articulate a new life in the Spirit in the midst of their social struggle. They have opted for life over against death because “God’s option proceeds from life.”⁵⁵⁴ Giving life to those who lack of abundant life motivate them to work for others. This new life is not only spiritual but also material and is lived as a gift of God. The Spirit of life has empowered them to be creative in reconfiguring a new humankind where peace is built, and the refugee is dignified as a human being created in the image of God. It is significant that these poor communities have learned to live with joy in the midst of their everyday struggle. The social actions of Latina/o pentecostals in ICE are a prophetic reclamation for a dignified life. It is an ethics reclaiming life while also giving life. They create and re-create their social, economic, and religious challenges and transform these challenges into opportunities of life and for life. In spite of the fact that most of these Latina/o pentecostals lack a college and even high school education, they know how to maximize their capacities (or virtues) for social transformation and human flourishing.

⁵⁵² Castillo, *Espiritualidad para Insatisfechos*, 33, 39.

⁵⁵³ López, *The Liberating Mission*, 28.

⁵⁵⁴ Sölle, *Theology for Skeptics*, 112.

This reclamation of a dignified life is evident in many of the testimonies collected in the field. For instance, Gladys spoke about this saying: “they need to start living a life with dignity.”⁵⁵⁵ Carmen: “Every person who comes to this place requesting help deserves dignified treatment as a human being.”⁵⁵⁶ Juan: “The Bible says that giving, not only economically, but giving of what the Spirit has given us, is part of the life of the believer.”⁵⁵⁷ As mentioned in chapter four, these believers’ past experiences of living in poverty or in the midst of violence or other difficult circumstances have transformed their lives to be in solidarity with others who are now living in similar conditions as they once were.

Latina/o pentecostals are not people full of superficial emotions and without any interest in the needs of the poorest of society. Instead, they see the spiritual gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit as moral virtues useful for their social ministry practice. For example, solidarity as a moral virtue is fundamental at a personal level for being compassionate and caring toward others, but it is also a social virtue “since it places itself in the sphere of justice” and is “directed to the common good.”⁵⁵⁸ Trinidad shared about this solidarity: “Today, as a person renewed by God’s grace, I reaffirm the values of solidarity and brotherhood in our church.”⁵⁵⁹ In this way, Latina/o pentecostals’ virtue of solidarity is in loving themselves and loving their neighbors. Latina/o pentecostals have

⁵⁵⁵ Gladys, Interview, Nov. 2, 2016.

⁵⁵⁶ Carmen, Interview, Nov. 5, 2016.

⁵⁵⁷ Juan, Interview, Nov. 21, 2016.

⁵⁵⁸ Alvarez, *Integral Mission*, 99.

⁵⁵⁹ Trinidad, Interview, Oct. 26, 2016.

seen the importance of working in community for the common good. They develop and form their character in association with others. This strong sense of community is how they create life amid death. While they are ignored, deprecated, and rejected by the dominant society, they create new ways of joy and life in community.

Villafañe's emphasis on the virtues of justice and love as strategies of the Spirit and Castelo's godly virtue of patience are not only moral virtues but social principles that generate new life and create a new humankind.⁵⁶⁰ In the midst of their crises and social struggles, the epicletic Latina/o community of ICE as "Spirit-dependent and Spirit-enabled"⁵⁶¹ is abiding in and waiting for "God with hope-filled expectancy," since they have discerned and envisioned a different future. In the already-not yet eschatological tension, they patiently love and care for others and work for a new life, for they know that Latina/o community depends on "God's own time and way."⁵⁶² Castelo states that "Patience is not an attribute one usually associates with Pentecostals."⁵⁶³ Based on my own experience as a Latino pentecostal, I reaffirm Castelo's assertion. However, in the case of ICE, nine out of ten participants emphasized patience as a virtue necessary to carry out the social ministry in El Buen Samaritano as manifested in the following testimonios: Ernesto: "Patience is such an important virtue to do this social work and carry out the mission that God has entrusted to us."⁵⁶⁴ Trinidad: "I have already talked

⁵⁶⁰ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 117.

⁵⁶¹ Daniel Castelo, *Pneumatology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London, England: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 132, (italics in the original.)

⁵⁶² Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 117, 127.

⁵⁶³ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 107.

⁵⁶⁴ Ernesto, Interview, Nov. 30, 2016.

about love, but our work requires patience and compassion for the needy. God is a God of justice.”⁵⁶⁵ Elena: “How not to have compassion? How not to have kindness, mercy, and patience?”⁵⁶⁶ Gladys: “Patience, compassion, kindness, and love lead us not only to live our faith in Christ, but also to grow and mature in faith as a testimony of service to the needy.”⁵⁶⁷ It was Michael who expressed the most compelling words about this virtue of patience:

Now this type of work demands a lot of patience, compassion, love, kindness, and caring on my part in dealing with small groups in the sense that even when I do not agree with them, I must respect them. I am not talking about that a situation in which someone spends a lot of time with them, and then that person is waiting to see others change. No, that’s not the kind of patience I am talking about. Patience begins when we change, and when we engage others with a sincere heart.⁵⁶⁸

“Patience begins when we change, and when we engage others with a sincere heart.” Is this not a beautiful affirmation of the desire to live and gives life to others? Michael has observed this virtue of the Spirit as a way to transform and be transformed by the experience of being in solidarity with those who have been marginalized. This is beyond any mystical or magical idea; it is a practice-oriented virtue that empowers Latina/o pentecostal communities. Latina/o pentecostal churches provide a place of

⁵⁶⁵ Trinidad, Interview, Oct. 26, 2016.

⁵⁶⁶ Elena, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

⁵⁶⁷ Gladys, Interview, Nov. 2, 2016.

⁵⁶⁸ Michael, Interview, Nov. 25, 2016.

refuge by serving patiently in communal solidarity, as Melvin Delgado and Denise Humn-Delgado affirm: “All of these churches support Pentecostal programs to rehabilitate drug addicts, prostitutes, and other outcasts of society.”⁵⁶⁹

Latina/os participate in the worship service and in their social ministry to dignify the lives of those who are seen as *indignos* (unworthy). Los indignos worship God and celebrate life, life in the Espíritu, life in community. For them God has chosen those who have been rejected. They sing, dance, and testify as vivid witnesses of the Spirit of life. In his book, *Dignidad: Ethics Through Hispanic Eyes*, García stresses that

The affirmation and redefinition of identity and dignity is at the heart of the Hispanic moral quest. Our capacity for moral agency, our capacity to create community, and our capacity to be authentic to the values of our culture feed our sense of human dignity.⁵⁷⁰

For García, human beings have a unique *dignidad* (dignity) because God has given it to humans. This dignidad can be seen in the playful character of Latina/o pentecostalism. It is an encounter of the divine-human relation that celebrates life in all its aspects. Those who play never lack for imagination and never lose the sense of life. Dancing in the Espíritu occurs because body matters; singing in the Espíritu occurs because the voices of the marginalized matter; testimonios in the Espíritu occur because oral stories matter; and social actions in the Espíritu occur because prophetic practice matters. The spontaneity, passion, and improvisation that characterize Latina/o pentecostal spirituality is a manifestation of the freedom in the Espíritu that opposes totalitarianism, control, order,

⁵⁶⁹ Melvin Delgado and Denise Humn Delgado, “Natural Support Systems: Source of Strength in Hispanic Communities,” *Social Work* (January 1982): 85, quoted in Eldin Villafaña, *Seek the Peace of the City: Reflections on Urban Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 34.

⁵⁷⁰ García, *Dignidad*, 18, 130–131.

and authoritarianism in an established system. They are disruptive moments of pentecostal spirituality that erupt in their world of the affections. This *lúdico* (ludic or playful) aspect of Latina/o pentecostal ethics and theology is a song for a new life where there is yet no life.

The humanization and dignification of those who have been treated as indignos is also connected with sanctification. Castelo is correct when he states that “Pentecostals have been inclined... to think in terms of embodiment and performing holiness.”⁵⁷¹ Latina/o pentecostals in ICE think of a holy life not only as being *out of the world*, but also as being *in the world*. Pentecostals have discerned “what is profane and what a sanctified approach to such profanity could look like.”⁵⁷² With this in mind, the life of those who suffer cannot be quantified but qualified.⁵⁷³ That is, they deserve to live a dignified life because God sanctifies life in all its forms. To be sanctified by the Spirit of life is to be integrated into the community of life. Any effort to destroy and mutilate the life of those who suffer is desecration and profanation of what has been made holy by God in each created creature. This is not a moralistic comment but one about the sanctification of life. Any person who is served in the ICE’s facilities is sanctified by the social actions of those indignos that have already been *hecho dignos y santos* (made worthy and holy) by the power of the Spirit of life. Their social actions not only give life and preserve life; they also sanctify life. Maduro writes stunningly about how these Hispanic pentecostal churches are transforming the lives of the indignos:

⁵⁷¹ Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 92.

⁵⁷² Castelo, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics*, 93.

⁵⁷³ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 181.

From being a 'foreigner', an 'illegal', an 'anybody', a 'suspect' or, worse, a 'nobody', the immigrant person, when crossing the threshold of a Hispanic Pentecostal church, becomes more than simply 'someone', to become an absolutely important person, chosen, called, motivated, blessed and protected by God; a person with a more important mission than that of any movie star, millionaire, doctor, president, executive or professor: the mission of showing to those who do not know, the true path of eternal salvation.⁵⁷⁴

Instead of seeing these Latina/o pentecostals as part of the life of this country and instead of seeing their contributions on behalf of the American society, the anti-immigrant movement and its ethical emphasis in security, nationalism, and social order sacralizes these Hispanic communities. Ávila states that

Sacralization means it is important to narratives of power and domination that religious groups participate in the process of demonizing the other (“othering”), baptizing the rule of law, privileging order over justice. Emphasis on the criminality of illegally crossing borders –rather than biblical or theological notions of the stranger or sojourner—is prioritized because the rule of law is seen as primordial to protecting the state we have come to recognize and identify as blessing and divine gift.⁵⁷⁵

This sacralization contradicts the social practices of Latina/os in ICE. Michael’s words mentioned above are particularly relevant here: “I would say that they are like a guest in this country. If the policy makers think about that for a second: Can we think of them as a guest? How will this change the way we talk about them?” How would treating these Latina/o immigrants ethically as guests change the way they are perceived in this country? How would an ethics of the guest contribute to an ethical immigrant policy? There is so much more to say and write about Latina/o pentecostal ethics.

⁵⁷⁴ Otto Maduro, “Nota sobre Pentecostalismo y Poder,” 30.

⁵⁷⁵ Ávila, “Latino/a Ethics,” 257.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the voices of Latina/o pentecostals have been paired with a variety of authors to understand and develop a pentecostal social ethics that would emerge from the social location of Latina/os. The key research sub-question that guided this chapter was: What are the ethical practices/perspectives that motivate US Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry? After analyzing the data, three major findings emerged: Pentecostal ethics as virtues of the Espíritu, pentecostal ethics of acompañamiento, and pentecostal ethics for a dignification of life. We insist on the Spirit of life and the fruit of this Spirit as a virtue of life itself. Because at the expense of submissive and obedient citizens, ethical virtue has been sacrificed on the anvil of a dominant culture that seeks to subject the poor to established laws that do not dignify life itself or know the justice of God. In this effort to hear the clamor of those who have been living in the margins of society, a new pentecostal social ethics based on virtue ethics has been proposed as la virtud de joder, engaging both responsible action and creative disobedience. Latina/o pentecostals in ICE do not *rationalize* ethics in the way that has been taught in the Western world; they *do* social ethics – the praxis and the theory— en conjunto and in familia as compañeros y compañeras.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Latina/o pentecostals have been labeled as “fanatics,” “emotionalists,” “holy rollers,” and “aleluyas.” They have been described as people who are concerned only with living other-worldly life, preaching a gospel of eternal salvation, but without having any interest in the social needs of the poorest in society. López states that many scholars deem pentecostalism to be like a “pill” which, with its theology and emotional practices, numbs the social consciousness of the poor and helpless.⁵⁷⁶ Are Latina/o pentecostals just dancing and singing in their temples, having ecstasies and emotional experiences all the while ignoring the poor and their social struggles? Certainly, Latina/o pentecostalism has not made a clear theological asseveration for a preferential option for the poor like Liberation Theology, but it has nonetheless been a movement of the poor and has served the marginalized of society since its origins. It has been a Christian movement with the poor, for the poor, and by the poor.

The purpose of this research study has been to examine what religious experiences motivate Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry with the poorest persons in the United States. By social ministry, I refer to addressing the social and material needs of the poorest, not only their spiritual needs. By religious experiences, I mean daily social actions, beliefs, emotions, convictions, virtues, and practices of the Espíritu

⁵⁷⁶ López, *Pentecostalismo y Transformación Social*, 9.

(pneumapraxis) in the lives of US Latina/o pentecostals in an integrative framework. The research project has sought to understand and interpret this phenomenon under the rubric of pentecostal mission, theology, and ethics. To that end, the study has posed one major research question: What are the religious outlooks/perspectives/practices that motivate Latina/o pentecostals to engage in social ministry in the context of the United States?

The title of this doctoral dissertation, "En el Poder del Espíritu:" A Qualitative Research Study on Social Ethics/Theology among US Latina/o Pentecostals," has attempted to encapsulate the meaning of the purpose of this research project. "En el Poder del Espíritu," (In the Power of The Spirit) refers to the pneumatological experiences lived by these Latina/o pentecostal that are powerless in a dominant society, but who are empowered by the power of the Espíritu, to whom they pray, whom they worship, and whom they invoke in lo cotidiano. "A Qualitative Research Study" condenses the methodology used in this project. Studying lived religion as a phenomenological, qualitative research approach has achieved the purpose. The main research methodology consisted of conducting face-to-face interviews with ten participants using open-ended questions and participant observation. Research participants were actively involved in Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and its social ministry called the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries. They contributed to the study openly and avidly. "On Social Ethics/Theology" shows the areas of interest (pentecostal mission, theology and ethics) that emerged from the literature review as an integrative framework to analyze the data collected in the field. "Among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals" describes the focused community where the research was carried out. Latina/o pentecostals face discrimination and live in the margins in the context of the United States.

Throughout this research project I have shared the experiences of US Latina/o pentecostals, in so doing attempting to hear their subaltern voices. Their lived experiences in the margins, their passion for the kingdom of God, their love for their neighbors, and their commitment to serve the poor have been observed in their words and actions as lived testimonios of *compañeros y compañeras* that peregrinate a liminal journey in familia.

As I presented in the “findings” chapters of this research study, the missiological, theological, and ethical perspectives that motivated Latina/o pentecostals to social ministry were varied and emerged from the testimonios collected from the participants. With the intention of not repeating what has already been said, I will condense some concluding notes of these analyzed areas.

Regarding the pentecostal *misión integral*, the community of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer understands itself, then, not as a transplanted church of an American origin, but as an indigenous church with deep Latina/o roots that seeks the well-being of all those to whom they can provide a helping hand regardless of race, religion, or sex. The pentecostal *misión integral* in this church contains social dimensions that are framed within the individual and collective experiences of its members into familiar, social, economic, and religious levels based on their lived experiences in their countries of origin in Latin America. The experiences of pain and suffering, violence and poverty are like an incentive to serve the other and to do Christian mission. At the heart of the mission is the Holy Spirit who inhabits the pentecostal community and who makes the mission of Jesus vital. The Holy Spirit revitalizes the mission in order to welcome the other with love and

to be able to fulfill Jesus' bequeathed commandment to love their neighbors as themselves.

This revitalizing experience of the pentecostal mission is assumed by the community in the new birth of the Spirit. This new birth is the gateway to pneumatic experiences that generate life where there has been death. The theme of this new birth is theologically developed as conversion and salvation in the Spirit. The pentecostal community welcomes these new converts even before experiencing the life of the Spirit as part of the familia de Dios. Friendship and fellowship are developed in *communitas* as an epitome of Christian mission. That is, for those members of Ebenezer, the social mission is not simply the evangelization of the other, but the integration of the human being within the pentecostal community, where the refugee is received with open arms in an atmosphere of celebration and camaraderie. The church celebrates in a festive atmosphere with songs, dance in the Spirit, and testimonios to serve and welcome the refugees and all those whom they can serve with love and passion. The altar becomes a place of mission, a place of welcome, hospitality, and revival. Coritos like “Somos Uno en Cristo Somos Uno” (We are One in Christ We are One), are sang with fervor and joy every Sunday and celebrate el culto as a prophetic act against the dominant forces that mutilate life.

This liminal pentecostal community that creates bonds of *communitas* subverts the Christian Protestant mission and moves it from the dominant center to the periphery, to the margins where only the despised of society live. In these margins, they serve the poor by providing them with shelter, clothing, food, and a community that embraces them as a temporary family. The pentecostal *misión integral* is holistic because it seeks to

reach all areas of the human being in need and not only the spiritual one. It is a social spirituality for the poor that eliminates the theological and missiological dichotomy of spirit and body.

The misión integral of the pentecostal social spirituality is lived prayerfully. Through prayer and reading the Bible, members of ICE show a serious commitment to God's kingdom and to seeing that his justice is established in an unjust world. Pentecostals depend also on prayer, fasting, and meditation to make decisions about their social actions. They practice meditation for action and action in meditation. In Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer, the social concern is not reduced only to praxis in sacrifice of meditation, contemplation and prayer, nor is Christian praxis sacrificed because of contemplative meditation in prayer. For the pentecostal believers, these spiritual disciplines help them to perceive God and the world around them, that is, among their neighbors. They understand God not only pragmatically or rationally but can feel the neighbors and their need for God with the soul of the Spirit. Prayer for the needs of the refugees, the cry for the health of the sick, the prayer for the abandoned widow, or the intercession for the desolate immigrant in addition to the social actions of the church feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and giving water to the thirsty complement each other. The participatory encounter of the one who gives what little she has (the members of the church) and the one who receives (the refugee) is an experience of the Spirit of communion.

And how necessary is a pentecostal misión integral in the fast world that is lived today, where there is no time for anything! In many churches, prayer has been relegated to a group of widows or elders or to a group of mystics who are strangely regarded as

aliens of the Spirit. In many churches, prayers are read in a minute in the worship service, meditated upon for some seconds, and there is no time for more. Contemplation has been locked away in the grandmothers' trunks or in antique cabinets. Not to mention the technological world and social media that overwhelm us with the massive amounts of information without giving us deep knowledge. We live in an accelerated world that makes it hard to make time for leisure, meditation, contemplation, and rapport with the other. We know and want to possess or dominate. It is hard for us to give, to let go; it is hard for us to live that freedom of the Spirit that fills the soul and gives life in our routine life.

While some Christian churches have dedicated themselves to social action (praxis), many of those churches have assiduously relegated meditation and prayer to a secondary level, so much so that it is difficult to distinguish between a nonprofit organization and the ecclesial community. Other churches dedicate so much time to prayer and mystical meditation that they have become urban hermits who walk like zombies in a world that is advancing in giant steps. Without being the perfect church, Ebenezer presents us with an alternative community model that, without being totally aware of it, integrates spirit and body into its social actions generating life, and life in abundance (John 10:10). From what little comes so much, from a small mustard seed comes an immense tree of generosity and Christian love.

Regarding the theology of the Spirit, in referring to the experiences of the Spirit in the marginalized pentecostal community in this research, I did not refer to a scholastic, rational, enlightened, and dogmatic theology, but to a *teología del pueblo* (lay theology), popular wisdom, that emerged from the journey of people who know God and follow

God in their daily struggle. This *teología del pueblo* with their testimonios and pneumatic experiences is a counter-narrative to the dominant, abstract, and even exhausting narrative theology of the Protestant and Catholic cloisters.

As we have seen, then, Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer reaches out to the community through their social actions in two ways: The way of approaching and encountering refugees in the midst of their pressing needs, who come naked and find a place to rest from their exhausting journey. They find a hand that does not deny them the bread they need or a coat to warm them. And the second way is given in the spiritual meeting in which the parishioners welcome the refugees as in need of the kingdom of God, and surround them with prayer, love, and communal affection in the liturgy of the pentecostal festive celebration. And in these two ways we talk about the social experience of God's kingdom of righteousness that welcomes the helpless, suffering, and marginalized and integrates them into the Christian community through the Spirit of life.

Here, those who are embraced into the kingdom of God are dignified and treated as persons created in the image of God, whether man or woman, boy or girl, Muslim or atheist. We speak of a communion of love and friendship with God and with humankind, creating a new way of living together, a new humanity centered not on the dominant law but on the law of love for the neighbor, against which there is no law. The theology of the Spirit is a theology of God's love, unconditional and humanizing. Through divine empathy, God has welcomed the despised in his inexhaustible love. It is a love that liberates and does not alienate, a love that gives without waiting, that repays itself in the single act of love.

This theology of the Spirit that refers us to the cross of Christ and to his condoned sacrifice in solidarity with the poor and scorned make no sense and even is shocking to the dominant Christian theology, centered on the law of the sacred written text and not in the spirit of the text. Because a theology of the pentecostal Spirit centered on love towards the marginalized is incoherent for those who live in the comfort zones of a theology that dominates, controls, and universalizes their beliefs and dogmatisms, ignoring and even despising the experiences of pain and suffering that the masses of Latina/o communities experience. The pentecostal God is not apathetic, antipathetic, or sympathetic, but rather empathetic. The empathos of the pentecostal Spirit God is understood as a love that dignifies and humanizes, not a love that discriminates and marginalizes, or that even benefits from the marginalization of the other. The God of Jesus manifested in the social actions of Ebenezer by the Spirit of love, is a passible God, who feels and even resents human indifference. The refugee who comes asking for help, the single mother with her daughters, the disoriented young man that finds no way out, and even the enemy are filled with the love of God, because the Latina/o pentecostals firmly believe that God has loved them first in Christ, and he has made them in his image and likeness to love others.

This common love that is nothing more than the communion of the Spirit is manifested in the diversity of spiritual gifts that make up the community of the Spirit. Because only through the experience of love founded in Jesus arises the desire to live and contribute with the gifts of the Spirit to the life of common love and human flourishing. Because when someone is loved, that person feels the freedom of the Spirit to cooperate, work, and fight for the collective well-being more than the individual. Love and

liberation are two sides of the same coin, and where they are together in a community, there is reciprocity. In the life of the love of the Spirit, the amalgamation of diversity in unity and unity in diversity arise. A charismatic flourishing of life arises in Ebenezer when the other is loved, the stranger, who is welcomed and integrated in the community of love. Loving the stranger (refugee), they find their true self (Ebenezer community). In estrangement, the love of the Spirit is given, which is not a selfish love, but one that is patient and does not dishonor others.

Regarding pentecostal ethics, I have proposed an ethics centered not on a preferential option for the poor, but rather on a preferential option for life. Because when you live on the margins, what is at stake is life itself in all its expressions. Today we see death in every corner of the big urban cities. Nationalism, security, and citizenship have been exalted as values of the social order to guarantee life, which has turned out to be the opposite. With such pretensions, the life of a privileged few is guaranteed utilitarianly at the expense of the immense poverty of the untiring poor workers, who fight for daily bread. Death surrounds us and scares us, but the worst thing is that it seems that we have become used to that phantom, and that sometimes we do not want to wake up from our lethargy.

Therefore, we insist on the Spirit of life and the fruit of this Spirit as a virtue of life itself. Because at the expense of submissive and obedient citizens, ethical virtue has been sacrificed on the anvil of a dominant culture that seeks to submit the poor to established laws that do not dignify life itself or know the justice of God. The ethic of the Spirit confronts and interrogates a selfish and individualistic world that deteriorates the life of those who live in the margins. Pentecostal ethics reminds us that we are vulnerable

human beings who need the other in order to live. Valuing the marginalized just as they are, dignifying and humanizing them, is a moral obligation of our time. This ethics of care developed by the pentecostal community towards the refugees or orphans we have called an ethic of *acompañamiento*. As *compañeros y compañeras* on the road, we have observed that the pentecostal ethic of Ebenezer does not consist in potentiating the virtues of the Spirit for the benefit only of the individual or a few people within the church or society, but that it leads us to look at the outside, beyond the walls of the church, to focus our gaze on the abandoned. Cooperating in a community is more equitable and just than benefitting only the individual or the privileged.

In virtue of an ethics that dignifies and does not depersonalize the marginalized, the pentecostal ethics proposed in this work has rejected the Westernized ethics centered on human virtues with an abstract and universal approach. Starting from the social location of the marginalized US Latina/o communities, I have proposed an ethics of *acompañamiento* as *la virtud de joder* that reverses the process of order and obedience, and that develops the virtues of the Spirit that foster the opposite: liberation through creative disobedience and responsible action. Through responsible action and creative disobedience, the pentecostal community must develop the necessary virtues to irrupt and disrupt the structures of economic, political and religious power that maintain the status quo. The submission to the established structures (family, church, school, State, etc.), have favored those who continue to hold power, while Hispanic communities suffer by living in the margins. Another ethics is necessary if we want to break with the moralist cycle that keeps some at the top of the pyramid at the expense of those always on the bottom.

The emphasis of this pentecostal ethics is happiness and joy—the abundant life of which the Gospels speak. It is a life that can be enjoyed and enjoyed as the feast of the Spirit. It is an ethics that values life and fights for it, that does not deny the playful character of the Espíritu, the ludic activity of life, as part of the being of God in relation to human beings. In the playful character of God, the members of Ebenezer participate in relationship with the others/otherness. It is like finding life in the weakest. Thus, Christian ethics does not consist of various rigid and inflexible rules and norms, but in an openness to freedom, democracy, creativity, and humanization, because the same Spirit of life is "the dance partner who swirls us in a *bachata*, and who takes us to uncharted areas of faith experience."⁵⁷⁷

There is still a long road to walk on the theme of US Latina/o pentecostal community and its social concern. This research has sought to contribute to the topic of the theology of social concern through qualitative research that brings to the academic table and the community in general the voices of a Hispanic community that has been marginalized, discriminated against, and stereotyped by the force and power of a dominant culture that is not satiated but overflows in presumption and pretension. The poetic words of Antonio Machado, so well-known in Latin America, can guide us into ongoing questions about missiological, theological, and ethical work and as recommendations for future academic research.

Wanderer, your footsteps are the road, and nothing more;
Wanderer, there is no road, the road is made by walking.
By walking one makes the road, and upon glancing behind

⁵⁷⁷ Martell-Otero, et al., *Latina Evangélicas*, 18–19 (italics in the original).

One sees the path that never will be trod again.

Wanderer, there is no road –Only wakes upon the sea.

This research study is just one more road in the ongoing journey to attain well-being for the marginalized. Like any other research, it has its limits and even its faults. There is no perfect and exhaustive research. I left behind some essential codes that in one way or another could help to discover other reasons that motivated the pentecostal community to serve socially. For example, in the ethical area, a self-determining aspect was identified as a way of making decisions to create resistance in the midst of the daily struggle. This code emerged from the data collected and it which would have been interesting to explore it. Likewise, all research roads must be analyzed, examined and even criticized. To pretend that everything that is done or said in the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer is wonderful would be to romanticize their social actions without being critical. Therefore, I will present some critical points for consideration in future research.

First, pentecostal social ministry contributes to some individual and collective social changes at the local level, but not significantly at the structural level. Ebenezer makes a great contribution to the church and society supporting refugees, orphans, and people across the US Mexican border. They provide shelter, food, clothes, and many other things that benefit the community. This church helps not only materially, but spiritually and emotionally those who are involved inside and outside of the church. This social ministry has to continue to be done, but the church with its social ministry, missionary perspectives, and theological views and practices is not really shaking or disturbing the underlying economic, religious, and political structures that cause poverty,

discrimination, segregation, criminalization, and other evil features that marginalize Latina/os in the US society.

Second, pentecostal social actions unconsciously support the systems of power that have been created to keep those in the top of the pyramid. These social programs of many pentecostal churches have some paternalistic traces that help mask the realities of the “games of power” (Focault) that the dominant culture plays to keep marginalized communities invisible.

Third, pentecostals’ uncritical attitude and prophetic voice towards those who hold the power is a detriment to those who live in the margins.

Fourth, the theme of conversion and evangelization continues to be predominant in Latina/o pentecostalism which, although it is actively involved in social transformation in communities, still has elements of colonization that significantly affect the life and identity of the Hispanic community in United States.

Fifth, the theological theme of "sound doctrine" continues to spark internal discussions and theological debates between the Catholic and Pentecostal, Protestant and Pentecostal communities, causing divisions and fractures within the Hispanic community that significantly affect the life and identity of the poor. Although there are ecumenical examples of the spirit of service and fellowship among these Christian communities – Pentecostals, Protestants and Catholics–, from my own perspective as researcher and from my own experience as a pentecostal leader in the past, there is still a struggle to possess the "truth" as a frame of reference for understanding as a community. This struggle for "the truth" has made it possible to observe, emphasize, and radicalize positions that are fundamentalist and with literalistic hermeneutical features that distort

the message of liberation of the gospel and create sectarian divisions within these Christian communities.

Finally, at the ethical level, the pentecostal community believes in the Bible and the Spirit as the first source of moral authority. It is vital that a reading of the Bible endures that does not develop a bibliocentrism that petrifies the political participation of the pentecostal community, but that a popular reading continues, one that unmask the structures of power and creates alternative political paths of resistance and social change.

This study concludes that US Latina/o pentecostals speak less about mission, theology, and ethics as motivators to serve the poor. Rather, Latina/o pentecostals experience the mission of Jesus when they preach the gospel and help the poor; they have no articulated theology but live it every day; and they do not conceptualize their moral values, and yet they embody the fruit of the Espíritu as moral virtues as a testimony of what it means to be an authentic Christian.

This dissertation is an invitation to continue analyzing the way in which Hispanic communities deal with social struggle in this country. There is a longer road to walk, but certainly Latina/o pentecostals make the road by walking with the Espíritu.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Hampton. *Why I am a Disciple of Christ*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1957.
- Alanís, Javier R. "The *imago Dei* as Embodied in *Nepantla*, a Latino Perspective." In *Perspectivas*, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 10 (Fall 2006), 63-80. <http://perspectivasonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2006-Fall.pdf>.
- Albrecht, Daniel E. *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.
- Alexander, Estrela. *Limited Liberty: The Legacy of Four Pentecostal Women Pioneers*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2008.
- Alexander, Estrela. "Introduction." In *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, edited by Estrela Alexander and Amos Yong, 1-15. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009.
- Alfaro, Sammy. *Divino Compañero: Toward a Hispanic Pentecostal Christology*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010.
- Alfonso, Pablo. "Camarioca: cuatro décadas de éxodo y dolor." *El Nuevo Herald* (Cuba), Sept. 26, 2005. <http://www.cubanet.org/htdocs/CNews/y05/sep05/26o6.htm>
- Althouse, Peter. "Women Praying for Women: Christian Healing Ministries and the Embodiment of Charismatic Prayer." In *Women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministry: Informing a Dialogue on Gender, Church, and Ministry*, edited by Margaret English de Alminana and Lois E. Olena. Boston, MA: Brill, 2016.
- Álvarez, Carmelo. "Hispanic Pentecostals in the US." In *Pentecostal Power: Expressions, Impact and Faith of Latin American Pentecostalism*, edited by Calvin L. Smith, 63-84. Boston, MA: Brill, 2011.
- Álvarez, Daniel Orlando. *Latin@ Identity in Pneumatological Perspective: Mestizaje and Hibridez*. Cleveland, OH: CTP Press, 2016.
- Álvarez, Miguel, ed. *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America*. Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2005.
- Álvarez, Miguel. *Integral Mission: A Paradigm for Latin American Pentecostals*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016.
- Álvarez, Miguel. *Beyond Borders: New Contexts of Mission in Latin America*. Cleveland, OH: CPT Press, 2017.
- Alanís, Javier R. "Created in the Image of *Diosito*," In *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, edited by Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre, 11-16. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006.
- Alexander, Paul. *Sings and Wonders: Why Pentecostalism is the World's Fastest Growing Faith*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009.
- Ammerman, Nancy T. "Finding Religion in Everyday Life," *Sociology of Religion* 75, 2 (2014): 189-207, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/sru013>.

- Anderson, Allan. "Towards a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority of the World." In *Azusa Street and Beyond: 100 Years of Commentary on Global Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement*, edited by Grant McClung, 169-90. Alachua, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006.
- Anderson, Allan. "Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions." In *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van Der Laan, 13-29. Los Angeles, CA: California University Press, 2010.
- Anderson, Allan H. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books, 1999.
- Aponte, Edwin. "Theological and Cultural competence *en Conjunto*." In *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, edited by Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre, 1-10. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006.
- Aponte, Edwin. "Protestant Ecclesiology." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, 199-214. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.
- Aquino, Jorge A. "Mestizaje" In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, 283-311. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.
- Aquino, María Pilar. *Our Cry for Life: Feminist Theology from Latin America*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993.
- Archer, Kenneth J. "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 9, no. 3 (July 2007): 301-314.
- Archer, Kennet J. *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011.
- Avalos, Héctor, ed. *Introduction to the U.S. Latina and Latino Religious Experience*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2004.
- Ávila, María Teresa. "Latino/a Ethics." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, 249-67. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.
- Bell, Brenda, Gaventa, John, and Peters John, eds. *We Make the Road by Walking: Myles Horton and Paulo Freire. Conversation on Education and Social Change*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990.
- Bhaba, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1994.
- Bhattacharjee, Anol. *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, (2012), 97, http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3/.

- Barton, Paul. “/Ya Basta/ Latino/a Protestant Activism in the Chicano/a and Farm Workers.” In *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, edited by Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, 127-44. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Barua, Archana. *Phenomenology of Religion*. New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2009.
- Benjamín, Walter. “Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia,” [1929]. In *Walter Benjamín: Selected Writings*, Vol 1 (1927–1934), trans. Edmond Jephcott, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, 47-56. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Bergunder, Michael. “The Cultural Turn.” In *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van Der Laan, 51-73. Los Angeles, CA: California University Press, 2010.
- Bloomberg, Linda Dale and Volpe, Mare. *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Roadmap from Beginning to End*, 3rd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2008.
- Boff, Leonardo. *Church: Charism and Power*. New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1979.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Ética*. Translated by Lluís Duch. Madrid, España: Editorial Trotta, 2000.
- Boring, M. Eugene. *Disciples and the Bible: A History of Disciples Biblical Interpretation in North America*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1997.
- Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 20th ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.
- Braun, Virginia and Clarke, Victoria. “Using thematic analysis in psychology.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, no. 2 (Jan 2016): 77–101, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235356393>.
- Brunner, Frederick D. *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1997.
- Brusco, Elizabeth. *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*. Austin, TX: University of Austin Texas, 1995.
- Bunck, Julie Marie. *Fidel Castro and the Quest for a Revolutionary Culture in Cuba*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- Campos, Bernardo. *De la Reforma Protestante a la Pentecostalidad de la Iglesia*. Quito, Ecuador: CLAI, 1997.
- Campos, Bernardo. *La Madurez del Hermano Mayor. Los Otros Rostros de Pentecostalismo Latino Americano: Apuntes sobre el Sujeto de la Producción Teológica Pentecostal*. Lima, Perú: Instituto Elías para La Extensión del Reino, 2012), 57. https://www.academia.edu/6327842/Bernardo_Campos_LA_MADUREZ_DEL_HERMANO_MENOR
- Cartledge, Mark J. *Testimony in the Spirit: Rescripting Ordinary Pentecostal Theology*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.

- Castelo, Daniel. *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics: The Epicletic Community*. Cleveland, OH: CPT Press, 2012.
- Castelo, Daniel. *Pneumatology: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London, England: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015.
- Castelo, Daniel. “*Diakrisis Always En Conjunto: First Theology Understood from a Latino/a Context.*” In *Constructive Pneumatological Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Christianity*, edited by Kenneth J. Archer and William Oliverio, Jr., 197-210. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016.
- Castelo, Daniel. *Pentecostalism as a Christian Mystical Tradition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017.
- Castillo, José María. *La Ética de Cristo*, 2ed. Bilbao, Vizcaya: Desclée de Brouwer, S.A., 2006.
- Castillo Najari, Cecilia. “*Imágenes y Espiritualidad de las Mujeres en el Pentecostalismo Chileno.*” In *Voces del Pentecostalismo Latinoamericano III: Identidad, Teología, Historia*, edited by Daniel Chiquette and Luis Orellana, 183-98. Hualpén, Chile: RELEP-Trama Impresores S.A., 2009.
- Castro, Fidel and Ramonet, Ignacio. *Fidel Castro: My Life*. New York, NY: Scribner, 2007.
- Castro Cruz, Juanita and Collins, María Antonieta. *Fidel y Raúl, Mis Hermanos: La Historia Secreta. Memorias de Juanita Castro Contadas a María Antonieta Collins*. Donald, FL: Santillana USA Publishing Company, Inc., 2009.
- Cervantes-Ortiz, Leopoldo. “*Hernán Rivera Letelier: Una Literatura Marcada por la Religiosidad Evangélica.*” *Protestante Digital.com*, Nov 12, 2015, http://protestantedigital.com/cultural/37855/Hernan_Rivera_Letelier_Una_literatura_marcada_por_la_religiosidad_evangelica_I
- Chan, Simon. *Pentecostal Theology and Christian Spiritual Tradition*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000.
- Chomsky, Aviva. *A History of the Cuban Revolution* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. “*A Statement of Gratitude to Native Americans and First Peoples.*” Nov 15, 2016. <http://disciples.org/general/thanks-native-americanfirst-peoples/>
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. “*2013 General Assembly. Program and Business Docket.*” Accessed October 15, 2017. <https://disciples.org/our-identity/our-structure/the-general-assembly-and-general-board/past-general-assemblies/2013-orlando/>
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. “*Disciples of Christ Identity. Statement and Principles.*” Accessed January 30, 2018. <http://disciples.org/our-identity/identity-statement-and-principles/>
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. “*The Four Priorities of the Church.*” Accessed October 12, 201. <http://disciples.org/our-identity/the-four-priorities-of-the-church/>

- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. "Mission First!" Accessed October 18, 2017, <http://missionfirst.disciples.org/>
- Clawson, Michael. "Misión Integral and Progressive Evangelicalism: The Latin American Influence on the North American Emerging Church." In *Religion 3* (August 2012): 790–807, DOI: 10.3390/rel3030790.
- Conde-Frazier, Elizabeth. "Being Gospel Together: The Marks of an *Evangélica* Ecclesiology." In *Latina Evangélicas: A Theological Survey from the Margins*, Edited by Loida I. Martell-Otero, Zaida Maldonado, and Elizabeth Conde-Fraizer, 90-107. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013.
- Cone, James. *A Black Theology of Liberation*. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, 1970.
- Confraternidad Nacional Hispana y Bilingüe de la Iglesia Cristiana (Discípulos de Cristo) en los Estados Unidos y Canada. "Constitución y Reglamento Internos Obra Hispana," 16-17. Accessed March 21, 2018, https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/58184f_ce9663918b5440e0b460b94c9fa5d3b1.pdf
- Cortina, Adela. "El quehacer ético: Una guía para la educación moral." *Diálogo Filosófico* 1 (1985): 35–44.
- Costas, Orlando E. *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005.
- Cummis, D. Duane. *A Handbook for Today's Disciples in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003.
- Cummis, D. Duane. *The Disciples: A Struggle for Reformation*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2009.
- Davoes, Wilma Wells. "La naturaleza de la conversión pentecostal en la Argentina: Implicaciones misiológicas" In *Voces del Pentecostalismo Latinoamericano: Identidad, Teología, Historia*, edited by Daniel Chiquette and Luis Orellana, 157–79. Hualpén, Chile: RELEP, 2009.
- Deiros, Pablo. *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, 1992.
- De La Torre, Miguel. "Ajiaco Christianity: Toward an Exilic Cuban Ethic of Reconciliation." Ph.D. diss., Temple University, Philadelphia, 1999. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- De La Torre, Miguel. *Reading the Bible from the Margins*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002.
- De La Torre, Miguel. "Scripture." In *Handbook of U.S. Theologies of Liberation*, ed. Miguel A. De La Torre, 85-104. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004.
- De La Torre, Miguel. "Pray for Elián: Religion and Politics in Miami." In *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, edited by Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, 249-62. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- De La Torre, Miguel, "Rethinking Mulatez," in *Rethinking Latino (a) Religion and Identity*, edited by Miguel De La Torre and Gastón Espinosa, 158-175. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2006.

- De La Torre, Miguel. *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010.
- De La Torre, Miguel. *Social Latina/o Ethics*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010.
- De La Torre, Miguel. "Ethics." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, 337-346. Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012.
- De La Torre, Miguel. *The Politics of Jesús: A Hispanic Political Theology*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.
- De La Torre, Miguel. *The U.S. Immigration Crisis: Toward an Ethics of Place*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016.
- D'Epinay, Cristian Lalive. *El Refugio de las Masas: Estudio Sociológico del Protestantismo Chileno*. Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1968.
- De Temple, Jill. "Chains of Liberation: Poverty and Social Action in the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God." In *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, edited by Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, 219-31. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Díaz-Stevens, Ana María. Stephen-Arroyo, Anthony M. *Recognizing the Latino Resurgence in U.S. Religion*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998.
- Díaz-Stevens, Ana María. "Identity and Social Location." In *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, edited by Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre, 130-35. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006.
- Dudley, Carl S. *Basic Steps Toward Community Ministry: Guidelines and Models in Action*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 1991.
- Duffield, Guy P. and Van Cleave, Nathaniel M. *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology*. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma Media, 2008.
- Durkheim, Émile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Trans. Karen E. Fields (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1995).
- Dussel, Enrique. *History and Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976.
- Dussel, Enrique. *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981.
- Dussel, Enrique. *Ethics and Community*. Translated by Robert Barr. New York: Orbis Books, 1988.
<http://biblioteca.clacso.or.ar/clacso/otros/20120216095358/ethics.pdf>.
- Dussel, Enrique. *The Invention of America: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, Translated by Michael D. Barber. New York, NY: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995.
- Dussel, Enrique. *Ética de Liberación en la Edad de la Globalización y la Liberación*, 2ed. Valladolid, España: Trotta, 1998.
- Elizondo, Virgilio. *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983.

- Elizondo, Virgilio and Carrasco, David. *The Future is Mestizo: Life where Cultures Meet*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2000.
- Erricker, Clive. "Phenomenological Approaches." In *Approaches to the Study of Religion*, edited by Peter Connolly, 73–101. New York, NY: Continuum, 2001.
- Espinosa, Gastón, Elizondo, Virgilio, Miranda, Jesse. *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Espinosa, Gastón, "Latino Clergy and Churches in Faith-Based Political and Social Action in the United States." In *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, edited by Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, 279-306. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Espinosa, Gastón. "History and Theory in the Study of Mexican American Religions." In *Mexican Americans Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture*, edited by Gastón Espinosa and Mario T. García, 17-56. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Espinosa, Gastón. *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Espinosa, Gastón. *Latino Pentecostals in America: Faith and Politics in Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015.
- Espinosa, Gastón. "'Third Class Soldiers': A History of Hispanic Pentecostal Clergywomen in the Assemblies of God." In *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, edited by Estrela Alexander and Amos Yong, 95-111. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2009
- Estrada Carrasquillo, Wilmer. "¿Y los Pentecostales? ¡Presentes!: Public Theological Contributions from Latin America." *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 24, 2 (2015): 231–240. <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455251-02402009>.
- Esqueda, Octavio J. "Theological Higher Education in Cuba: A Case Study of the Eastern Cuba Baptist Theological Seminary." PhD diss., Denton, TX: University of North Texas, 2003. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- "Feliberto Pereira." Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries. Accessed Nov 25, 2017. http://www.swgsm.org/Feliberto_Pereira.html.
- Fernández-Armesto, Felipe. *Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2014.
- Fettke, Steven M. *God's Empowered People: A Pentecostal Theology of the Laity*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2011.
- Figueroa Aponte, Miriam E. "Hacia un Modelo de una Teología Pastoral de la Mujer Pentecostal Puertorriqueña: Un Análisis Documental y Etnográfico del Conflicto del Ministerio Pastoral de la Mujer en la Iglesia de Dios Mission Board en Puerto Rico." PhD diss., Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico (Recinto Metropolitano). Programa Doctoral de la Escuela de Teología, Puerto Rico), 2013.

- Flora, Cornelia B. "Pentecostal Women in Colombia: Religious Change and the Status of Working-Class Women." *Journal of American Studies and World Affairs* 17, no. 4 (Nov 1975): 411–425.
- Frigerio, Alejandro "¿Por qué no podemos ver la diversidad religiosa?: Cuestionando el paradigma católico-céntrico en el estudio de la religión en Latinoamérica." *Cultura y Representaciones Sociales* 12, 24 (March 2018): 51-95, <https://doi.org/10.28965/2018-024-03>.
- Gálvez Alvarado, Rigoberto M. "A Guatemalan Perspective on Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century." In *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America*, edited by Miguel Álvarez, 144-60. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015.
- García, Ismael. *Dignidad: Ethics through Hispanic Eyes*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997.
- García, Sixto J. "United States Hispanic and Mainstream Trinitarian Theologies." In *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the United States*, edited by Alan Figueroa Deck, 88-103. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992.
- Garrison, Winfred E. *Christian Unity and Disciples of Christ*. St. Louis, MO: The Bethany Press, 1955.
- Garrison, Winfred E. and DeGroot, Alfred T., *The Disciples of Christ: A History*. St. Louis, MO: The Bethany Press, 1958.
- George, Sherron. "Constructing Latin American Missiology: How the Holistic Perspective Overcame Traditional Stereotypes." In *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America*, edited by Miguel Álvarez, 24-35. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015.
- Gibson, Ian. "Pentecostal Peacefulness: Virtue Ethics and the Reception of Theology in Nepal." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 23 (Dec 2017): 765-782.
- Gittings, Anthony J. *Bread for the Journey. The Mission of Transformation and the Transformation of Mission*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1993.
- Gladwin, Ryan R. "Toward a Transformative Latin American Pentecostal-Charismatic Social Ethics: An Argentine Perspective." In *Pentecostals and Charismatics in Latin America and Latino Communities*, edited by Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro, 49-63. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015.
- Gobo, Giampetro. *Doing Ethnography*. Translated by Adrian Belton. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008.
- Goodwin Heltzel, Peter, ed. *Chalice Introduction to Disciples Theology*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2008.
- Goizueta, Roberto S. *Caminemos con Jesús: Toward a Hispanic/Latino Theology of Accompaniment*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1995.
- Gómez Morales, Néstor A. "Pentecostales Latinos en los Estados Unidos: Ritualismo en un Estado Liminal Permanant." *Kronos Teológico*, 3 (June 2012): 11-34.
- Gómez Morales, Néstor A. "Can the Subaltern Speak? The Active Silent Voice of the Pentecostal Women." In *Revista Camino: Pensamiento Bíblico & Cultural* 6 (2018): 61–66.

- González, Juan. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. New York, NY: Penguin Books Ltd., 2001.
- González, Justo L. *Mañana: Christian Theology from a Hispanic Perspective*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990.
- González, Justo L. "Hispanic Worship: An Introduction." In *!Alabadle!: Hispanic Christian Worship*, edited by Justo L. González, 9-27. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.
- González, Michelle A. *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007.
- González, Michelle A. *A Critical Introduction to Religion in the Americas: Bridging the Liberation Theology and the Religious Studies Divide*. New York, NY: New York University Press, 2014.
- Goore, Henri. "The Pentecostalization of Religion and Society in Latin America," *Exchange*, 34, 4 (2010): 355–376, https://brill.com/abstract/journals/exch/39/4/article-p355_4.xml.
- Grams, Rollin G. "Theology: Its History, Theology and Hermeneutics," *Transformation*, 24, no. 3/4 (July/October 2007): 193-212. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43052710>.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1973.
- Heaney, Sharon E. *Contextual Theology for Latin America: Liberation Themes in Evangelical Perspective*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publisher, 2008.
- Heart, David B. "No Shadow of Turning: On Divine Impassibility." *Pro Ecclesia*, 11 (2002): 184-206.
- Henderson-Espinoza, Robyn. "Queer Theory and Latino/a Theologizing," In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, 329-43. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.
- Hessel-Robinson, Timothy. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper: Modern Reception and Contemporary Possibilities." In *Calvin's Theology and Its Reception: Disputes, Developments, and New Possibilities*, edited by J. Todd Billings and I. John Hesselink, 166-192. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.
- History of the Restoration Movement. "The Declaration and Address (September 1809)." October 2012, http://www.therestorationmovement.com/_states/wv/declaration.htm
- Hollenweger, Walter. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.
- Holloway, Gary and Foster, Douglas A. *Renewing the World: A Concise Global History of the Stone-Campbell Movement*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University press, 2015.
- Icaza, Ross María. "Prayer, Worship, and Liturgy." In *Frontiers of Hispanic Theology in the United States*, edited by Alan Figueroa Deck, 134-53. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992.
- Imenda, Sitwala. "Is There a Conceptual Difference between Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks?" *Journal of Social Sciences* 38, 2 (2014): 185-195, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2014.11893249>.
- Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. *En la Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004.

- Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. "la lucha." In *Hispanic American Religious Culture*, Vol I, edited by Miguel A. De La Torre, 158–60. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2009.
- Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. "Un Poquito de Justicia. A Little Bit of Justice: A Mujerista Account of Justice," In *Hispanic/Latino Theology: Challenge and Promise*, edited by Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Fernando F. Segovia, 325-39. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
- Jäger, Steve Félix. *Pentecostal Aesthetics: Theological Reflections in a Pentecostal Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2015.
- Johnson, Todd M, Zurlo, Gina A., Hickman, Albert W., and Crossing, Peter F. "Christianity 2015: Religious Diversity and Personal Contact." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 39, no. 1 (Jan. 2015): 28-29.
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/239693931503900108>
- Kao, Chen-Yang. "The Cultural Revolution and the Emergence of Pentecostal-style Protestantism in China." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 24, no.2 (2009): 171–188, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537900902816657>.
- Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. "Are Pentecostals Oblivious to Social Justice? Theological and Ecumenical Perspectives." *Missiology: An International Review* 29, no. 4 (October 2001): 417-431.
- Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, Intercultural, and Contextual Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. "The Pentecostal Understanding of Mission." In *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, edited by Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, 26-44. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014.
- Keating, James F. and White, Thomas Joseph, eds. *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009.
- Kirk, Hiram Van. *A History of the Theology of the Disciples of Christ*. St. Louis, MO: Christian Publishing Company, 1907.
- Land, Steven J. *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*. New York, NY: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003.
- Lane, George A., S, J. *Christian Spirituality: A Historical Sketch*. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2004.
- Lehman, Paul. *Ethics in a Christian Context*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- León, Luis. *La Llorona's Children: Religion, Life, and Death in the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2004.
- Leonard, Karen I. Stepick, Alex, Vásquez, Manuel A., and Holdaway, Jennifer, ed. *Immigrants' Faiths: Transforming Religious Life in America*. New York, NY: Altamira Press, 2005.
- Levison, John R. *Filled with the Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009.
- Lewis, Paul W. "A Pneumatological Approach to Virtue Ethics," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 1 (1998): 42-61.

- Lindhart, Martin. "Poder, Género y Cambio Cultural en el Pentecostalismo Chileno." *Revista Cultura y Religión* 3, no.2 (2009): 94-111.
<https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=3088695>.
- Lindhart, Martin, ed. *New Ways of Being Pentecostal in Latin America*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016.
- López, Darío. *Pentecostalismo y Transformación Social: Más allá de los Estereotipos, las Críticas se Enfrentan con los Hechos*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Kairós, 2000.
- López, Darío. *La Fiesta del Espíritu: Espiritualidad y Celebración Pentecostal*. Lima, Perú: Ediciones Puma, 2006.
- López, Darío. *Pentecostalismo y Misión Integral: Teología del Espíritu, Teología de la Vida*. Lima, Perú: Ediciones Puma, 2008.
- López, Darío. *La Propuesta Política del Reino de Dios: Estudios Bíblicos sobre Iglesia, Sociedad y Estado*. Lima, Perú: Ediciones Puma, 2009.
- López, Darío. "The God of Life and the Spirit of Life: The Social and Political Dimension of Life in the Spirit," *Studies in World Christianity*, 17.1 (2011): 1-1.
<https://doi.org/10.3366/swc.2011.0002>.
- López, Darío. *The Liberating Mission of Jesus: The Message of the Gospel of Luke*. Translated by Stephanie de Israel and Samuel Escobar. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012.
- Lorentzen Lois Ann, and Mira, Rosalina. "El Milagro Está en Casa: Gender and Private/Public Empowerment in a Migrant Pentecostal Church," *Latin American Perspectives*, 32, 140 (Jan. 2005), 57-71.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X04271852>
- Loreto Mariz, Cecilia and Campos, Maria Das Dores. "Pentecostalism and Women in Brazil. In *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*, edited by Edward L. Clearly and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, 41–52. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.
- Loveland, Matthew T. "Civic Congregations: Congregational Dynamics and Individual Civic Involvement." PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 2005. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Lugo, Gamaliel. "Ética Social Pentecostal: Santidad Comprometida." In *Pentecostalismo y Liberación: Una Experiencia Latinoamericana*, edited by Carmelo Álvarez, 101-122. San José, Costa Rica: DEI, 1992.
- Machia, Frank. *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.
- Madrazo, Tito. "Profeta Ana Maldonado: Pushing the Boundaries of Paradoxical Domesticity." *Perspectivas*, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 14 (Spring 2017): 140-53 (italics in the original). http://perspectivasonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/P-E-R-S-P-E-C-T-I-V-A-S_Spring_2017.pdf.
- Maduro, Otto. "Nota sobre Pentecostalismo y Poder." *Horizontes Antropológicos* 13, no. 27 (2007): 30, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-71832007000100002>.

- Mansanilla, Miguel Ángel. "Pentecostalismo y Ciencias Sociales. Reflexión en torno a las Investigaciones del Pentecostalismo Chileno," *Revista Cultura y Religión* 3, no. 2 (2009): 21-41.
- Martell-Otero, Loida. "From *Satas* to *Santas*: *Sobrajás* No More: Salvation in the Spaces of the Everyday." In *Latina Evangélicas: A Theological Survey from the Margins*, edited by Loida I. Martell-Otero, Zaida Maldonado Pérez, and Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, 33-51. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013.
- Martell-Otero, Loida. "Neither 'Left Behind' nor Deciphering Secret Codes: An Evangelical Understanding of Eschatology." In *Latina Evangélicas: A Theological Survey from the Margins*, edited by Loida I. Martell-Otero, Zaida Maldonado Pérez, and Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, 108-26. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013.
- Martínez, Juan Francisco. *Protestantes: An Introduction to Latino Protestantism in the United States*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011.
- Martínez, Juan Francisco. "Remittances and Mission: Transnational Latino Pentecostal Ministry in Los Angeles." In *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*, edited by Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory, 204-24. Oxford, UK: Oxford Scholarship online, 2013.
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199920570.001.0001.
- Martínez, Juan Francisco. *The Story of Latino Protestants in the United States*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018.
- Mason, Jennifer. *Qualitative Researching*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002, http://www.sxf.uevora.pt/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Mason_2002.pdf
- Maxwell, Joseph A. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013.
- May Jr., Roy H. *Ethics without Principles: Another Possible Ethics – Perspectives from Latin America*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015.
- Mazariegos, Byron. "La teología medular del pentecostalismo latinoamericano." In *Voces del Pentecostalismo Latinoamericano: Identidad, Teología, Historia*, edited by Daniel Chiquette and Luis Orellana, 121-41. Hualpén, Chile: RELEP, 2009.
- McGuire, Meredith B. *Religion: The Social Context*, 5th ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2002.
- McGuire, Meredith B. *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Medina, Néstor. *Mestizaje: Remapping Race, Culture, and Faith in Latina/o Catholicism*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009.
- Medina, Néstor and Alfaro, Sammy. "Renewal Across the Americas: Thinking Globally from a Local Context." In *Pentecostals and Charismatics in Latin America and Latino Communities*, edited by Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro, 227-35. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015.

- Medina, Néstor. "Theological Musings toward a Latina/o Pneumatology." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, 173-90. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.
- Menzies, Robert P. *Pentecostés: Esta Historia es Nuestra Historia*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2013.
- Migliore, Daniel L. *Faith Seeking Understanding: Una Introduction to Christian Theology*, 2ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Ama y Haz lo Que Quieras: Hacia una Ética del Hombre Nuevo*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Editorial Escatón, 1972.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Espacio para Ser Hombres: Una Interpretación del Mensaje de la Biblia para Nuestro Mundo*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Sierra Nueva, 1975.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1982.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Toward a Christian Political Ethics*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Rostros del Protestantismo Latinoamericano* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Nueva Creación, 1995).
- Míguez Bonino, José. "Introduction." In *Not by Might nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America*, Douglas Petersen. Irvine, CA: Regnum Books International, 1996.
- Míguez Bonino, José. *Faces of Latin American Protestantism: 1993 Carnahan Lectures*. Translated by Eugene L. Stockwell. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997.
- Miller, Dana L. "One Strategy for Assessing the Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research: Operationalizing the External Audit." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Chicago (March 24–28, 1997), 2, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED411268.pdf>
- Miller, Donald E., and Yamamori, Tetsunao. *Global Pentecostalism. The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2007.
- Mills, Watson E. ed. *Speaking in Tongues: A Guide to Research on Glossolalia*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986.
- Mittelstadt, Martin William. *Reading Luke-Acts in the Pentecostal Tradition*. Cleveland, OH: CBT Press, 2010.
- Miskov, Jennifer A. "Giving Room to the Anointing: Carrie Judd Montgomery's Influence on Women in Ministry." In *Women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministry: Informing a Dialogue on Gender, Church, and Ministry*, edited by Margaret English de Alminana and Lois E. Olena, 143–54. Boston, MA: Brill, 2016.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. London, UK: SCM Press, 1992.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Crucified God*, 40th ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005.

- Morales Gamboa, Abelardo and Castro Valverde, Carlos. *Migración, Empleo y Pobreza*. San José, Costa Rica: FLACSO, 2006.
<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/icap/unpan028358.pdf>.
- Moustakas, Clark. *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994.
- Murphy, James. "Beyond 'Religion' and 'Spirituality': Extending a 'Meaning Systems' Approach to Explore Lived Religion." *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 39, 1 (May 2017): 1-26.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Adoration: The Deconstruction of Christianity II*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2012.
- Nanko-Fernández, Carmen M. "lo cotidiano." In *Hispanic American Religious Culture*, Vol I, edited by. Miguel A. De La Torre, 158–60. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2009.
- Nel, Marius. "Attempting to Define a Pentecostal Hermeneutics." *Scriptura* 114, no. 1 (2015): 1-21. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/scriptur/v114/06.pdf>
- Nikander, Pirio. "Working with Transcripts and Translated Data." *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 5 (3) (2008): 22-231, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780880802314346>
- Nowell, Lorelli S. Morris, Jill M., White, Deborah E. and Moules, Nancy J. "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16 (Aug 2018): 1–13, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327078001>.
- Oboler, Suzanne. *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives: Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- Obras completas de San Agustín. Escritos Apologéticos, Tomo V. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos de la Editorial Católica, S. A., 1985.
- Orsi, Robert. "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion." In *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*, edited by David D. Hall, 3-21. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Orsi, Robert. *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious World's People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).
- Ortiz, Fernando A. and Davis, Kenneth G. "Machismo." In *Hispanic American Religious Cultures*, Vol. I, edited by Miguel A. De La Torre, 339-40. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2009.
- Ortiz, Israel. "Beyond Numerical Growth: The Challenge of Transformation in Guatemala." In *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America*, edited by Míguel Álvarez, 161-177. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015.
- Oss, Douglas A. "Definition and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts." *Enrichment Journal* (Jul. 2013). http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm?targetBay=1b574def-b227-4617-bfc7-a02cdb926902&ModID=2&Process=DisplayArticle&RSS_RSSContentID=26126&RSS_OriginatingChannelID=1170&RSS_OriginatingRSSFeedID=4486&RSS_Source=

- Padgett, Deborah K. *Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Public Health*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012.
- Padilla, C. René. *Misión Integral: Ensayos sobre el Reino y la iglesia*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Nueva Creación, 1986.
- Padilla, C. René. "Integral Mission and Its Historical Development." In *Justice, Mercy and Humility: Integral Mission and the Poor*, edited by Tim Chester, 42–58. Carlisle, PA: Paternoster, 2003.
- Padilla, Elaine. "Embodied Love: Explorations on the *imago Dei* in the Caribbean Latina Theology of Ada María Isasi-Díaz," *Perspectivas*, Hispanic Theological Initiative, 13 (Spring 2016): 65-88. http://perspectivas.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/P-E-R-S-P-E-C-T-I-V-A-S_Spring_2016.pdf.
- Park, Robert E. "The Marginal Man." *American Journey of Sociology* 33, no. 6 (May 1928): 881–893. https://www-jstor-org.du.idm.oclc.org/stable/2765982?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.
- Patterson, Eric. "First Steps toward a Pentecostal Political Theology: Augustine and the Latin American Context," In *Pentecostals and Charismatics in Latin America and Latino Communities*, edited by Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro, 211-26. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015.
- Pedraja, Luis G. *Teología: An Introduction to Hispanic Theology*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003.
- Penney, John Michael. *The Missionary Emphasis of Lukan Pneumatology*. New York, NY: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- Pereira, Feliberto and Kelley, Chris. *I was a Stranger: Hope for a Hidden World*. Dallas, TX: Brown Books Publishing Group, 2008.
- Pérez, Verónica. "Mujeres y Pentecostalismo: Repensando el espacio sagrado, la iglesia" *Revista Cultura y Religión*, 3, no. 1 (2009): 129–137. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2952621>.
- Petersen, Douglas. *Not by Might nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America*. Irvine, CA: Regnum Books International, 1996.
- Peterson, Ryan S. *The Imago Dei as Human Activity: A Theological Interpretation*. Philadelphia, PA: Eisenbrauns Publishing, 2016.
- Pew Research Center. Religion & Public Life. "The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States," May 7, 2014, <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states/>
- Philips, Elizabeth. "Liberation theology: A Virtue's Ethicist Response." In *Christian Faith and Social Justice: Five Views*, edited by Vic McCracken, 105-08. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc., 2014.
- Pinnock, Clark H. *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

- Pomeville, Paul. "Pentecostalism and Missions: Distortion or Correction? The Pentecostal Contribution to Contemporary Mission Theology." PhD diss., The School of World Mission and Institute of Church Growth, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena CA, 1982.
- Qualls, Joy E. A. *God Forgive us for Being Women: Rhetoric, Theology and the Pentecostal Tradition*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2018.
- Rabaté, Jean-Michel. *The Ethics of the Lie*, Trans. Suzanne Verderber. New York, NY: Other Press, 2007.
- Ramírez, Daniel. *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
- Ramos, Marco Antonio. *La Cuba de Castro y Después... Entre la Historia y la Biografía*. Nashville, TN: Grupo Nelson, 2007.
- Recinos, Harold. "Mission: A Latino Pastoral Theology." In *Mestizo Christianity: Theology from the Latino Perspective*, edited by Arturo J. Bañuelas, 132-145. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1995.
- Recinos, Harold J. and Magallanes, Hugo, ed. *Jesus in the Hispanic Community: Images of Christ from Theology to Popular Religion*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.
- Richie, Tony. "Transposition and Tongues: Pentecostalizing an Important Insight of C. S. Lewis." *Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, 13, no. 1 (2004): 117–137.
- Richie, Tony. "Translating Pentecostal Testimony into Interreligious Dialogue," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 20 (2011): 155-83. 164, 165–72. <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455251-02402009>.
- Ríos, Elizabeth D. "'The Ladies Are Warriors': Latina Pentecostalism and Faith-Based Activism in New York City." In *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States*, edited by Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, 197-214. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Rivera Pagán, Luis. *A Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992.
- Rivera Pagán, Luis N. *Entre el Oro y la Fe: El Dilema de América*. San Juan, PR: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1995.
- Robinson, Dominic. *Understanding the "Imago Dei": The Thought of Barth, von Balthasar and Moltmann*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.
- Rodríguez Castrillo, Alfonso Mártir, *Una Breve Historia de Cuba*. Bloomington, IN: Trafford Publishing, 2013.
- Rodríguez, José David, and Martell-Otero, Loida I., ed. *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.
- Rodríguez-Olmedo, Joanne. "The U.S. Hispanic/Latino Landscape." In *Handbook of Latina/o Theologies*, edited by Edwin David Aponte and Miguel A. De La Torre, 123-29. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006.

- Rosario-Rodríguez, Rubén. "Hispanic Liberative Ethics." in *Ethics: A Liberative Approach*, edited by Miguel A. De La Torre, 91-108. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.
- Rosario-Rodríguez, Rubén. "Sources and *en conjunto* methodologies of Latino/a Theologizing." In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Latino/a Theology*, edited by Orlando O. Espín, 53-70. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015.
- Rosenior, Derrick R. "The Rhetoric of Pentecostal Racial Reconciliation: Looking Back to Move Forward." In *A Liberating Spirit: Pentecostals and Social Action in North America*, edited by Michael Wilkison and Steven M. Studebaker, 53-84. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010.
- Saldaña, Johnny. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2009.
- Sandoval, Chela. *The Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- Sánchez Walsh, Arlene. "'Normal Church Can't Take Us': Re-Creating a Pentecostal Identity among the Men and Women of Victory Outreach." *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 9, no.2 (Nov 2001): 48–78.
- Sánchez-Walsh, Arlene M. *Latino Pentecostal Identity: Evangelical Faith, Self and Society*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Sheehan, Stephanie. "A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Transcendental Phenomenology through the Lived Experiences of Biblical Leaders." *Emerging Leadership Journeys*, 7 (2014): 10-20, <https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/elj/vol7iss1/2ELJ-Sheehan.pdf>
- Schmidt, Bettina E., ed., *The Study of Religious Experience: Approaches and Methodologies*. Bristol, UK: Equinox, 2016.
- Scholtz, Christopher P. "The Performativity of Perception and its Theological Significance: The Example of Pastoral Care." In *Lived Religion: Conceptual, Empirical and Practical-Theological Approaches. Essays in Honor of Hans-Günter Heimbrock*, edited by Heinz Streib, Astrid Dinter and Kerstin Söderblomp, 145-156. Boston, MA: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2008.
- Segundo, Juan Luis. *The Liberation of Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976.
- Smith, Brian H. *Religious Politics in Latin America: Pentecostal vs. Catholic*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Söle, Dorothee. *Theology for Skeptics: Reflection on God*. Translated by Joyce L. Irwin. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Söle, Dorothee. *Creative Desobedience*, 2nd ed. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007.
- Solivan, Samuel. "Sources of a Hispanic/Latino American Theology." In *Hispanic/Latino Theology: Challenge and Promise*, edited by Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Fernando F. Segovia, 134-148. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
- Solivan, Samuel. *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

- Solivan, Samuel. "The Holy Spirit –Personalization and the Affirmation of Diversity. A Pentecostal Hispanic Perspective," in *Teología en Conjunto: A Collaborative Hispanic Protestant Perspective*, ed. José David Rodríguez and Loida I. Martell-Otero, 50-65. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.
- Sprinkle, Stephen V. *Disciples and Theology: Understanding the Faith of a People in Covenant*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999.
- Stephenson, Christopher A. *Types of Pentecostal Theology: Method, System, Spirit*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Stiltner, Brian. *Toward Thriving Communities: Virtue Ethics as Social Ethics*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2016.
- Sunstein, Bonnie Stone, and Chiseri-Strater, Elizabeth. *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing*, 3ed. New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.
- Támez, Elsa and Alves, Ruben A. *Against Machismo*. Yorktown, VA: Meyer-Stone Books, 1987.
- Támez, Elsa, ed. *Through Her Eyes: Women's Theology from Latin America*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006.
- Tennekes, Hans. *El Movimiento Pentecostal en la Sociedad Chilena*. Santiago de Chile: Sub-facultad de Antropología Cultural y Sociología No Occidental. Universidad Libre de Ámsterdam. CIREN, 1984.
- Tuch Tasej, Erick Fernando. *Misión y Transformación Social: Una Perspectiva Pentecostal*. México: Kerygma, 2017.
- Tweed, Thomas A. *Crosssing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Thomas A. Tweed, "After the Quotidian Turn: Interpretive Categories and Scholarly Trajectories in the Study of Religion since 1960s." *The Journal of Religion* 95, 3 (July 2015): 361-85.
- Thomas, John Christopher. "Pentecostal Theology in the Twenty-First Century." *Pneuma* 20, no. 1 (1998): 3–19.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, Trans. Richard Howard. New York, NY: Harper Perennial, 1994.
- Tollefsen, Christopher O. *Lying and Christian Ethics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Turner, Max. *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: In the New Testament Church and Today*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988.
- Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969.
- United Nations (LC/PUB.2018/1-P. "Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Social Panorama of Latin America, 2017." Santiago, 2018, 3-188.
https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/42717/6/S1800001_en.pdf.
- Vainio, Olli P. *Disagree Virtuously: Religious Conflict in Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017.

- Valentin, Benjamin. "Mestizaje." In *Hispanic American Religious Culture*, Vol I, edited by Miguel A. De La Torre, 351–56. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC., 2009.
- Vásquez, Manuel. *More than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- Villafañe, Eldin. *The Liberating Spirit: Toward a Hispanic America Pentecostal Social Ethic*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993.
- Villafañe, Eldin. *El Espíritu Liberador: Hacia una Ética Social Pentecostal Hispanoamericana*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Nueva Creación, 1996.
- Villafañe, Eldin. *Beyond Cheap Grace: A Call to Radical Discipleship, Incarnation and Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 2006.
- Villafañe, Eldin. *Introducción al Pentecostalismo: Manda Fuego Señor*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2012.
- Vinay, Samuel, and Sugden, Chris, eds. *The Church in Response to Human Need*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987.
- Viruru, Radhira, and Cannella, Gaile S. "A Postcolonial Critique of the Ethnographic Interview: Research Analyzes Research." In *Qualitative Inquiry and the Conservative Challenge: Confronting Methodological Fundamentalism*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Michael D. Giardina, 175-89. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006. EBSCOhost Academic eBook Collection.
- Vondey, Wolfgang. *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010.
- Vondey, Wolfgang. *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017.
- Waldrop, Richard E. "The Social Consciousness and Involvement of the Full Gospel Church of God of Guatemala." *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal Charismatic Research* 2 (July 1997), <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj2/waldrop.html>.
- Wariboko, Nimi. *The Principle of Excellence: A Framework for Social Ethics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009.
- Wariboko, Nimi. *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012.
- Wariboko, Nimi. *Nigerian Pentecostalism*. New York, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2014
- Wariboko, Nimi. *Economics in Spirit and Truth. A Moral Philosophy of Finance*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.
- Wariboko, Nimi. *The Charismatic City and The Resurgence of Religion: A Pentecostal Social Ethics of Cosmopolitan Urban Life*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014.
- Wariboko, Nimi. *The Split God: Pentecostalism and Critical Theory*. New York: SUNY Press, 2018.
- Warrington, Keith. *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*. New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2008.

- West, Traci C. *Disruptive Christian Ethics: When Racism and Women's Lives Matter*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- Williams, D. Newell, Foster, Douglas A., and Blowers, Paul M., ed., *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2013.
- Wogaman, J. Philip. *Christian Ethics. A Historical Introduction*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993.
- Wynn, Mark R. *Emotional Experience and Religious Understanding: Integrating Perception, Conception and Feeling*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Yong, Amos. *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.
- Yong, Amos. "Poured Out on All Flesh: The Spirit, World Pentecostalism, and the Renewal of Theology and Praxis in the 21st Century." *PentecoStudies* 6, no.1 (2007): 16-46. <https://www.glopent.net/pentecostudies/online-back-issues/2007/yong-2007.pdf/view>.
- Yong, Amos. *Theology and Down Syndrome: Reimagining Disability in Late Modernity*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007.
- Yong, Amos. *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010.
- Yong, Amos. *The Spirit of Creation: Modern Science and Divine Action in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Imagination*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011.
- Yong, Amos. *The Missiological Spirit: Christian Mission Theology in the Third Millennium Global Context*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014.
- Yong, Amos. *Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012.
- Zaldívar, Raúl. "Where are the Evangelists? The Phenomenon of Evangelism in Latin American History." In *The Reshaping of Mission in Latin America*, edited by Miguel Álvarez, 263-81. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015.

APENDICES

Appendix A: Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer



Appendix B: Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries Facilities



Appendix C: Demographics of Research Participants

	Pseudonym	Country of Origin/Heritage	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Interview Place
1	Trinidad Méndez	Peru	Latina	Female	Church office
2	Lourdes González	United States/Mexico	Hispanic American	Female	Church office
3	Gladys Romero	Mexico	Latina	Female	Church office
4	Omaira Castillo	Mexico	Latina	Female	Church office
5	Carmen Moreno	Honduras	Latina	Female	Church office
6	Juan Aguilar	Cuba	Latino	Male	Church office
7	Michael Luna	United States/Mexico	Hispanic American	Male	Church office
8	Elena Acosta	Mexico	Latina	Female	Home
9	Ernesto Robles	Cuba	Latino	Male	Church office
10	Alberto Ochoa	Puerto Rico	Latino	Male	Dallas

Appendix D: Analysis of Research-Based Literature⁵⁷⁸

Title: _____ Author(s): _____ Publication: _____	
Overview	
Key Premises	
Relevance Extent to which the information directly supports your topic and is useful to your study.	
Overall Impressions How useful does this work seem to you with regard to theoretical and/or practical applications?	
Synthesis Synthesize the pieces of your critique to emphasize your own main points about the author's work; its relevance and/or application to other theories you have reviewed and to your own study	

⁵⁷⁸ “Template for Analysis and Critique of Research-Based Literature” in Bloomberg and Volpe, *Completing your Qualitative Dissertation*, 120. This template has been modified to fit the research questions and purpose of this study.

Appendix E: Institutional Review Board

University of Denver Institutional Review Board IRB Application Form

Last edited by: Néstor Gómez Morales

Last edited on: August 21, 2016

[\[click for checklist\]](#)

Ceded review

Non-DU researcher

HIPAA

Federal funds

Schools research

[945053-1] "En el Poder del Espíritu:" A Qualitative Research Study on Social Ethics among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals

I. Principal Investigator

Name: Néstor Gómez Morales

Status: Graduate Student

Credentials:

Phone: 720.393.0174

Email: ngomez-morales@iliff.edu

Department: Iliff Dual Degree

II. Faculty Sponsor

N/A

Note: A faculty sponsor is required if the PI is a student or fellow, and the Faculty Sponsor MUST sign this package through IRBNet.

Name: Luis Leon

Status: Faculty

Credentials:

Phone: 303-871-4706

Email: luis.leon@du.edu

Department: AHSS Religious Studies

Appendix F: Recruitment Letter

Dear _____

My name is Néstor Gómez Morales and I am student from the Joint PhD Program in Religious/Theological Studies at the University of Denver. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study. The purpose of this study is to explore the nature of the experiences of the Spirit in the life of the U.S. Latina/os as fundamental for understanding their social-ethical engagement with those who suffer oppression and marginalization. I am interested in knowing your viewpoint and your experience in working with people who are in need of social support. You are eligible to be in this study because you are a member/leader who participates actively in the social ministry at the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer. I obtained your contact information from Pastor Feliberto Pereira, who kindly provided me your fully name for consideration.

If you agree to be in this study, I would want to conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about what motivates you to be involved in social ministry, the ethical values, the needs in the community, and the mission of the church,. I intend to set up an initial 45 minutes, and submit the questions/prompts one week before the interview for your observation. After the initial interview I will follow up with a brief post-interview of about 15 minutes to offer a summary of my notes and make some corrections you may want to suggest. You will also participate in a workshop in which you will be working with others in small groups. I will facilitate the workshop process and will collect the information given by you and others.

Remember this is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in the study or not. If you would like to participate or have any questions about the study, please email me at ngomez-morales@iliff.edu or call at 720-393-0174.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Néstor A. Gómez Morales

Appendix G: Certification of Translation Form



University of Denver Institutional Review Board (IRB)

For research conducted in languages other than English, the DU IRB/ Office of Research Compliance must have all versions of the research materials (e.g. recruitment, informed consent form(s), instruments) in both English and Non-English on file. This Certificate of Translation Form must be submitted to verify that a translation from English to Non-English is accurate. Those who translate the research materials need to provide a brief description of their qualifications, skills or experience for carrying out this role.

Important Considerations:

- **Translation:** It is acceptable for investigators listed as research personnel to “translate” the research materials (e.g., recruitment, consent, data collection instruments).
- **Timing of the Translation:** The research investigator(s) may wish to delay initial translation from English into the Non-English until after the IRB’s initial review of the application. Awaiting the IRB initial review comments will ultimately help researchers avoid having to consult a translator more than once.
- **Modifications:** When a translation is carried out AFTER the research has been approved, a formal modification to the approved research must be submitted. The researcher must submit any modified materials along with the translated versions of these materials. The Certificate of Translation Form can be submitted as part of the formal modification process.

Choose One Option:

- Initial Review
 Modification (to add new documents)

General Information:

Principal Investigator’s Name: Néstor Gómez Morales

IRBNet #:
945053-1

Translated language(s) necessary for the research to be conducted:

Spanish language

Briefly describe the qualifications (either professional or through life experience) of translator(s):

I am a native speaker, my mother language is Spanish. I am from Colombia, South America.

Spanish teacher at Bridge English, Denver CO

Spanish tutor for graduate students at the Iliff School of Theology, Denver CO

Spanish translator at the Project Common Ground, Grand Junction, CO

Published articles in several Spanish journals.

Recently, I work as director of a social project for the Latina/o community. I have to translate pamphlets, documents, and conferences from English into Spanish. Salida, CO.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: By signing your first and last name, and the date below, you certify that the content of the translated documents is accurate and correct.

Translator’s First and Last Name:

Néstor Gómez Morales

NGM
Translator’s Signature

August 10, 2016
Date

Appendix H: Consent to Participate in Research

“En el Poder del Espíritu:”

A Qualitative Research on Social Ethics among U.S. Latina/o Pentecostals

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

Good day. My name is Néstor A. Gómez Morales. I am student from the Joint PhD Program in Religious/Theological Studies at the University of Denver. The purpose of this study is to explore the nature of the experiences of the Spirit in the life of the U.S. Latina/os as fundamental for understanding their social-ethical engagement with those who suffer oppression and marginalization. I am interested in knowing your viewpoint and your experience in working with people who are in need of social support.

If you agree to be in this study, I would want to conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about what motivates you to be involved in social ministry, the ethical values, the needs in the community, and the mission of the church,. I intend to set up an initial 45 minutes, and submit the questions/prompts one week before the interview for your observation. After the initial interview I will follow up with a brief post-interview of about 15 minutes to offer a summary of my notes and make some corrections you may want to suggest. You will also participate in a workshop in which you will be working with others in small groups. I will facilitate the workshop process and will collect the information given by you and others.

I do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. There are no benefits to you, but I hope that through this process all parties involved can learn more about the motifs and practices that motivate you and your church to do a social ministry work.

Taking part in this project is voluntary and there is no penalty for refusing to take part. And if you do choose to take part, you may stop at any time, or skip any questions you do not wish to answer without penalty.

Your responses and any information will be kept private. Furthermore, in any sort of report I make public I will not include any information that will disclose your identity. I will keep the research information in a locked file. As a researcher, I will be the only one who will have access to the records.

As a dissertation research, the document will be available to readers in a university library in electronic form. The research might also be published in a research journal or book.

If you have questions regarding the research, you may kindly contact me at ngomez-morales@iliff.edu or call at 720-393-0174.

I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your signature _____

Date _____

Your name (printed) _____

Appendix I: Interview Questions

1. How do you understand the relationship of your church to social ministry?
2. What motivates you to be engaged in this social ministry?
3. What needs do you see in the community that inspire you to do this type of social service?
4. What experiences of the Spirit do you consider as being vital for doing this kind of social service?
5. How do you understand the connection between the baptism of the Holy Spirit or speaking in tongues and this social ministry?
6. What other spiritual gifts do you consider to be significant for doing this social service?
7. Why are these spiritual gifts so important for the life of the church and the community here?
8. How do you understand the mission of your church in the world?
9. What are the biblical texts that guide your life for carrying out the Christian mission?
10. How do you see/analyze the connection between the mission of the church and the social ministry from a moral/ethical perspective?
11. What are the ethical values that are crucial for you to do this social ministry?
12. Why are these ethical values so important for you?

Appendix J: Pilot Project - Consent Form

As a participant in this research project, I understand that the following interview will be used only for a pilot project. I understand that my participation will not be anonymous, but that the information I give will be kept confidential. I understand that no records of observations or interviews will be retained by the researcher or by the university the researcher represents. I understand perfectly the information I have received orally by the researcher about the purpose and goal of this project. I understand that the information I give will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. I understand that I can terminate the interview at any time. I sign this document with a clear consciousness of my participation.

Interviewee

Interviewer

Signature

Signature

Date

Appendix K: Sample of a Signed Consent Form

Consentimiento Informado para Participar en una Investigación

"En el Poder del Espíritu:"

Investigación Cualitativa sobre la Ética Social entre la/os latina/os en Estados Unidos

Por favor, lea esta información con detenimiento y haga todas las preguntas necesarias antes de participar en este estudio.

Buenos días. Mi nombre es Néstor A. Gómez Morales, estudiante del Programa de Doctorado en Estudios Religiosos/Teológicos de la Universidad de Denver. El propósito de este estudio es explorar la naturaleza de las experiencias del Espíritu en la vida de la/os latina/os como un aspecto fundamental para comprender su compromiso ético-social con los que sufren marginación y opresión en los Estados Unidos. Mi interés es conocer su opinión y escuchar sobre su experiencia trabajando con la gente que realmente necesita esta ayuda social.

Si le parece bien este estudio, quisiera invitarle a una entrevista personal. En la entrevista las preguntas tratarán sobre qué le motiva a realizar este ministerio social, los valores éticos, las necesidades de la comunidad y la misión de la iglesia. Tendrá una duración de 45 minutos, pero usted recibirá las preguntas una semana antes para su observación. Después de esta primera entrevista, nos reuniremos de nuevo unos 15 minutos para darle un resumen de mis notas y, a la vez, hacer algunas modificaciones o correcciones que usted considere pertinentes. Además, asistirá a un taller en donde usted junto con otras personas realizarán una actividad en grupos pequeños. Como investigador, yo facilitaré el proceso durante el taller y recopilaré la información dada por todos los participantes.

El riesgo o malestar previsto por participar en esta investigación no es mayor al que se da en la vida diaria. No recibirá ningún beneficio o compensación, pero espero que a través de este proceso ambos podamos aprender más sobre los motivos y prácticas que le motivan a usted y a su iglesia a realizar este ministerio social.

No existe ninguna penalización por no involucrarse en el proyecto, pues su participación es de carácter voluntario. Si usted decide participar, puede interrumpir o no responder a alguna pregunta en cualquier momento sin ser penalizado.

Toda información suministrada por usted es de carácter confidencial. La información de la investigación será archivada en un lugar seguro, y como investigador, seré la única persona que tendrá acceso a dicha información. En caso de darse algún tipo de informe público, su identidad personal no será revelada bajo ninguna circunstancia.

El documento de investigación estará a disposición de los lectores en la biblioteca de la universidad en forma electrónica, o puede publicarse en un libro o en una revista de investigación.

Si tiene alguna duda o pregunta respecto a este estudio, por favor contácteme al correo electrónico ngomez-morales@liff.edu o llámeme al número telefónico 720-393-0174.

He leído la información proporcionada. He tenido la oportunidad de preguntar sobre ella y se me ha contestado satisfactoriamente las preguntas que he realizado. Consiento voluntariamente participar en esta investigación.

Su firma 

Fecha: 3 de Diciembre del 2016

Su nombre

Appendix L: Double-Entry Notes Template

DATE	EVENT Describe briefly the event where you participated or the event you observed using concise language and specifying what you observed that was significant to keep a record in your filed notes	OBSERVATIONS Why is this event so significant? What do this event reveals about the research study? What specific research question is related to?

Appendix M: Sample of Interview Transcripts

Entrevista Persona 1

INT: 1. **¿Cómo entiende usted la relación de la Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer-Discípulos de Cristo con el trabajo social que realizan? ¿Qué le motiva a involucrarse en este ministerio social?**

P1: Lo que me motiva es el cambio que Jesús ha protagonizado en mi propia vida cuando le acepté como mi Señor y Salvador. En particular, en nuestra iglesia desde que yo llegué aquí como refugiada, vi el amor de la gente, te brindan una mano de apoyo y siempre están dispuestos a ayudar al necesitado. Existen conflictos y diferencias, pero la unidad nos caracteriza por encima de cualquier inconveniente. Además, cabe resaltar que este sentido de cooperación y apoyo lo heredé desde el seno de mi familia, aún sin ser todavía convertida al cristianismo. Hoy, renovada por la gracia de Dios, afirmo esos valores de solidaridad, y hermandad en nuestra iglesia.

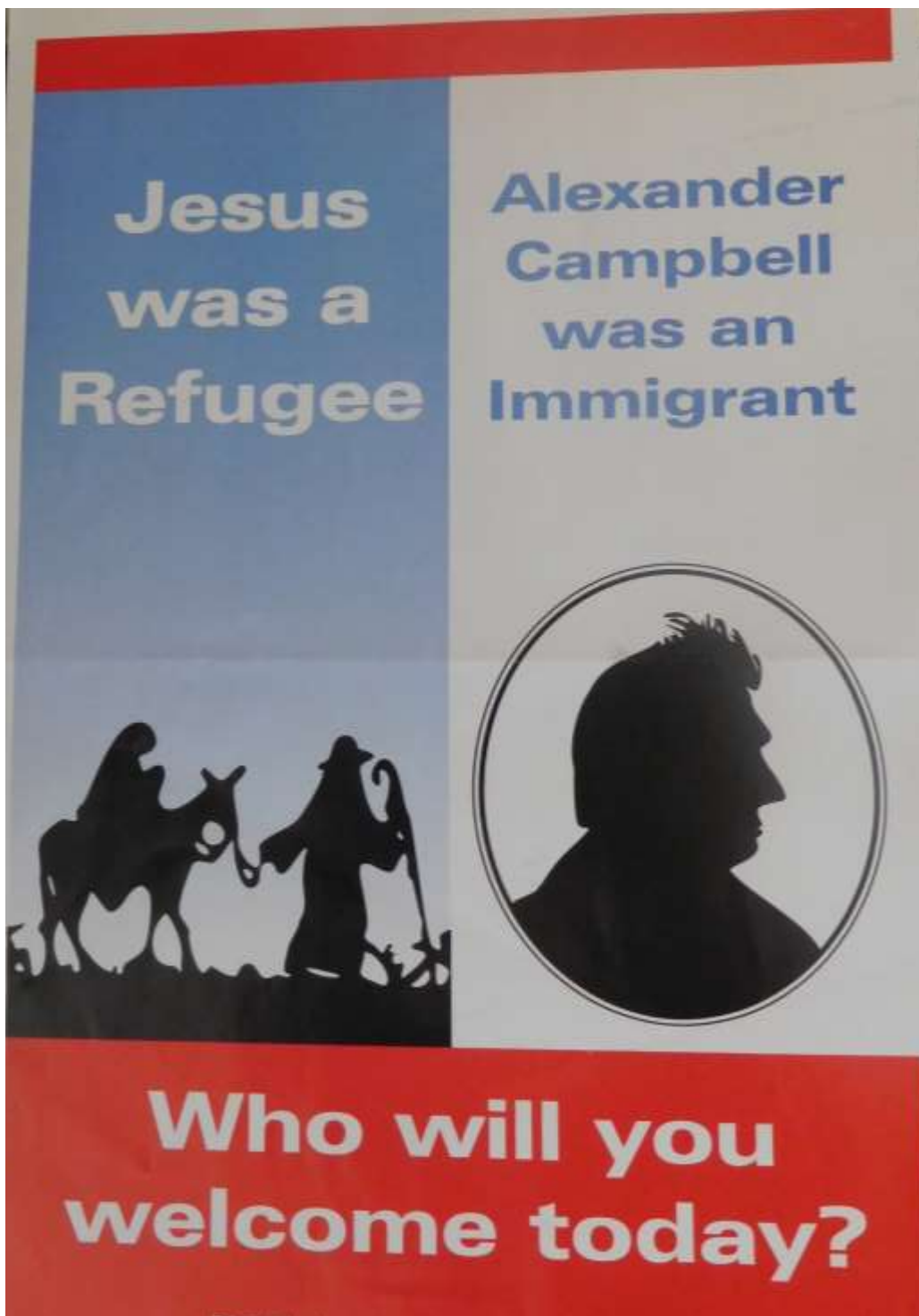
En mi papel como refugiada y ahora como persona más activa en la iglesia, la gente me mira de manera diferente y me busca para un consejo o una ayuda. Yo he sido cambiada y transformada por el poder de Dios y por participar en esta iglesia. Esto me ha ayudado a mirar a las personas necesitadas de manera diferente.

INT: **¿Qué necesidades observa en la comunidad que le inspiran a realizar este tipo de obra social?**

P1: Las principales necesidades que he observado en los refugiados son de índole material: ropa, comida, techo. La gente llega aquí sin absolutamente nada; prácticamente con la ropa que llevan puesta. Otra necesidad primaria es la espiritual, porque siempre nosotros oramos por cada persona y le exponemos el Plan de Salvación. Muchas personas se arrepienten, aceptan a Jesús y cambian de manera positiva. Esto me motiva porque cuando llegan a este país se enfrentan a otra realidad, a un mundo completamente diferente que les entristece y deprime. Por tanto, ver esos cambios en las personas refugiadas me llena de ánimo y esperanza para seguir. Dios les consuela y les llena de su amor.

Desde que llegué a este lugar, tenía visiones de gente llegando y una iglesia llena de personas como la vemos ahora. Somos como 180 o 200 actualmente. Sin embargo, esta es una iglesia de frontera donde mucha gente llega y se integra temporalmente, y luego, se van para otras partes donde hay mejores ofertas de trabajo. Es gente de paso.

Appendix N: Sample of Reports and Posters



Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries Board Meeting October 13-14, 2016

Thanks be to the Lord for the many blessings received!

Our relationship with Customs and Immigration remains the same. Since last April we have provided transportation to 266 refugees to the different states and cities to meet with their families, friends, sponsors, etc.

Ecumenical Work – We continue to have good relationship

Clothing, toiletries canned goods, rice and beans – We provide them to Disciples and independent pastors and ministries on other sides of the border, as well as urgent -in-need members of their congregations and/or outreaches.

Mike's Kids Project – Kick-Off of Mike's Kids will be November 5th at First Christian Church, Garland, Texas, with Feliberto Pereira as main speaker.

In Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico – we continue to support –

- **Casa Hogar Bethel** – 54 children in residence, continues under the care of Lorena Garza. We support the Public school tuition costs, uniforms and supplies, room and board (meals, personal items); healthcare, administrative expenses and rice, beans, and canned goods.

- **City Landfill** – Under the care of Pastor Abel Cardona he continues to feed around 300 families including canned goods, clothes, rice and beans.

- **Municipality of Rio Bravo, Tamaulipas, Mexico** – Daniel Cortez continue to serve this outreach ministry with the help from SWGSM provides the homeless and elderly persons with rice, beans, clothing, shoes and toiletry items.

- **The Annual Fishing Tournament** - Under the leadership of Rev. Sam Simon of First Christian Church, Edinburg, Texas, will be held October 22, 2016.

- **Bluebonnet Assembly** - Attended the area assembly held May 7, 2016.

- **Concert** – on April 30, 2016, Central Christian Church, San Antonio, Texas, held a concert to raise funds for SWGSM.

- **Brite Divinity, Dallas, Texas**, attended summer classes June 5-11, 2016.

- **National Hispanic Assembly** - Attended assembly held July 14-16, 2016 in Coral Gables, Florida.

- **CCSW Men's Retreat** – Attended on September 16-18, 2016, Brownwood, Texas.

Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries: Responding to Christ's Call for Compassion

I was a refugee.

Refugee Programs

Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries was established in 1983 with the specific purpose of providing assistance to refugees coming primarily from Central America seeking political asylum in the United States. A refugee is "a person who fears persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." Working closely with the US Department of Homeland Security and Church World Service, SWGSMA has helped more than 20,000 refugees begin the arduous journey of the love of Jesus Christ through gifts given "to the least of these" whenever their need may be.



I was an orphan.

Case Method

Responding to special needs of the youngest of the poor in Altamirano, Mexico, SWGSMA distributes numerous gifts that help to provide school scholarships, uniforms, school supplies, food, clothing and toys.

I was hungry.

Rice and Beans Program

The Disciples' Rice and Beans program, sponsored primarily through two Areas of the Christian Church in the Southwest Region, provides thousands of meals every year through these basic staples to needy families, isolated villages and children's homes in both the U.S. and Mexico.



I was homeless.

Jericho Road Program

Who is my neighbor? The parable of the Good Samaritan tells us that it is the person in need. This ministry helps families on the U.S. side of the border with needed home repair, such as leaky roofs, poor construction, plumbing problems, painting projects, kitchen appliances, and fallen fencing. With poverty rates exceeding 23% in Brownsville-Harlingen area (compared to 15% on average in the U.S.), there are many poor families needing shelter repair. The Jericho Road program is operated entirely on the U.S. side of the border and overseen by professional carpenters who assist mission work groups.

I needed care.

Lines of the Volleys

This ministry mentors young mothers in the Rio Grande Valley who would otherwise have little or no educational support, parenting and life-skills training opportunities. The mothers meet weekly for training and education while volunteers attend to their children. A new educational facility was added to what was formerly the caretaker's cottage at this view. "The Life House" is equipping the mothers with life skills such as sewing, healthier cooking and English.

I was sick.

Mike's Kids

Mike's Kids, begun in 1987 by Mike Slaght, has become an annual Christmas project supported by the North Texas Area of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). An 18-wheeler filled with more than 1,500 banana boxes delivers new and gently used clothes and toys to be distributed to the poor and abandoned children across the Lower Rio Grande Valley.



Coming Soon: Dental Clinic

SWGSMA hopes to open a dental clinic at the Brownsville campus to serve the neediest with basic dental services, such as fillings and extractions. A local dentist has graciously agreed to serve as the volunteer director of the clinic, which will work with local church pastors to identify low-income families in the Harlingen-Brownsville area who need dental care and are unable to afford it.



Southwest Good

Samaritan Ministries

28259 Beulah Compression Rd,
P.O. Box 273
Lake Precious, TN 38566
Phone: 956-233-5198
E-mail: info@swgsma.org

Appendix O: First Cycle - Initial Coding

- MISSIOLOGY
- THEOLOGY
- ETHICS

Entrevista Persona 2

INT: 1. ¿How do you understand the relationship of Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer with the social work you carry out?

P2: 1. I understand the relation of the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and the social work of El Buen Samaritano as part of the life and commitment of the church with those who are the poor of the poorest in society.

INT: ¿What motivates you to be involved in this social ministry? ¿What needs do you see in the community that inspire you to do this kind of social ministry?

P2: 2. What motivates me is the love for those refugees who are in need or in the case of the orphanage the needs of those children who have nothing materialistically speaking. No money, no shelter, no food. In other words, the need of love and the compassion have flourished inside of me since I have been working and participating actively in this ministry. Let me clarify that I was a compassionate person before being involved in this church and its social work, but here at the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, this virtue of having compassion for the refugees and others have growth significantly since I have the chance to see the needs at first hand every day, particularly, elders and children have touched my heart deeply.

INT: 2. ¿What experiences of the Spirit do you consider as vital to do this social ministry?

P2: 7. The Spirit is going to lead us towards those who have the necessity of something material, or perhaps, the need of prayer or the need to be heard and talk. We must give them our friendship, love, support and kindness without limits. They need a shoulder to cry. My own experiences have helped me to talk to them with confidence. I like to share my testimony as a way of empowerment and encourage to them. I say to them that the Lord will take you from there into a new situation. He's not going to abandon you or leave you alone.

INT: ¿How do you understand the connection between the baptism of the Holy Spirit or speaking in tongues with this social ministry?

P2: 10. While our church is moving more and more into a pentecostalization, the baptism of the Holy Spirit plays a significant role in the life of our community, I believe in speaking in tongues, but not always I am speaking. I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells in us and gives us the power to testify about Christ, our Lord. He gives us the sentiment and gives us the capacity of hearing and how to respond to the needs of others.

1. M. AS TESTIMONY
1. MISSIOLOGY AS A COMMITMENT WITH THE POOR

1. THEOL OF LIBERTATION/PENTECOSTAL

2. M. AS LOVE
2. M. MATERIAL NEEDS

3. THEOLOGY OF LOVE
ETHICS OF COMPASSION

4. MISSIOLOGY
PAST EXPERIENCE

5. ETHICAL VALUE

6. MISSIOLOGY: MATERIAL NEED

6. MISSIOLOGY: INTERNAL MOTIVATIONS

7. THEOLOGY OF DISCERNMENT/GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

7. MISSIOLOGY: MATERIAL NEED

7. MISSIOLOGY: SPIRITUAL NEED

8. ETHICAL VALUES

8. MISSIOLOGY UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT

9. MISSIOLOGY: PAST EXPERIENCE

9. MISSIOLOGY AS TESTIMONY/EMPOWERMENT

10. THEOLOGY OF THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

11. MISSIOLOGY: POWER TO TESTIFY

12. MISSIOLOGY: MATERIAL/SPIRITUAL NEEDS

12. THEOLOGY OF THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

El Buen Samaritano

love, the need of love
Have touched my heart deeply

the Spirit is going to lead us

THEOLOGY OF COMMITMENT

Spirit life in community

Appendix P: Second Cycle

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY CODES	P1	P2	P3	OBSERVATIONS
MISSIOLOGY	Missiology means new born changes	<p>1. What motivates me is the change that Jesus has done in my life when I accepted him as my Savior and Lord.</p> <p>11. Therefore, seeing all those changes in the refugees gives me courage and hope to continue the journey. God comforts them and fills them with love.</p>	<p>15. There are so many people that they do not know the Lord and have not experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit</p> <p>16. therefore, these spiritual gifts are relevant for the mission of the church.</p> <p>17. One can speak to them about that power that have transform our lives; e. i., the testimony of the Holy Spirit in us</p>	<p>1. The social work of our Iglesia Ebenezer is a joint work, very beautiful and harmonious, because there are refugees who are bad people and come here to our facilities and are changed, totally transformed.</p> <p>7. If a person comes to church or comes here as a refugee and seeks God genuinely, that person will be changed; but if, on the contrary, he does not seek God, he will leave as he entered. They have the gift of God and they have not discovered it because they do not get involved with God.</p>	
	Missiology means unconditional support	<p>2. In our church since I arrived here as refugee, I viewed the people's love. They give a support-hand and always want to help the needed.</p>	<p>8. We must give them our friendship, love, support and kindness without limits. They need a shoulder to cry!</p>		
	Missiology means a connection with past experiences	<p>4. Besides, it is worthy to highlight that this sense of cooperation and support came from my family, even without being converted to Christianity.</p>	<p>4. Let me clarify that I was a compassionate person before being involved in this church and its social work,</p> <p>5. but here at the Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer and the Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, this virtue of having compassion for the refugees and others have growth significantly.</p> <p>9. My own experiences have helped me to talk to them with confidence. I like to share my testimony as a way of empowerment and encourage to them. I say to them that the Lord will take you from there into a new situation. He's not going to abandon you or leave you alone.</p>	<p>3. When a person tells us his story of suffering and pain, that was robbed, assaulted and beaten, through time leaves this place renewed, restored and changed. The person who arrives is not the same person who leaves.</p> <p>16. I was not so good or so bad; I believed in God, but I didn't follow him as he commanded. The spiritual transforms our reality, our evil. If we were to criticize and judge the condition of the people, then, we could hardly serve in this ministry and help the people who get here.</p>	

Appendix Q: Data Analysis Notes Template

DATA ANALYSIS		
PHASES	FIRST CYCLE	SECOND CYCLE