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RECONCILED IN CHRIST: AN INTERTEXTUAL
BIBLICAL MODEL FOR ETHNODOXOLOGY
PRACTICE IN LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY

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I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Kylie, for her endless encouragement; to our children, Olivia Joy and Sadie Grace, for their patience; to my parents, Arthur and Dorothy Padiath, for their prayers of intercession; and to the church leadership and congregation at Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly whom I have the privilege of serving.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	vi
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Definition of Terms	3
Thesis	8
Review of the Literature and Foundations for the Study	9
Literature Review: Discipline and Practices of Ethnodoxology	12
Biblical Theology of Ethnic Unity in the Church	19
Literature Review: Multi-ethnic Worship	21
Need for the Study	22
2. A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NATIONS AT WORSHIP IN SELECT OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS	24
Psalms	24
Isaiah	29
Daniel	35
First and Second Corinthians	38
Ephesians	41
Colossians	43
Conclusion	45

Chapter	Page
3. A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NATIONS AT WORSHIP TOGETHER IN REVELATION	47
Doxological Merisms	48
Anti-Doxological Merisms	53
Conclusion	56
4. A CASE STUDY OF WORSHIP AT WATERLOO PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY	57
The Multi-Ethnic History of Waterloo Region	58
The Multi-Ethnic Sectors of Waterloo Region	61
The Multi-Ethnic Demographics of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada	63
The Multi-Ethnic History of Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly	67
Conclusion	71
5. MINISTRY APPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	72
Recommended Resources for Global Hymnody	73
Practical Applications for Multi-Ethnic Worship	79
Recommended Strategies for Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly	82
Potential Barriers to Overcome at Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly	85
Recommendation for Future Research	87
Conclusion	89
 Appendix	
1. INTERVIEWS WITH CHURCH LEADERS FROM THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF WATERLOO PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY	91
2. CENSUS OF COUNTRIES AND LANGUAGES REPRESENTED AT WATERLOO PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY	94
BIBLIOGRAPHY	96

PREFACE

I have always participated and served in multi-ethnic churches. Unlike other Indian immigrants to Canada, my parents saw great value in attending a multi-ethnic church instead of a mono-ethnic church. The congregations in which I have led worship or preached the gospel have been composed of believer from many nations, tribes, peoples, and language groups. My research is motivated by a biblical passion for multi-ethnic worship, my personal experience in multi-ethnic ministry contexts, and my eager anticipation for worship in the eschaton.

I am grateful for my experience at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I also express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Crookshank, for broadening my horizons in the field of ethnodoxology throughout the research process. Thank you to Dr. Beougher for serving at my oral defense and to Dr. Crider for his formational teaching on worship.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As the gospel of Jesus Christ continues to disseminate around the world and as immigration to the West increases, it is imperative that the disciplines of ethnodoxology and worship studies devote increasing attention to the study of multi-ethnic worship of evangelicals in North America. For example, how will ethnodoxologists study the worship practices of congregations in Toronto, which has become one of the most multicultural cities in the world? While in many North American immigrant churches there has been a tendency to establish mono-ethnic churches in order that culture-specific traditions and expressions of worship can be preserved and passed on to subsequent generations, movements like Mark DeYmaz's Mosaix Global Network¹ are strategizing how to establish more multi-ethnic church plants as churches, especially in many urban areas, are becoming more diverse. In recent literature on the subject, Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 serve almost exclusively as the foundational biblical texts given in support of multi-ethnic worship and of the discipline of ethnodoxology.² These verses provide a glimpse into the nature of heavenly worship in the eschaton. The apostle John's revelation vividly describes those in the "great multitude" as representatives "from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Rev 7:9).³ Will the multi-ethnic "great multitude" in these passages

¹ "Mosaix Global Network," accessed March 15, 2018, <http://www.mosaix.info>.

² Mark DeYmaz, *Building A Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments and Practices of a Diverse Congregation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 113.

³ All Scripture references in this thesis are taken from the New International Version.

respond in one humanly identifiable voice or many voices? In Rodney Woo’s interpretation of this, “What is surprising is that the believers who are already present in heaven are distinguished by their race, culture, ethnicity, and language. Yet all the people groups sing in harmony the unifying song.”⁴ In addition, this passage is often read as prophetic of a day when ethnic and linguistic barriers of exclusivity found on earth are overcome in finality.

While the vivid scene portrayed in Revelation 7:9 gives believers a vision of worship in the eschaton, this passage in no way constitutes apostolic instruction in the leading and pastoring of present day multi-ethnic worship because it provides a narrow study rather than a comprehensive study of Scripture as a whole. In heaven, pastors will no longer be pastoring, but worshipping. Therefore, the role of the pastor while on earth is not only to prepare their congregations for heavenly worship, but to cultivate a culture of doxology in the here and now. In order for churches to embrace an emerging multi-ethnic identity in the twenty-first century, it is imperative that pastors and leaders engage with the Bible holistically by allowing the Scripture to inform the theology of multi-ethnic worship and discipline of ethnodoxology. With the rise of multi-ethnic churches in North America, pastors and other church leaders must intentionally assess the demographics of their unique locality and evaluate the inclusiveness of their churches. Far from being a new phenomenon, ethnic variety has been a hallmark characterizing some but not all of the local churches in the New Testament era, of the church since its inception, as Kenneth Mathews and Sydney Park observe:

Not all New Testament churches were integrated. For instance, the Jerusalem church, given its location, was, in all likelihood, mostly comprised of Jewish Christians. . . . Corinth or Philippi, were populated mainly by Gentile Christians, while the church in Rome seems to have had both Jews and Gentiles due to the sizeable presence of Jews in Rome.⁵

⁴ Rodney M. Woo, *The Color of Church: A Biblical and Practical Paradigm for Multiracial Churches* (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 13.

⁵ Kenneth A. Mathews and M. Sydney Park, *The Post-Racial Church: A*

Mathews and Park assert that while not every church has the capacity to be multi-ethnic yet, “ethnodoxological conversations” are crucial for congregations seeking to respond to the changing demographic landscape of the North American context. These authors contend that multi-ethnic worship moves congregations from racial and ethnic segregation to integration and from ethnic diversity to spiritual unity.

Definition of Terms

Ethnodoxology. This field of study has its origin with Western missionaries and their anthropological study of the worship practices in various world cultures. In answering the question “What is Ethnodoxology?” the official website of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE)⁶ identifies David Hall as the one who coined the term and whose definition includes theological, anthropological, and artistic parameters. Robin Harris pays such tribute when she states,

In the late 1990s worship leader and missionary David Hall coined the term *ethnodoxology* by combining three Greek terms—*ethne* (peoples), *doxa* (glory), and *logos* (word). The English word *doxology* combines “words” and “glory” into a concept signifying “words to glorify” or “worship” God. Hall defined ethnodoxology as “the study of the worship of God among diverse cultures.”⁷

Multi-ethnic. In the context of congregational studies, Mathews and Park note that *ethnic* “identifies an affiliated ‘people group’ who share history, traditions, and culture, such as familial descent, language, and religious and social customs.”⁸ This differs from *race*, which is concerned with physical traits and stems from the overarching categorization of the human race. In regard to percentages, Mathews and Park note,

Biblical Framework for Multiethnic Reconciliation (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 245.

⁶ International Council of Ethnodoxology, “What is Ethnodoxology?” accessed March 15, 2018, <http://www.worldofworship.org/what-is-ethnodoxology/>

⁷ Robin P. Harris, “Evangelical Engagement with Ethnodoxology,” in *Evangelicals around the World: A Global Handbook for the 21st Century*, ed. Brian C. Stiller et al. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 156.

⁸ Mathews and Park, *The Post-Racial Church*, 30.

“Sociologist George Yancey defines a multi-ethnic church by the percentage of ethnic representation in worship services: No one ethnic group has more than 80 percent of the regular congregation at worship.”⁹ In *Crossing the Ethnic Divide: The Multi-ethnic Church on a Mission*, Kathleen Garces-Foley references The Multiracial Congregations Projects¹⁰ in 1999 that defined “a multiracial congregation as one in which no single racial group constitutes over 80 percent of the total,”¹¹ which denotes the majority versus minority percentage of congregants. In Canadian churches, I have observed that congregations often base their perception of a church’s diversity on the number of national flags representing the nationalities of congregants displayed in the church auditorium or sanctuary.

Mono-ethnic. This term refers to singular homogeneous people groups and is in stark contrast to the meaning of multi-ethnic. Mono-ethnic churches are filled with a majority representation of one ethnicity. In light of recent migration to the West, mono-ethnic churches are still being intentionally established to avoid assimilation into the host culture as an effort to preserve and perpetuate the language, traditions, and worship practices of foreign people groups.

Missional. The human participation in *mission Dei*, or the mission of God.¹² Lesslie Newbigin (1909-98) was a Presbyterian missionary to India from 1947-74 and later became the bishop in the Church of South India (CSI). His seminal work focuses on

⁹ Mathews and Park, *The Post-Racial Church*, 30.

¹⁰ A study conducted by sociologist Michael Emerson, currently serving as the Provost of North Park University (Chicago) and former Co-Director of the Institute for Urban Research at Rice University (Houston).

¹¹ Kathleen Garces-Foley, *Crossing the Ethnic Divide: The Multiethnic Church on a Mission* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 79.

¹² For a more recent treatment of the mission of God, see Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

the interaction between the gospel in relation to culture based on the assertion that become his unofficial life creed.¹³ Newbigin clarifies, “The church's very being is the continuation of Christ's redeeming mission in the world.”¹⁴ Misuse and constant redefinition of the term has led to much confusion and at times its original essence has been neglected. A worship application for the term is found in the Missional Manifesto, a document collaboratively authored by Ed Stetzer, Alan Hirsch, Tim Keller, Dan Kimball, Eric Mason, J. D. Greear, Craig Ott, Linda Bergquist, Philip Nation, and Brad Andrews. The Missional Manifesto states, “God is a sending God, a missionary God, who has called His people, the church, to be missionary agents of His love and glory.”¹⁵ This is the very impulse motivating a person to reach the nations locally or globally.

Transcultural. As defined in the Nairobi Statement, this term refers to “the same substance for everyone everywhere, beyond culture.”¹⁶ In regard to multi-ethnic worship, Word and sacrament are shared across all cultures. These values will be true irrespective of a particular culture. The Bible, the creeds, and the baptism formula can be translated into the abundant vernaculars of the world. The Nairobi Statement stresses, “The recovery in each congregation of the clear centrality of these transcultural and ecumenical elements renews the sense of this Christian unity and gives all churches a solid basis for authentic contextualization.”¹⁷

¹³ For more information, see *Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

¹⁴ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 94.

¹⁵ Ed Stetzer et al., “Missional Manifesto,” accessed March 15, 2018, www.missionalmanifesto.net.

¹⁶ Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, “Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture Full Text,” accessed August 27, 2018, <https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/nairobi-statement-on-worship-and-culture-full-text>, 1.3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Contextual/contextualization. As defined in the Nairobi Statement, this term refers to how “God can be and is encountered in the local cultures of our world.”¹⁸ Christ is experienced by a particular people, in a particular geography, and in a particular culture. In his chapter entitled “Ways of Contextualizing Church Music: Some Asian Examples,” I-to Loh defines the term as “an intimate and complicated double wrestling of the ‘text’—the word of God—with our present ‘context’ (the *Sitz im Leben*).”¹⁹ The goal of worship expressions as responses to the gospel is that they ought to take anthropological forms without compromising the truth of the gospel.²⁰ Mutual respect affirms the values and practices of the local culture and expands the scope of global worship.

Counter-cultural. As defined in the Nairobi Statement, this term refers to “challenging what is contrary to the Gospel in a given culture.”²¹ Christians are in the world but not of the world. The polarization requires Christians to be agents of the culture of heaven while living in the culture of earth. Farhadian comments, “Some components of every culture in the world are sinful, dehumanizing, and contradictory to the values of the gospel. From the perspective of the gospel, they need critique and transformation.”²² Some tools Christians utilize in Christian worship will need to be reevaluated or removed.

¹⁸ Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, “Nairobi Statement.”

¹⁹ I-to Loh, “Ways of Contextualizing Church Music: Some Asian Examples,” in *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*, ed. James Krabill et al. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), 29.

²⁰ It is important to take under consideration the way Christians respond to the gospel in oppressive Islamic contexts. For more information, see John Travis. “The C1 to C6 Spectrum: A Practical Tool for Defining Six Types of ‘Christ-Centered Communities’ (‘C’) Found in the Muslim Context,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1998): 407-8.

²¹ Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, “Nairobi Statement.”

²² Charles E. Farhadian. *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 289.

Cross-cultural. As defined in the Nairobi Statement, this term refers to “making possible sharing between different local cultures.”²³ It is possible for one culture to adopt the worship practices of another culture. Farhadian states, “By virtue of baptism, there is one church; and one means of living in faithful response to baptism is to manifest ever more deeply the unity of the church.”²⁴ While cultural worship practices tend to separate, members of Christ’s body sharing cultural worship practices can actually unify culturally diverse believers.

Indigenization. James R. Krabill’s chapter on “What Happens to Music When Cultures Meet? Six Stages of Music Development in African Churches” identifies indigenization as the fifth stage of a six-stage journey from importation to internalization. Krabill states,

Whenever such music is introduced . . . something almost magical immediately sets in . . . Every face lights up; there is an unmistakable feeling as of thirsty desert travelers who reach an oasis. Anyone watching . . . will know immediately that [the] worshipers are at home, singing heart and soul.²⁵

The result is worship tunes, texts, and rhythms that are closer to the heart song of the indigenous people.

Heart Language/Heart Song. Self-expression from the heart is essential to multi-ethnic worship. In her chapter “The Great Misconception: Why Music is not a Universal Language,” Robin Harris explains, “Just like each person has at least one heart language, we all have our own heart music and arts; it’s like a mother tongue for expressing your heart, and it affects how you worship.”²⁶ There is not one, but many music languages. Rather than seeing the existence of multiple heart languages in a local

²³ Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, “Nairobi Statement.”

²⁴ Farhadian, *Christian Worship Worldwide*, 289.

²⁵ James R. Krabill, “What Happens to Music When Cultures Meet? Six Stages of Music Development in African Churches,” in Krabill et al., *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 149.

²⁶ Robin P. Harris, “The Great Misconception: Why Music is not a Universal Language,” in Krabill et al., *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 82.

church as a threat to mono-ethnic worship, multiple heart languages create an opportunity for growth in multi-ethnic worship for the local church. Nevertheless, each person must work to override their own ethnocentricity, a superiority complex, through which they filter music in general.

Thesis

North American local churches, especially evangelical churches, need biblically holistic and intertextual exegetical approaches grounded in a more solid biblical and theological foundation for multi-ethnic worship practices to worship and minister in the twenty-first century. Present studies in ethnodoxology do not adequately address multi-ethnic worship in the evangelical North American context. Current biblical and theological literature does not adequately address examples of multi-ethnic worship in Scripture or take into account ethnodoxological research. A reflection of the ideals of heavenly worship can be realized here on earth as a foretaste of the eschaton. To assess the strengths and weaknesses of using Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 as a foundation for ethnodoxological studies and multi-ethnic worship, this thesis develops a biblical theology of the nations at worship based on examination of the “nations” motif in the Old Testament as found particularly in the Psalms, Isaiah, and Daniel, and of the “unity” motif in the New Testament through engagement with 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians. A biblical theology of the nations at worship in Revelation then follows. To anchor the argument in a twenty-first century context, a case study of the nations at worship at Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly from October 2016 to April 2018 was conducted. The study concludes with recommended practices and resources that pastors can integrate and utilize and suggestions for future research that will move the field of ethnodoxology and the experience of mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic churches toward more biblically-informed worship.

Review of the Literature and Foundations for the Study

Many books and articles written from an ethnodoxological perspective treat worship and artistic expression within specific cultures. The following thesis reviews ethnodoxological literature that attempts to understand how all the nations of the earth are called to worship God.

Daniel Hays offers a theological perspective in *From Every People and Nation: A Biblical Theology of Race* (2003). In his study on race, Hays studies the often ignored nation of Cush, the discrimination they receive due to their dark complexion, and yet their inclusion in God's salvation plan. Hays begins his argument with an overview of the people groups that inhabited the Ancient Near Eastern world during the era of the patriarchs, focusing on the peculiarity of the Israelites and Cushites. He emphasizes that the patriarchs of Israel were actually non-Israelites, whose geographical origins and native languages differed from the stereotypes modern interpreters may superimpose upon the heroes of the faith. This view exposes the ignorance in believing that Abram belongs to a pure Jewish lineage; however, he was a resident of Ur of Chaldees. In addition to the origin story of humanity in the Genesis creation narrative containing the Adamic blessings, the Abrahamic blessing represents the next genesis of Judaism.

Daniel Hays notes that “the ethnic landscape of the Old Testament world was completely multi-ethnic,”²⁷ as many people groups inhabited neighboring lands. The passage in Genesis 10 known as the “Table of Nations” is the centerpiece of Hays' work. This is followed by the account of the confusion and dispersal at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, which precedes the giving of the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 12. In these three chapters, God reveals His intent to issue a saving plan that includes all the nations

²⁷ Daniel J. Hays, *From Every People and Nation: A Biblical Theology of Race* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 45.

of the earth. As Hays explains, “The theme introduced here—that sin scatters the people of the world but that God’s blessing reunites them”²⁸ runs throughout the Scriptures.

When addressing the NT text, Hays focuses on Luke-Acts, the Pauline Epistles, and the Johannine Apocalypse. With the Greco-Roman culture as the backdrop for NT studies, Hays states, “There still seems to be an underlying assumption in much of the literature that everyone who was not Jewish or ‘Barbarian’ was ‘Greco-Roman,’ as if this were a monolithic ethnic group.”²⁹ This contention mirrors his previous sentiments regarding mistaken assumptions students make about the ethnic origins of the patriarchs of Israel. No one is outside of God’s sight and His plan. From a human perspective, the irony is that the very people who do not meet the requirements to belong to God’s people actually receive an extended invitation and welcome by God. The early church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, is an ethnically diverse movement that has embraced an entirely different missional culture than that of the host culture. Hays’ work is a valuable resource for students that want to explore a theology of race. The greatest area of weakness in this book is the limited amount of time and space dedicated to probing the Book of Revelation since the Pauline Epistles and Revelation are combined into one chapter.

Kenneth A. Mathews and Sydney Park in *The Post-Racial Church* argue that “the people of God are not characterized by racial purity, but by covenant faithfulness and exclusive worship of Yahweh.”³⁰ They advocate for a dependency on Scripture to combat racial hostility and offer four practical windows of opportunity so that believers can engage the topics of immigration, interracial marriage, multicultural worship, and evangelism/missions. Mathews, an OT specialist, clarifies that Israel’s origins were not pure bloodlines. He provides an example of this when he states, “If Abraham were the

²⁸ Hays, *From Every People and Nation*, 62.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 142.

³⁰ Mathews and Park, *The Post-Racial Church*, 262.

first ‘Hebrew,’ we can hardly say that his parents were ‘Hebrews’ too.”³¹ Abraham’s inclusion in God’s plan was not based on merit, but based on divine election. The Israelites were foreigners in search of a promised land. While on this journey, the struggle for and against intermarriage comes with a moral caution against idolatry. Over time, it also becomes a permissible action for the sake of expanding the circle of ethnic inclusivity among God’s people. Park, a NT specialist, continually evaluates how well the Gentiles were being accepted into the church by Jewish Christians throughout the New Testament. He specifically studies the notion of reconciliation among the early church leaders found in Acts 10 and 15 and later reiterated in the Pauline Epistles.

Jesus is both a reconciler and peacemaker where racial enmity exists. In accordance with Ephesians 2:14, it is in Christ that all division and hostility between nations and people groups are healed. Mathews and Park not only wax theological, but provide thought-provoking questions at the end of each chapter to move readers into deeper contemplation and practical application. The church universal must commit to being a consistently post-racial community and must overcome numerous social barriers in order to encourage all the nations to respond to God’s invitation of inclusivity, which manifests itself in multi-ethnic worship.

John Piper’s *Bloodlines* is a pastoral effort at exposing the epidemic of racism within the church and celebrating the commonality of believers in Jesus Christ. Based on his own convictions of racial harmony and intermarriage, Piper points to racism as one of the largest hurdles Christianity faces. If believers are unable to receive others as they are, into the one family of God, then racism rules the church. He develops a gospel-centered approach that discredits an exclusivist worldview. The way forward requires a renewal of the mind from an “old creation” mentality and the embracing of a “new creation” mentality. He stresses an embrace of human oneness since all people bear the image of

³¹ Mathews and Park, *The Post-Racial Church*, 97-98.

God. Piper goes so far as to argue that all humans have a shared parentage since all have one spiritual Father: “The bloodline of Jesus Christ is purer than the bloodlines of race. The death and resurrection of the Son of God for sinners is the only sufficient power to bring the bloodlines of race into the single bloodline of the cross.”³² Humans are not literally of the same bloodline, but in a spiritual sense, through faith, humans belong to Christ’s bloodline. Not only does Piper cite Revelation 5:9 as an instrumental text for ethnodoxology, but he discusses “the nations” motif as found in Psalm 22, 67 and 96. This thesis adopts and expands on Piper’s “the nations” motif in the Old Testament. Though he does not discuss worship in depth, the underlying sense is that racial reconciliation is a first step toward the goal of worshipping together.

Literature Review: Discipline and Practices of Ethnodoxology

Though this thesis does not cover practices of multi-ethnic worship within specific ethnic worship traditions, it is important to introduce the work of leading and active ethnodoxologists. James Krabill, Frank Fortunato, Robin Harris, and Brian Schrag have collaborated as editors in *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*.³³ A compilation of contributions from more than one hundred contributors from twenty countries, these writers introduce their readers to principles and practices of ethnodoxology from a global perspective. One of the primary motivations for this thesis came from reading Andrew E. Hill’s chapter in the *Ethnodoxology Handbook*, “Biblical Foundations of Christian Worship.” Hill’s brief article illustrates the desire to establish holistic biblical foundations for the discipline that spans from Genesis to Revelation. This thesis will further develop a biblical theology for the field of

³² John Piper, *Bloodlines: Race, Cross, and the Christian* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 13-14.

³³ Krabill et al., *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*.

ethnodoxology and study of multi-ethnic worship that can bolster future ICE network research and publications.

The Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture was created by the Lutheran World Federation in 1996 and is a respected document among ethnodoxologists and a critical document for practitioners who desire to foster multi-ethnic worship in the local church. Anne Zaki's chapter entitled "Shall We Dance? Reflections on the Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture" helps simplify its meaning for those who may be new to the discipline of ethnodoxology. Zaki states, "The Nairobi Statement reminds church leaders of what is at stake when we plan Christian worship."³⁴ This thesis utilizes the Nairobi Statement in order to provide clarity about four commonly confused terms (transcultural, contextual, countercultural, and cross-cultural), specifically outlining the relationship between worship and culture.

In his chapter entitled, "The Bridge: Worship Between Bible and Culture", Ron Man emphasizes the importance of biblical foundations in the worship practices of the local church. He uses the illustration of a suspension bridge with two main pillars to teach practitioners about the balanced needed in corporate worship between the biblical constants and applying biblical principles of worship with latitude. Man states, "Our worship needs to be supported by firmly rooted biblical foundations."³⁵ As Man has identified the need for biblical foundations, this thesis endeavors to provide the biblical foundations as a contribution to the discipline of ethnodoxology and local churches striving for multi-ethnic worship.

In "Worship from the Nations': A Survey of Preliminary Analysis of the Ethnodoxology Movement," Scott Aniol collaborates with his students from a doctoral

³⁴ Anne Zaki, "Shall We Dance? Reflections on the Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture," in Krabill et al., *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 71.

³⁵ Ron Man, "'The Bridge': Worship Between Bible and Culture," in Krabill et al., *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 18.

seminar at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in an attempt to trace the rich history of the ICE movement from its missiological beginnings and to its current expression.³⁶ The first scripture employed in this article is Revelation 7:9-10,³⁷ which reinforces the very claims I make in this thesis. Nevertheless, Aniol and his students do have the ability to enlarge the scriptural foundations for ethnodoxology and multi-ethnic worship by analyzing both Old and New Testament passages including Acts 2, Psalms 67:3-4; 117:1, Matthew 28:19, and Mark 13:11.³⁸ Aniol's endorsement of Thomas Avery's positive view of the Babel narrative from Genesis 11 as the origin for a multi-ethnic world is a misinterpretation of the people's absolute pride and disobedience toward God.³⁹ While there is much to agree about concerning the history of the key movements, figures, and influences in the discipline of ethnodoxology, I take issue with the conclusions drawn by Aniol and his students in their assessment of the weaknesses of the movement. Aniol disconnects people from their culture when it comes to worship in the eschaton. Aniol states, "While the New Testament certainly proclaims that Christianity will spread across all ethnic boundaries, the emphasis for the Church is that, rather than asserting its multi-ethnic composition, it is actually a *new* and distinct people group."⁴⁰ The error in this view is that Aniol fails to believe that the God who created humanity, and as a result created cultures, will redeem culture in the eschaton. Our humanity and our culture are a gift from God. Aniol chooses to emphasize and value Christian unity and reduce Christian diversity which contradicts his own biblical theology that he

³⁶ Scott Aniol et al., "'Worship from the Nations': A Survey of Preliminary Analysis of the Ethnodoxology Movement," *The Artistic Theologian*, vol. 3 (2015): 2-21.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

presented earlier in this article. Aniol boldly asserts, “These passages teach that all *nations* will be in heaven; they do not teach that all *cultures* will be in heaven.”⁴¹ This statement contradicts the values of ICE because this organization sees people and culture as intertwined and inseparable. Aniol and his students later differentiate between culture not as identity, but as behavior.⁴² While advocating for “heaven on earth” multi-ethnic worship, the purpose of this thesis is to reset the conversation so that it is no longer one-sided toward the Book of Revelation.

Clearly, God foreshadows the eschaton in the Old and New Testaments, however, the Bible is not meant to be read backwards, otherwise it would have started with Revelation. When the Bible is read chronologically or according to its canonical shape and form, a grand narrative unfolds. To place Revelation at the forefront is to miss what God has revealed in Psalms, Isaiah, Daniel, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians about multi-ethnic worship. What is required is that believers on both sides of the “divide” exegete and interpret the scriptures more holistically through an ethnodoxological lens. While attempting to write from a global worldview, Aniol as well as contemporary ethnodoxologists (Krabill and others) have often neglected their own North American context and the multi-ethnic congregations that created the impetus for this thesis. The North American evangelical context, filled with both mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic churches and their worship practices, is a phenomenon that calls for much further study.

Glenn Stallsmith, in his detailed, thoughtfully argued response to Aniol’s article, concedes that many ethnodoxologists may have blind spots as well.⁴³ As one

⁴¹ Aniol et al., “Worship from the Nations,” 19.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Glenn Stallsmith, “Worship from the Nations: A Response to Scott Aniol,” *Global Forum on Arts and Christian Faith* 3, no. 1 (2015): A21-A36. For more discussion, see Scott Connell, “Creating an Ethnomusicological Environment and Ethos in the Local Church” (conference paper presented at North Central Regional Evangelical

example, Stallsmith allows that the field of ethnodoxology may be more sociologically informed than its practitioners may wish to admit. Along those lines, an important question to ask is: “Is the field of ethnodoxology even more sociologically informed than theologically informed at present?” Stallsmith first dismantles from biblical argument Aniol’s definition of culture as behavior, advocates for culture as part of a complex that includes behavior, ethnicity, and much more. While the word *culture* is not used by the apostle John in Revelation or anywhere in the original biblical languages according to Aniol, Stallsmith suggests that “culture—as the complex interaction of nationality, ethnicity, geography, language, and, yes, behavior—has a role to play in God’s saving history. . . . It is clear that God has used and will continue to use Christians as persons embedded in culture, national identity, and language communities to bring about the reign of the Lamb.”⁴⁴ God transforms culture, and the church has a role to play. In his concluding statements, Stallsmith calls for earnest dialogue around these issues:

I would like ethnodoxologists to engage in more sincere dialogue with the church, including academic theologians who might press us further than we would like in regard to music’s universals. Theology is necessarily a universalizing discipline—if God is truly God, then that God speaks to all people of the world in all times in history.⁴⁵

This thesis, then, may be read as one response to Stallsmith’s request.

Esther Crookshank in her forthcoming article, “Ethnodoxology and the Church’s Worship: An Introduction”, retraces a similar approach to Aniol’s article by identifying the leading voices of the ICE, by chronologically listing the rise of the discipline, defining key terms, and exposing misconceptions related to the field. Crookshank disagrees with Aniol’s belief that “the concept of culture is essentially equivalent to and is coequal with

Missionary Society Meeting, Deerfield, IL: Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, March 2018).

⁴⁴ Ibid., A26.

⁴⁵ Ibid., A31.

the word ‘behavior’⁴⁶ and calls Aniol’s view a misconception and “reductionist notion. . . . This argument denies the full biblical understand of the relationship between God’s work, *ethne*, and human cultures.”⁴⁷ Crookshank calls for an interdisciplinary study of the church and her ministries in the world in light of the full witness of Scripture.

In *Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally*, Michael Hawn’s premise is that church musicians are the very agents who can foster a multi-ethnic environment by facilitating indigenous expressions of global worship,⁴⁸ but worship should never be a means to an end. Scholars and practitioners belonging to the ICE network exhibit their commitment to expanding the study of ethnodoxology and to promoting the value of every culture’s unique expressions of praise and worship. For the purposes of this study, *Gathering into One* exposes readers to top five global musicians from North American hymnals and can be a helpful resource when writing a section in chapter five on global hymnody and songbooks.

The contributions of Harold Best are foundational to worship studies in many sectors, particularly in evangelical scholarship, but also impact the study and praxis of ethnodoxology. As a leading scholar in the field, he engages with worship theologically, philosophically, and critically. His seminal works *Music through the Eyes of Faith* (1993) and *Unceasing Worship* (2003) are foundational for developing a theology of worship.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Esther Crookshank, “Ethnodoxology and the Church’s Worship: An Introduction,” *Augustine Collegiate Review*, vol. 1, no. 3, forthcoming.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ C. Michael Hawn, *Gathering into One: Praying and Singing Globally* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

⁴⁹ Harold Best, *Music through the Eyes of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993); Harold Best, *Unceasing Worship: Biblical Perspectives on Worship and the Arts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003).

It is important to engage with Best's work because he affirms the invitation for all nations to worship God together rather than individually.⁵⁰

Josh Davis and Nikki Lerner partner together to write *Worship Together in Your Church As It is In Heaven*.⁵¹ Active members of ICE, they engage the local church as facilitators of global worship. While the title of the book alludes to a motivation derived from the Book of Revelation, they provide a blended engagement with the whole of Scripture. Their emphasis lies on relationship with people from different ethnicities, identifying one's personal heart song, and providing models for multi-ethnic worship.

More recently, Sandra Maria Van Opstal released *The Next Worship: Glorifying God in a Diverse World*.⁵² Van Opstal advocates for ethnically inclusive worship and her goal in writing is to lead the church forward in proactively preparing now for heavenly worship to come. She specifically uses the metaphor of a banquet and the theme of hospitality to help worship leaders visualize their ability to facilitate multi-ethnic worship experiences for their congregations. Van Opstal also offers practical tools for planning multi-ethnic worship.

Gabriel Statom's *Practice for Heaven: Music for Worship That Looks Higher* also complements the direction of this thesis.⁵³ His goal is to unfold how the vision of heavenly worship informs the practice of earthly worship. Statom states succinctly, "With our earthly worship we are rehearsing for heaven—we are practicing our faith by

⁵⁰ See Harold Best, "God's Creation and Human Creativity: Seven Affirmations," in *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 13-16.

⁵¹ Josh Davis and Nikki Lerner, *Worship Together in Your Church as It Is in Heaven* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015), Kindle.

⁵² Sandra Maria Van Opstal, *The Next Worship: Glorifying God in a Diverse World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016).

⁵³ Gabriel C. Statom, *Practice for Heaven: Music for Worship That Looks Higher* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015).

worshipping with the hope of heaven in mind.”⁵⁴ He likens earthly worship to the practice of a musician in preparation for a long awaited performance. This thesis differs from Statom’s work in that it is more oriented toward strengthening the North American evangelical church’s worship practices rather than literal musical practices. In other words, the participants themselves take precedence over the medium by which people express their worship.

Biblical Theology of Ethnic Unity in the Church

Furthermore, interaction with Bible commentaries, particularly on Psalms and Isaiah through the Old Testament, is essential in the theological development and exegesis of the two biblical motifs, those of the “nations” and “unity” among God’s people that are foundational to this study.

Daniel I. Block, a respected Old Testament scholar, has written a book entitled “*For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship*.”⁵⁵ A biblical theology of worship must begin and end with the scriptures. Block surveys the worship themes of Scripture, identifies key passages, and provides the necessary foundation to ground a biblical theology of ethnic unity in the church.

An important source for the study of the “nations” motif is Derek Kidner’s two-part commentary on Psalms, which is concise, yet well-respected among scholars.⁵⁶ In contrast to the numerous commentaries on the Psalms that do not comment on every chapter, Kidner’s work is especially valuable in that it covers the entire book of Psalms. Norbert Lohfink and Erich Zenger’s *The God of Israel and the Nations: Studies in Isaiah*

⁵⁴ Statom, *Practice for Heaven*, 143.

⁵⁵ Daniel I. Block, “*For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship*” (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014).

⁵⁶ Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72, Kidner Classic Commentaries* (London: InterVarsity, 1973); and Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73-150, Kidner Classic Commentaries* (London: InterVarsity, 1975).

*and the Psalms*⁵⁷ is worth reading because of the intertextuality of this study. Lohfink and Zenger specifically examine the notion of covenant—that God made a broader covenant with humanity, which is all-encompassing and not limited to His covenant with Israel. Robert Davidson’s *The Vitality of Worship: A Commentary on the Book of Psalms*⁵⁸ is rich in biblical exegesis and gives credence to the centrality of the Psalms in the worship of God’s people. Davidson views the Psalms with the purpose of life application. This work compliments Kidner’s concise study.

Having traced the “nations” motif, the focus turns to tracing the “unity” motif in the New Testament. Ephesians is very ecclesiological in nature and thus is a good book to refer to when studying the unity motif in Pauline epistles. Peter T. O’Brien’s *The Letter to the Ephesians*⁵⁹ comprehensively covers many exegetical issues that surface in this epistle. Ben Witherington’s *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles*⁶⁰ describes the interrelation between each epistle. A comparison between Ephesians and Colossians or Galatians provides valuable insights for tracing the theme of unity. John Paul Heil’s *The Letters of Paul as Rituals of Worship* examines Paul as a liturgist, as one who informs the public worship of the early church through his letters, and who finds motivation to write his epistles because of his deep theological understanding of worship.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Norbert Lohfink and Erich Zenger, *The God of Israel and the Nations: Studies in Isaiah and the Psalms* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2000).

⁵⁸ Robert Davidson, *The Vitality of Worship: A Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

⁵⁹ Peter T. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

⁶⁰ Ben Witherington III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

⁶¹ John Paul Heil, *The Letters of Paul as Rituals of Worship* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2011).

To explore the book of Revelation, this study first engages with Robert H. Mounce's revised commentary from The New International Commentary on the New Testament series.⁶² This student-friendly commentary takes the seemingly complicated book of Revelation and gives lucid commentary. A more rigorous commentary intended for the pastor-teacher is G. K. Beale's *The Book of Revelation*.⁶³ Beale refuses to see Revelation as solely futuristic, but a book that addresses the present worship of the church. He also makes numerous OT allusions that assist the purposes of this thesis when looking at Psalms and Isaiah. James M. Hamilton's *Revelation: The Spirit Speaks to the Churches* contains thirty-seven sermons that unpack the theology of Revelation.⁶⁴ As a proficient expositor, his ability to make connections beyond the book, particularly reaching back into the OT, attests to his commitment to biblical authority.

Literature Review: Multi-Ethnic Worship

In his dissertation, titled "A Theological Critique of the Multi-Ethnic Church Movement: 2000-2013,"⁶⁵ Richard Hardison argues that the prevalent theory that all North American evangelical churches ought to be [multi-ethnic] is false. He raises awareness for the multi-ethnic mandate; however, is supportive of churches that remain essentially mono-ethnic as long as that situation is a natural consequence of their specific context. I affirm Hardison's belief that developing multi-ethnic churches cannot be forced. This thesis seeks to argue that as the demographic landscape of North America

⁶² Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

⁶³ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

⁶⁴ James M. Hamilton, *Revelation: The Spirit Speaks to the Churches* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

⁶⁵ Richard Willson Hardison, "A Theological Critique of the Multi-Ethnic Church Movement: 2000-2013" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014).

changes so rapidly, churches must keep themselves accountable by staying biblically grounded, gospel-centered and continually monitoring changes in the ethnic makeup of their congregation.

In “Re-Thinking Homogeneity: The Biblical Case for Multi-Ethnic Churches,”⁶⁶ Aubrey Sequeira suggests that there is New Testament evidence to build a case in favor of multi-ethnic churches over mono-ethnic churches. Sequeira takes this argument further by challenging Donald McGravan’s “homogeneous unit principle” of church growth and arguing that it “has fostered and reinforced sinful ethnocentric prejudice within a people professing to know Christ.”⁶⁷

Need for the Study

The literature on multi-ethnic churches is expanding rapidly. Mark DeYmaz is leading the largest multi-ethnic church movement in North America. In spite of such progress, few comprehensive studies about multi-ethnic worship exist. The current literature is lacking in several areas: (1) Many pastors and leaders fail to view worship as the catalyst for developing multi-ethnic churches. (2) The common practice is to proof-text a small number of passages like Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 in passing in these books. (3) Theologians like the ones mentioned in the previous section are writing books about a theology of race and social reconciliation, yet many only tangentially mention worship. (4) The writings on the practice of multi-ethnic worship itself are generally limited to worship expressions unique to specific ethnicities rather than including the study of multi-ethnic worship. (5) There is a tendency among ethnodoxologists to reference the Book of Revelation to the exclusion of other scriptures in their research. Of the examples mentioned in the literature review, Hays and Mathews and Park offer examples of this

⁶⁶ Aubrey Sequeira, “Re-Thinking Homogeneity: The Biblical Case for Multi-Ethnic Churches,” *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

limited or even dismissive approach to the topic. Similarly, Piper has not written specifically on multi-ethnic worship. As many such authors fail to value and prioritize ethnodoxological praxis, North American evangelical churches continue to struggle in creating the multi-ethnic community that they desire.

It is crucial that ethnodoxologists, pastors, and leaders reassess this topic in light of the entirety of Scripture rather than isolated passages from the Book of Revelation alone. There must be an increase in biblical authority and biblical engagement in order to make progress in the field of ethnodoxology. Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 alone are insufficient to address the concerns of twenty-first-century multi-ethnic worship.

CHAPTER 2

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NATIONS AT WORSHIP IN SELECT OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

When seeking to establish a comprehensive biblical framework for multi-ethnic worship, one must examine both Old and New Testaments to discover the pre-existence and originality of the paradigm prior to engaging with the book of Revelation. The following Old Testament analysis will address key passages from Psalms, Isaiah, and Daniel. The New Testament analysis will address key passages from 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians.

Psalms

The Psalter has been shaping the worship of God's people for centuries. These scripture-songs express the full range of human emotion. The Psalms are not exclusive to Israel in content, but prophetically make an inclusive call to the nations to worship the Lord. Sigmund Mowinckel states,

There is every indication that such a democratization—and individualization—of religion did take place in Israel. Yahweh has gradually become, not only the god of the whole people as in the earliest time, and the god of kings, chiefs, priests, and prophets—as official and cultic representatives of the whole—but the god of the common man and woman well.¹

Through the Psalms, the scope from mono-ethnic to multi-ethnic worship broadens. Though the Israelites are rightly depicted as God's chosen people, this does not negate the fact that God is Lord over all creation, and specifically Lord over all of humanity. The Psalmists open-mindedly develop the "nations" motif in Psalm 67:1-5; 68:28-32; 86:8-

¹ Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 78.

10; 87:4-7; 96:7-10, and 117:1-2. As part of the methodology in studying the Psalms, the criteria for selecting a passage for study is that it must be longer than one verse.

The thanksgiving section found in Psalm 67:1-5 is contextually couched in agricultural prosperity experienced by Israel and witnessed by the surrounding nations. Deploying the poetic device of anaphora, the Psalmist here uses five sets of pronouncements of blessing, each starting with “may.” The first (v. 1) and last (v. 7) are God-oriented, while the middle three (vv. 3-5) are people-oriented. As Kidner writes, “The song begins at home, and returns to pause there a moment before the end; but its thought always flies to the distant peoples and to what awaits them when the [Abrahamic] blessing that has reached ‘us’ reaches all.”² There is eschatological hope that foreign people will turn to the Lord when they hear, see, and experience God’s graciousness and benevolence. There should be something incipiently attractive to the world about God’s dealings with His covenant people. Davidson explains:

If there was ever a narrow exclusiveness in Israel’s understanding of God—and there was at times—then this brief psalm is surely the antidote. The blessing which God’s people have received and confidently expect to continue to receive is a blessing to be shared. Here is a faith crying out to be universalized.³

While Kidner fails to comment on the prominent multi-ethnic themes of this psalm, Davidson is fully captivated by these features. The Psalmist likely has neighboring countries in mind, but the whole earth needs to be reconciled to God. Psalm 67:3 incites the praises of all the people of the earth. The people are glad and sing for joy because of God’s shepherd-like equity and guidance. “Equity” certainly stands out, “for you rule the peoples with equity” (Ps. 67:4), as the most striking word in this Psalm. God’s equity trumps any notion of racism or prejudice. He is not impartial to those outside Israel and

² Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72, Kidner Classic Commentaries* (London: InterVarsity, 1973), 236.

³ Robert Davidson, *The Vitality of Worship: A Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 209.

His lordship extends over them. His revelation through the fruitfulness of the land now requires the response of the nations.

Psalm 68:28-35 discloses the names of some of the worshipping nations that may be in view in Psalm 67. This psalm predictively envisions a day when subjugated kingdoms will bring vassal tribute to the Lord and place it at His temple. The Psalmist asks God in verse 30 to “rebuke the beast among the reeds” (Egypt) and to rebuke “the herd of bulls among the calves of the nations” (Cush). Once enemies, Egypt and Cush are no longer wild, but are now depicted as tamed. Allen P. Ross asserts, “Egypt and Ethiopia are referred to as the great powers, not Assyria and Babylon. The psalm would fit rather well at the time of the moving of the ark to Zion (2 Sam. 6).”⁴ This is not forced participation in the temple cult, but an opportunity to participate in the vocalized multi-ethnic monotheistic worship. Psalm 68:32 provides the invocation for the nations to “sing.” What started as Israelite worship (68:24-27), develops into Egyptian and Cushite inclusion in worship (68:28-31), and ends in total multi-ethnic worship (68:32-25). This example illustrates how the “nations” motif enriches the reading of the Psalms through a multi-ethnic lens.

King David’s lament in Psalm 86 gives voice to his feelings of despair and loneliness. After calling upon the Lord to be attentive to his prayer, David expresses momentary praise. Both Kidner and Davidson fail to offer adequate commentary to help interpret Psalm 86:8-10. David’s admission of God’s greatness above all other gods is characteristic of Israelite theology during this time period. Surrounded by the pluralism of neighboring countries, David’s statement “among the gods” could be rhetorical, but can also be viewed as an example of the faulty doctrine of monolatry in which the true God is worshipped without the denial of the existence of other gods; an ideology circulating around surrounding nations. The idol worship of other nations is overcome by the

⁴ Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013), 2:465.

supremacy and sovereignty of God as evidenced by His deeds. David logically believes that since God created all the nations of the earth, it is fitting to anticipate a day when they will worship the Lord and bring glory to His name. Ross details, “Bowing down is the representative act that signifies worship.”⁵ Sometimes words are unable to express the greatness of God and the only fitting response is to bow down—a powerful visual display of multi-ethnic worship. Though eschatologically nuanced, David’s confident hope is to experience a foretaste of this in his lifetime.

When introducing Psalm 87 in his commentary, Kidner notes, “This remarkable psalm speaks of Zion as the destined metropolis of Jew and Gentile alike. Nothing is explained with any fullness, yet by the end there remains no doubt of the coming conversion of old enemies and their full incorporation in the city of God.”⁶ Certainly Jerusalem is the center of worship during the Davidic reign and peoples from others nations who wanted to worship Yahweh would make pilgrimage to the holy temple annually. In Psalm 87:4, Jerusalem’s registry indicates that Rahab (Egypt), Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, and Cush (Ethiopia) are all citizens of Zion. Psalm 87 functions as a precursor to Pauline theology concerning the reception of Jews and Gentiles. Davidson states, “In verse 4-5 God speaks to declare that this is a city which has liberal immigration laws, its gates open to those who know me.”⁷ The Septuagint (LXX) renders “Zion” as mother in this Psalm and these listed nations are her offspring. Psalm 87:4-7 is a beautiful picture of multi-ethnic music-making and singing.

Psalm 96 is a celebration of the kingship of God. Whereas verses 1-3 are more centered around declaring the glory of God among the nations, verses 7-9 provide an opportunity for the families of nations to respond. The three-fold repetition of “ascribe to

⁵ Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms*, 2:783.

⁶ Derek Kidner, *Psalm 73-150, Kidner Classic Commentaries* (London: InterVarsity, 1975), 314.

⁷ Davidson, *The Vitality of Worship*, 287.

the Lord” suggests that the nations ought to express words and bring offerings in recognition of the authority of the Lord. Since the Lord will judge the earth and His reign is firmly established, there should be an awe and a reverent fear before Him. In verse 10, the concept of equity found in Psalm 67 reappears in the context of the inclusion of the “nations.” Verses 4-5 suggest that God “is to be feared above all gods,” which revisits the case of monolatry found in Psalm 86. Psalm 96 manages this scenario by reducing the gods of the nations to mere idols in stark contrast to the living God who has made the heavens and the earth. This psalm continues a pattern of shared traits among the Psalms where the “nations” motif appears.

Despite its brevity, Psalm 117 provides a geographically expansive and culturally inclusive call to worship. Joan Huyser-Honig summarizes, “You might think of Psalm 117 as ethnodoxology in a nutshell. Like the psalmist, ethnodoxologists know there are as many God-given ways to worship as there are languages and cultures.”⁸ According to verse 2, every human is eligible to receive God’s great love and experience His unceasing faithfulness. Previously, neighboring nations and peoples had rejected God’s love and not experienced His faithfulness because of their unfaithfulness, but now there is a response of jubilant praise to those who have received God’s love. This psalm is addressed to the entire human race, believer and unbeliever alike. Every nation has an opportunity to respond to this invitation to praise and extol the Lord regardless of past beliefs and behaviors. The ultimate purpose for which God created humans, this psalm seems to assert, was to offer Him multi-ethnic, multilingual, and multi-national praise.

⁸ Joan Huyser-Honig, “Ethnodoxology: Calling All People to Worship in Their Heart Language,” Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, February 10, 2009, <http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/ethnodoxology-calling-all-peoples-to-worship-in-their-heart-language/>, cited in Scott Aniol et al., “‘Worship from the Nations’: A Survey and Preliminary Analysis of the Ethnodoxology Movement,” *The Artistic Theologian* 3 (2015): 15.

While the Psalms of Ascent (Pss 120-134) do not explicitly mention the inclusion of the nations, these psalms concentrate on the notion of pilgrimage from remote areas to Jerusalem or Zion for worship. Norbert Lohfink and Erich Zenger note, “The Hebrew Bible must be read synchronically, in the canonical intertextuality of all the books.”⁹ Rather than reading the New Testament into the Old Testament, students should study the intertextuality of motifs within the same testament. Heeding their advice, the direction of study will shift to the Book of Isaiah which adopts the idea of pilgrimage and examines God’s covenant-making.

Isaiah

Before God’s climactic commissioning to prophetic ministry in Isaiah 6, God speaks to Isaiah through a visionary experience in Isaiah 2. The first vision contrasts two polar futures: The Mountain of the Lord and The Day of the Lord. For the purposes of this thesis, Isaiah 2:2-5 is the first example of intertextuality regarding the “nations” motif. In Isaiah’s vision, all other mountains, hills, temples or gods pale in comparison to the mountain of the Lord’s temple, which is situated on the highest summit. Lohfink and Zenger state, “Israel would call to the nations from afar, and they would come on the run. Thus Israel would be setting in motion the pilgrimage of the nations in Isaiah 2:2-4.”¹⁰ In Isaiah 2:3, foreigners view God’s mountain as an approachable place. In Zion, in Jerusalem, the Lord imparts His Law and His Word. God establishes His unprecedented peace and justice locally for those returning from pilgrimage. Alternatively, knowing Israel’s propensity to sin and become wayward, Oswalt observes, “The prophet is attempting to use the example of the Gentiles to provoke God’s people to a holy jealousy. . . . Surely, he seems to be saying, if the Gentiles will come seeking the truth we have, if

⁹ Norbert Lohfink and Erich Zenger, *The God of Israel and the Nations: Studies in Isaiah and the Psalms* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2000), 35.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

they will come to the light we hold, then we ought to walk in that light.”¹¹ In both these interpretations, Isaiah’s God-inspired vision suggests that there is an open invitation for Gentile nations to pilgrimage, worship, and receive truth from God. Israel as “a light to the nations” is Isaiah’s way of underscoring God’s agenda for inclusiveness in His acceptance of other nations, mediated through the hospitality and welcome of the people of Israel. One day this pilgrimage will become a realized eschatology.

Isaiah 11 is also a messianic text speaking of the stump or root of Jesse and the restoration of a righteous remnant. Oswalt states, “Certainly, believers were gathered to the Messiah from every part of the world, and v. 10, in a fashion reminiscent of 2:2-4, seems to begin the section with a reference to the nations at large.”¹² The literal context certainly speaks of the post-exilic Diaspora Jews returning from Assyrian captivity, but it would be unwise to overlook the significance of the “nations” motif in this text. In Isaiah 11:10-12, the Root of Jesse is a banner for the peoples and the nations. The banner is the constant visual marker to rally displaced people toward home. This second sweep of the surviving remnant is characteristic of the first reclaiming in the act of the exodus from Egypt (cf. Isa 11:16). Isaiah 11:11 lists the geographic areas that will be covered in God’s redeeming: Assyria, Lower and Upper Egypt, Cush, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath and the Mediterranean isles. Again, Oswalt states, “This completeness suggests that these names were not being used literally, although the Jews were ultimately dispersed very widely. Rather, the purpose is more figurative, attempting to say that God is able to restore his people from *everywhere* (cf. v. 12).”¹³ While it is difficult to fully agree with Oswalt’s observation, Oswalt is not as optimistic about the extent of this redemption as other commentators are and maintains a figurative interpretation. If God figuratively is able to

¹¹ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah—Chapters 1-39*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 118-19.

¹² *Ibid.*, 286.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 287.

restore His people from everywhere, surely God figuratively is also able to save people belonging to other nations who would acknowledge Him. This truth coincides with Isaiah 11:9, which reminds readers that “the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” Though not explicitly mentioned, Isaiah 11:10-16 assists in laying an Old Testament framework for the inclusion of the “nations” for the sake of multi-ethnic worship.

Isaiah is making a collective case for inclusion through his use of the “nations” motif in Isaiah 14:1-2. This Scripture documents God’s compassion toward the descendants of Jacob and how the nations are blessed through Israel. Isaiah 14:1 affirms God’s compassion for displaced Israel. They are His chosen possession and His desire is to rescue them from captivity in order for them to resettle in their own land. God’s compassion toward Israel strongly correlates with God’s intention to keep His covenant with His elect, which is then followed by the foreigners merging with the Israelites. Oswalt asserts, “Now instead of Israel being joined to aliens, the aliens will be added to Israel.”¹⁴ God’s intention is to strategically use the nations to restore the nation of Israel to its rightful land. The transformation of the foreigner into Israelite occurs when Israel takes possession of other nations and makes them servants in the Lord’s land. Though this could be viewed as slavery from a nationalistic lens, I would interpret it to represent adoption. Those whom God does not destroy are recipients of unmerited grace and can receive adoption into the Israelite household for divine purposes.

A prophesy against Egypt turns into a redemptive story about Egypt in Isaiah 19:18-25. If one reads the OT with an exclusionist mentality, it is natural to think that God only has a plan for Israel and not for Egypt, but this scripture thwarts this faulty view. According to Oswalt: “How often persons whose comfortable world has come crashing down around them turn to God in desperation and find, almost to their surprise that he

¹⁴ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah—Chapters 1-39*, 313.

has been waiting to receive them. So Isaiah pictures Egypt's turning to God."¹⁵ Isaiah 19:18 illustrates a linguistic phenomenon where five cities in Egypt will speak Hebrew and among them, Oswalt says, is "Heliopolis, the biblical On, the seat of the worship of Re, the great Egyptian sun-God."¹⁶ The intention is not to strip Egypt of its cultural uniqueness and language, but exchange everything that once fed their pride and kept them afar from God. To accept Yahweh is to experience regeneration. In accordance with Isaiah 19:19, whether in the city or near the borders, there would always be an altar or monument to the Lord in Egypt to inspire faithful worship. Just as the Israelites experience persecution in order to turn to God, the Egyptian will undergo persecution and plague, but God's will is that they are to be counted among the saved, defended, rescued (Isa 19:20), and healed (Isa 19:22). In Isaiah 19:23, God's grace extends to Egypt's neighbor, the Assyrians. A transmigration takes place between Egypt and Assyria for the sake of multi-ethnic worship, Oswalt argues. Reflecting on the latter part of the same chapter, Isaiah 19:24-25, Oswalt observes,

*A highway is a favorite metaphor in this book for the removal of alienation and separation. . . . Israel, Egypt, and Assyria are placed on a par. Among them Israel will exist for blessing, but all of them are at one before God. In a remarkable statement Isaiah applies terms previously restricted to Israel to both Egypt and Assyria. He calls Egypt *my people* and Assyria *the work of my hand*.¹⁷*

Both Egypt and Assyria thus experience a spiritual transformation from a lifestyle of persecution to one of praise. Isaiah envisions three nations worshipping without any hostility against each other. According to Oswalt, these three nations can be seen as modelling multi-ethnic worship to the world.

King Cyrus of Persia is used as a tool by God for Israel's deliverance from captivity. While the conquest of kings and rulers may convey the absence of God and the

¹⁵ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah—Chapters 1-39*, 376.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 378.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 380.

prevailing of foreign gods, the supremacy of God is rooted in the fact that He is the Creator. Isaiah 45:22-23 describes the expansion of the saved community. Not only is God willing to rescue the Israelites, but He is willing to rescue anyone from among the peoples of the earth. Oswalt explains,

In many OT texts the unrepentant and unbelieving world has destruction meted out on it. But the point here is that salvation is not the sole preserve of the Israelites whose God the Lord is. . . . If the Lord is the sole God of the whole world and if he is a savior (v. 21), then he must be the savior of the whole world as well. This understanding has run through the book from start to finish.¹⁸

The Book of Isaiah stresses that God does not have any racial prejudice against foreigners. When God's people correctly view God as Creator, they can then view fellow humans as equals. A right view of God creates a right view of people. This view is not only central to Christian theology, but also to the study of ethnodoxology. Israel's exclusivity in the plan of God is not based on cultural terms, but instead on His mercy or *hesed*. One does not need to be born Israelite in order to become a worshipper of Yahweh. What He requires is a turning from former ways of unrighteousness and idolatry. In Isaiah 45:23, God's words through Isaiah are irrevocable. This is not momentary kindness or a rare opportunity, but an open promise. This "turning," an acknowledgment of the Lordship of God, is symbolized by the bowing of the knee and the tongue swearing or giving oath.

Isaiah 56:1-8 is the longest passage in this book dedicated to multi-ethnic worship. Isaiah 56:1-2 outlines God's expectations in order to be counted among the elect. According to verse 3, God accepts the foreigner and eunuch who exhibits a new lifestyle authenticated by their commitment to justice and righteousness — "Let no foreigner who is bound to the LORD say, 'The LORD will surely exclude me from his people.' And let no eunuch complain, 'I am only a dry tree'" (Isa 56:3). This same verse debunks the myth of exclusion and reinforces the truth of inclusion. The eunuchs will receive an everlasting name from within the temple (Isa 56:5), while the foreigners will be brought to the Lord's

¹⁸ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah—Chapters 40-66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 223.

holy mountain for worship (Isa 56:6). Both locations signify places of worship. Oswalt clarifies, “There he will treat them just as he would any believing Israelite. They will have the privileges of having their sins atoned for (whole burnt offerings and sacrifices) and of having instant access to God in prayer.”¹⁹ God’s house is filled with multilingual prayer by a multi-ethnic assembly. The last verse sees this process as a continuous action, rather than a one-time occurrence. There is no deadline in place and the Lord has more people to gather to Himself.

The last chapter of the book of Isaiah mixes the certainty of divine judgment with hope. With pending judgment, God’s hope in Isaiah 66:18-21 surrounds the ingathering of the people from all nations and of all languages so that they can see His glory. It is important to note the missional mindset of this chapter. Those who are “brought in” are meant to “go out.” As ambassadors of God’s glory, this multi-ethnic remnant are dispatched to distant places. Destinations like Tarshish, Libya, Lydia, Tubal, Greece, and many others have never heard about the God of Israel nor beheld His glory. Oswalt explains,

The emphasis on the nations is a reprise of the thought of the opening verses of this division (56:1-8). The message of God is not for the descendant of Jacob but for the world, and those of the world who respond to it are the true children of Jacob. The message has been given the Israelites as a trust to be proclaimed. . . . But this theme is not limited to this last division of the book; it is part and parcel of the whole book, as indicated by its appearance in the introduction (2:2-5).²⁰

The theme of inclusion throughout the Book of Isaiah brings the two volumes of Isaiah 1-39 and 40-66 together. This is not by accident, but done with intention. Isaiah 66:18-21 provides an eschatological foreshadowing of multinational pilgrimage to the holy mountain in Jerusalem. Not only will they worship with their grain offerings, but some among them will take on priestly and Levitical roles. With certainty, both cosmic renewal and multi-ethnic worship will take place in the eschaton.

¹⁹ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah—Chapters 40-66*, 460.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 687.

Daniel

In moving from Isaiah's oracular prophetic work to Daniel's narrative prophetic work, from Assyrian exile to Babylonian/Persian exile, worship remains a common theme. Unfortunately, a void in literature fails to elaborate on the theme of worship found in the Book of Daniel. Whether it is the faithful monotheism of the young Hebrew leaders in exile, or the awe-filled responses of Babylonian or Persian kings to the miraculous, the Book of Daniel is set in an ideal context for multi-ethnic worship. The Book of Daniel makes a valuable contribution in building the case for "the nations" motif in the Old Testament. Daniel is noteworthy for its apocalyptic tone and its correlation with the Book of Revelation. The multi-ethnic worship found in Daniel is rooted in a specific historical context and can be seen as a precursor to the multi-ethnic worship found in Revelation.

The hope for foreign kings and their nations to worship Yahweh becomes a reality in the Book of Daniel. During these exilic years, Babylon represents a physical location where people from every known nation, tribe, and language have come by imperial succession and force. Christopher J. H. Wright calls Babylon "an international bridge"²¹ in his book *The Mission of God*. Part of God's grand narrative for the nations of the Ancient Near East, Wright argues, is the sending of Israel outside of the bounds of their promised land and into foreign lands. While their captivity is disciplinary, it is also missional. The exile theme dominates the Book of Daniel, but wisdom is the subdominant theme and is the very essence of Babylonian culture. Wright details that Daniel and his entourage were sought after:

These were people renowned for their knowledge, sought out for their advice and guidance. At a popular level, they seem to have been consulted rather like a Citizen's Advice Bureau. At the more elite level, they served in the courts of kings, functioning as administrators and government advisers.²²

²¹ Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 442.

²² Ibid.

It is the faithfulness of young Hebrew leaders amid religious oppression and their ability to interpret dreams and speak with boldness that gives them a place of influence in Babylon. Through Daniel and his friends, God makes His presence and power known to the Babylonians, which results in foreign kings verbalizing their worship of the God of Israel.

In Daniel 3:28-29, the miraculous protection of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace points back to the intertextual fulfillment of Isaiah 43:2. God's elect are not burned or consumed when walking through the fire. John J. Collins disagrees with the assertion that the doxology comes directly from the mouth of King Nebuchadnezzar. Collins defends,

The historical plausibility of this doxology on the lips of Nebuchadnezzar is nil, especially as the Jews are herein commended for defying the edict of the king. Compare the praise of the God of the Jews in 2:47 and 6:27. It is safe to say that these passages are written by Jews for the edification of Jews.²³

While this is a critical view, it is inconsistent with the progressively more robust regal confessions found later in the book of Daniel. This doubt is antithetical to the awe Nebuchadnezzar experiences in the narrative, it denies the transformative power of God, and suggests that the book of Daniel is a manipulated text. This statement of praise to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's God and their strict monotheism under pressure is publicly affirmed. This foreign king's doxological outburst of worship to Israel's God includes validating His existence, proclaiming His power, and defending His divinity by declaring an anti-malice decree. King Nebuchadnezzar's outburst of doxology is worshipful, however, not fully transformational.

The fulfillment of Daniel's interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream is found in Daniel 4:28-38. Told in the form of first-person narrative, Nebuchadnezzar confesses the eternity of God (v. 34), and then confesses the lowliness of humanity and

²³ John J. Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 191.

the sovereignty of God (v. 35). Nebuchadnezzar, once proud and now humbled, returns praise, exultation, and glory back to the Lord (v. 37). Ernest Lucas comments,

In light of the preceding story, at the end of which, as I have put it, Nebuchadnezzar is only “half converted,” it is significant that Nebuchadnezzar uses a pure “testimony” form in this letter. The words “to people of every race, nation and language” in the opening address remind the reader of the similar words in two decrees issued by the king in 3:4, 29. Both are attempts to direct the recipients’ worship. . . . The one who claims to rule “people of every race, nation and language” acknowledges that there is a higher rule, which is mighty and everlasting.²⁴

Lucas’ insight draws attention to the formal header of addressees, “to the nations and peoples of every language,” in the official documents preserved in the book of Daniel, specifically Daniel 3:4, 4:1, and 6:25. The phrase is characteristic of the multi-ethnic community that participates in worship in Revelation 7:9. In the context of the book of Daniel, it means that King Nebuchadnezzar has the power to sway the worship practices of the entire empire with one decree. Whom the king worships, the people worship. Now King Nebuchadnezzar admits that his reign is under the supreme jurisdiction of a divine ruler. When comparing Daniel 3 and Daniel 4 with Daniel 6, the sense of doxology is becoming increasingly descriptive.

The royal succession moves quickly past the reign of King Belshazzar to King Darius of the Medes. In Daniel 6:25-27, the culmination of Daniel’s lion’s den experience results in a written decree addressed to all the nations and people of every language in all the earth to fear and reverence the God of Daniel. Joyce Baldwin states,

The poems incorporated into the stories support the view that the writer’s concern was the greatness of his God, for every one of them, whether in the mouth of Daniel (as in 2:20-23) or spoken by one of the kings of the nations (4:3, 34, 35, 6:26, 27) is a hymn of wonder at the evidence of God’s rule in earth and heaven. Though many a psalm had taken up this theme, never before had there been an opportunity to witness in such alien circumstances the triumph of God over powerful international regimes.²⁵

²⁴ Ernest Lucas, *Daniel*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 114.

²⁵ Joyce Baldwin, *Daniel*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009), 149.

While at first it seemed like foreign praise, the book of Daniel has shifted to now incorporate an implied multi-ethnic praise. It is important not to underestimate the far-reaching influence of the king upon this vast multi-ethnic empire. While the guise or sound of worship is more instructional than experiential, the content of worship is still theologically weighty. While there is no complete conversion and the praise of a Babylonian king is only temporary, each story exhibits God's omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence.

Wherever multi-ethnic worship is found in the Old Testament, it seems to saturate the entire book under review. In other words, it is a noticeable theme in Psalms, Isaiah, and Daniel. Whenever multi-ethnic worship is found in the New Testament, particularly the Pauline epistles, it is brief, inferred, and is usually the culmination of a process of growing in Christ through either the pathways of reconciliation, peace, or oneness.

First and Second Corinthians

In 1 Corinthians, Paul exposes the faulty aspects of the Corinthian's worship with pastoral correctives. Considering the background behind the text, since Corinth was situated along the trade-route, it was a multi-ethnic metropolis. Leon Morris states,

Corinth was totally destroyed by the Roman, L. Mummius Achaicus, in 146 BC, but when it was refounded a century later as a Roman colony it speedily regained much of its former greatness. As the new city was a Roman colony, its inhabitants were at first Romans. Eventually Greeks came back in numbers and the city also attracted people from other races. Included among them was a Jewish population large enough to have a synagogue (Acts 18:4). . . . It was a city where Greeks, Latins, Syrians, Asiatics, Egyptians, and Jews bought and sold, labored and reveled, quarreled and hob-nobbed, in the city and its ports, as nowhere else in Greece.²⁶

High immigration levels created a multi-ethnic landscape that would have a direct impact on the ethnic makeup of the church. First Corinthians provides a multi-ethnic case study of NT church life. Immediately, Paul identifies the quarrelsome

²⁶ Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1985), 22.

divisions (1 Cor 1:10). The “unity” motif is introduced, and Paul urges agreement and perfect unity in mind and in thought amid disunity. Unless this is remedied, the church remains fragmented and multi-ethnic worship hindered. In 1 Corinthians, Paul focuses on the unity of the church. In 2 Corinthians, Paul focuses on reconciliation and peace in the church. Multi-ethnic worship is the Pauline sign that a church has moved from an unhealthy to healthy state.

After dealing with issues of wrong praxis, Paul begins to teach on the enrichment the Holy Spirit provides in worship through the distribution, order, and intelligibility of spiritual gifts. There is a wide distribution of the gifts to a multi-ethnic congregation and each member is respectively given a manifestation of the Spirit, which one must steward and then contribute back to the congregation for edification purposes (1 Cor 12:1-11). Whether by word or by deed, this enhanced worship that goes beyond the songs of a multi-ethnic congregation is truly a doxological phenomenon. The spiritual gift of tongues has a linguistic function in that it requires interpretation to be intelligible. All mentions of tongues point back to first New Testament occurrence of tongues in Acts 2. A differentiation must be made between the one-time occurrence of *xenolalia* and the numerous recorded occurrences of *glossolalia*.²⁷ John Paul Heil states,

The various attributes of Christian love are absolutely necessary for the harmonious performance of these quite different spiritual activities during worship. For example, as Paul poetically and eloquently elucidates, “love is patient, love is kind,” allowing each individual to exercise his or her particular spiritual gift. One with this kind of love is not envious of another’s spiritual gift, nor boastful or arrogant of one’s own spiritual gift.²⁸

²⁷ While early Azusa Street participants like Charles Parham believed that speaking in tongues was for missionary purposes, they were soon disappointed as they stepped on foreign soil and were unable to communicate with the indigenous people. For a global history of Pentecostalism that differentiates between the understanding and misunderstandings about *xenolalia* and *glossolalia*, see Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 34-36.

²⁸ John Paul Heil, *The Letters of Paul as Rituals of Worship* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 39.

While the Christ community in Corinth had to overcome their spiritual pride, they also had to overcome their ethnic pride and humbly defer to one another. In other words, what happens in the spiritual must first happen in the physical. In speaking of oneness, 1 Corinthians 12:13 labels the commonality Jews and Gentiles share through one Spirit and in one body, and the same applies to both slave and free. This is the first of four Pauline lists that compare and contrast labels. Though many members, as one body, this multi-ethnic church offers spiritual worship to the triune God through one Spirit.

The climactic and most explicit invitation to multi-ethnic and multifaceted worship is found in 1 Corinthians 14:26. One can immediately appreciate the encouragement that is addressed to both brothers and sisters. Multi-ethnic worship is not gender specific, but is the responsibility of every believer. In keeping with the Greek, Paul's first recommendation is that a psalm be sung. Tony Costa notes, “*ψαλμὸν* or song of praise is only one among a series of features of worship. This appears to support my contention that for Paul worship is multifaceted and not reducible to only one element.”²⁹ Surely worship is more than singing, and 1 Corinthians 14 demonstrates this with the plurality of worship expressions. Barry Liesch adds, “In light of all this it is interesting that 1 Corinthians 14 takes a real “position” on worship, the only New Testament text to do so.”³⁰ This is a defining moment for the biblical praxis of multi-ethnic worship. Furthermore, Liesch explains, “The only characteristic not explicitly associated with any other church is maximum participation.”³¹ The church in Corinth is both the most multi-ethnic and most participatory congregation among the Pauline epistles. Ralph P. Martin

²⁹ Tony Costa, *Worship and the Risen Jesus in the Pauline Letters* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 211-12.

³⁰ Barry Liesch, *People in the Presence of God: Models and Directions for Worship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 70.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

highlights, “The repeated use of words like everyone, anyone, someone, and all bring the Pauline approach into sharp focus.”³²

In approaching 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, the reconciliation that God has already accomplished in Jesus Christ is being communicated through the apostle Paul and his apostolic peers through ministry and message in order for all audiences at Corinth to make a human response to accept Christ’s reconciliatory work, which will be fully realized in the eschaton. Paul Barnett states, “Implicit in God’s reconciliation of the world to himself is the fact of human alienation or estrangement from God.”³³ Paul is indirectly inviting the Corinthian audience to discover their position in Christ so that they can participate in multi-ethnic worship of Christ. Otherwise, whether alienated from Christ or enemies of Christ, both are unable to worship God rightly. The term “ambassador” in 2 Corinthians 5:20 offers the citizenship of heaven to the citizens of Corinth and the earth. Heaven’s citizenship is multinational.

Ephesians

The Book of Ephesians is both ecclesiological and Christological, and is also a ethnodoxological case study. According to M. Sydney Park,

Paul provides one of the most explicit theological treatises on reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles (see Eph. 2:11-22). Given that Jews together with Gentiles constitute the entire world in the first century, Paul’s understanding of racial reconciliation encompasses all people.³⁴

The term “gentiles” refers to anyone who is non-Israelite. From the book of Acts onward, the hostility between Jews and Gentiles continues to brew at an apostolic level with the ministries of Peter and Paul and at a social level with the interactions between Jews, God-

³² Ralph P. Martin, *The Worship of God: Some Theological, Pastoral, and Practical Reflections* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 210.

³³ Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 307.

³⁴ Kenneth A. Mathews and M. Sydney Park, *The Post-Racial Church: A Biblical Framework for Multiethnic Reconciliation* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 176.

fearers, proselytes, Gentile Christians, and Judaizers. When speaking of the flaws of Jewish Christian identity as opposed to pure Christian identity, Tet-Lim N. Yee describes covenantal ethnocentrism “as the functioning of a certain stream of Judaism as a ‘closed-ethnic religion; and this has made the Gentile inclusion impossible in a straightforward manner unless the notion of (God’s) Israel is drastically redefined.”³⁵ For too long, Israel’s self-identity was based on their sense of peculiarity as God’s chosen. Jesus’ redemptive work redefines Israelite and Gentile identities and Paul describes the emergence of a phenomenon known as “a new humanity” (2:15). The people of God are now an open-multi-ethnic people. Foreigners and strangers are now given permanent citizenship in the kingdom of God. Shifting metaphors, these citizens are also members of God’s household too (2:19). As spiritual stones, believers are built into a holy temple upon the cornerstone, that is Christ Jesus, and together form the site from where multi-ethnic worship takes place. Even better, Jews and Gentiles alike become the embodied physical dwelling place for the Spirit of God (2:22). Tony Merida responds pastorally, “Let us be part of a red church—a group of people, from every tribe and tongue, that has been redeemed by the torn-apart Christ, who spilled His red blood that we may be reconciled to God and to one another. . . . Race is a cross issue.”³⁶ Ephesians 2:11-22 helps readers visualize the transformative theology behind the reality of multi-ethnic worship.

The “unity” motif reappears in Ephesians 4:3. Since Christ has unified Jews and Gentiles through peace (2:14), Paul now admonishes the congregation in Ephesus to continue to maintain this unity through the mutual bonds of peace. This emphasis on unity reveals that Christian living cannot be done in isolation, but only in community. To disturb, this peace would be to hinder the multi-ethnic worship of the new humanity.

³⁵ Tet-Lim N. Yee, *Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 71.

³⁶ Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Ephesians*, Christ-Centered Exposition (Nashville: B & H, 2014), 67.

Furthermore, Christ gives the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for equipping saints for ministry so that the multi-ethnic church at Ephesus can grow until it reaches full unity, full knowledge, and full maturity in Christ (3:11-13). While the New Testament examples of multi-ethnic worship are more implied rather than explicit, these examples of the “unity” motif in Ephesians find their verbal climax in the practice of Ephesians 5:19-20. Acknowledging that the one new humanity is made up of different ethnicities from Asia Minor, Jews and Gentiles, speaking and praising in Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew, their worship is not only multi-ethnic in representation, but multilingual in psalmody, hymnody, and spiritual songs. Peter O’Brien draws attention to the musicality behind the worship. “Both verbs, ‘sing’ and ‘make music’, pick up their cognate nouns from the previous clause. The additional words ‘with your heart’ do not specify an inward disposition, as though the apostle is referring to silent worship in contrast to ‘with your voices.’”³⁷ This vocalization means that there may be a mixture of creedal recitation, antiphonal singing and even instrumental praise. With this multi-ethnic worship, there is an intersection of historical Israelite worship practices and sounds, yet not without the influence of Greco-Roman musical nuances characteristic of Asia Minor. Not only is it mutually edifying, but it is also God magnifying with emphasis on thanksgiving. Credit must be rightly given to the Holy Spirit for inspiring multi-ethnic worship. Paul’s vision is for an Israelite Jew and an Asia Minor Gentile to worship together.

Colossians

The Book of Colossians bears many similarities with the Book of Ephesians, yet makes unique contributions toward developing the “unity” motif in Pauline literature. Unity is the prerequisite for Pauline multi-ethnic worship and it finds its expression through the themes of reconciliation and peace. When believers are unified to God and to one

³⁷ Peter O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 396.

another, multi-ethnic praise and worship overflows. In Colossians 1:15-20, Paul provides a magnificent sample of the Christocentric hymn that can be adapted, recited, and sung by a multi-ethnic congregation. Out of this rich hymnody comes the practical application of Christ's reconciling work whereby the alienated, with their enemy mentality and evil behavior, are put to death with Christ and are presented as sanctified without stain of sin or weight of guilt (Col 1:21-23). Reconciliation to God is the liberation of the saint from condemnation. Without right relationship with God, multi-ethnic worship is meaningless.

In Colossians 3:11, Paul removes a series of labels that once described the former life. The distinctions of ethnicity (Jews or Gentiles), tradition (circumcised or uncircumcised), language (barbarian or Scythian), and social class (slave or free) no longer impinge on acceptance into the worshipping community. Ben Witherington explains,

Paul does not mean that these distinctions and differences cease to exist when one becomes a Christian. Greeks are still Greeks and Jews are still Jews, of course. He means at the very least that these distinctions no longer determine who is among God's people. These distinctions no longer have any soteriological weight.³⁸

Succinctly put, Paul declares that Christ is all, and is in all. A shorter list appears in Galatians 3:28 with the mention of gender labels: male and female. The first list in canonical order, 1 Corinthians 12:13, was referenced in an earlier section. The shortest list appears in Romans 10:12 with only ethnic labels of Jew and Gentile. The unity of the church in Colossae is at the forefront of Paul's mind, and without this foundation a worshipful response from a multi-ethnic congregation is not possible.

The removal of these barriers and the equalization of status before God leads to the long awaited motivation for multi-ethnic worship in Colossians 3:15-16. As is characteristic of Pauline literature, Paul does not force multi-ethnic worship, but instructs multi-ethnic worship. The worshipful content should be out of thankfulness and gratitude, gospel-centered, admonishing in nature, an exercising of wisdom, in the form of psalms,

³⁸ Ben Witherington, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles*, Eerdmans Socio-rhetorical Series of Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 179.

hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Apart from the horizontal mutual benefits of multi-ethnic worship, the vertical direction of such worship must be sung toward God alone.

Douglas Moo suggests,

This verse is one of the very few that provide us with any window at all into the worship of the earliest Christians. It is, of course, too brief, and its specific contours too uncertain, to give us much specific information. First, the “message about Christ,” or, more broadly we could say, “the word of God,” was central to the experience of worship. Second, various forms of music were integral to the experience. And, third, teaching and admonishing, while undoubtedly often the responsibility of particular gifted individuals within the congregation or elders were also engaged in by every member of the congregation.³⁹

Whatever multi-ethnic worship took place was not restricted to spiritual leadership, but integrated every member of the body of Christ in the given location.

The fact that Laodicea and Hierapolis are mentioned in Colossians 4:13 speaks to the multi-ethnic audience that will hear this circulated letter. Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis are in close proximity to one another and the demographics of the churches only slightly change from city to city. Paul alludes to a missing letter sent to the church in Laodicea that had not made its way to Colossae (4:16). Perhaps this unpreserved letter would also contain instructions on worship emphasizing the “unity” motif just like Ephesians and Colossians do. Nevertheless, three cities from the same region receive encouragement to walk in Christ’s power of reconciliation, maintain peace, and worship the Lord. Christian orthodoxy and Christian orthopraxy prepare the church for Christian multi-ethnic worship.

Conclusion

Both the Old and New Testament reveal the expanding horizons of multi-ethnic worship. When the geographical contexts of each book are combined, they form a fuller map of multi-ethnic worship in various locales throughout the Ancient Near East. The Old Testament passages are generally more verbal and emotive, while the New

³⁹ Douglas Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 290.

Testament are more instructive and doctrinal. The Old Testament views multi-ethnic worship as a national response while the New Testament views multi-ethnic worship as a metropolitan response. By tracing the “nations” and “unity” motifs, the two testaments provide a more holistic view of biblical multi-ethnic worship.

CHAPTER 3

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NATIONS AT WORSHIP TOGETHER IN REVELATION

The book of Revelation provides beautiful vistas into what is not yet, but is to come. To read it is to release the human mind to acts of imagination, a visualization created by a series of word pictures from the inspired Word of God. This chapter traces the apostle John's "nations" motif through what Stallsmith refers to as a four-word "merism", "that is, a set of synonyms with overlapping senses of meaning."¹ In *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, Wilfred G. E. Watson, a Hebrew scholar, defines the poetic device *merismus* as when "certain representative components of a larger object are mentioned instead of the whole."² Merisms can be found in Revelation 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; and 17:15. The apostle John frequently uses six variables in singular and/or plural form: tribe (5x), language(s) (6x), people(s) (7x), nation(s) (7x), kings (1x), and multitudes (1x). The combination never repeats the same order. Three of seven combinations pertain to multi-ethnic worship. The first, second, and sixth are dominant examples. The third, fourth, fifth and seventh are subdominant examples. Additionally, two one-word anomalies are included in this study. One of the paramount goals of the Book of Revelation is to carefully monitor the eternal engagement and worshipful responses of everyone participating in the apocalyptic drama and eschatological kingdom from every tribe, language, people, nation, king, and multitude.

¹ Glenn Stallsmith, "Worship from the Nations: A Response to Scott Aniol," *Global Form on Arts and Christian Faith* 3, no. 1 (2015): A25.

² Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques* (London: T & T Clark, 1984), 31.

Doxological Merisms

The focus of Revelation is primarily on establishing a biblical argument for multi-ethnic worship that has its origin in the locale of heaven; namely, the throne motif. Laszlo Gallusz summarizes,

The throne of God is the main cardinal component of Revelation's throne motif. This is reflected in the fact that 76.6% of the book's θρόνος references (36 out of the 47) are throne of God texts. Almost half of them are concentrated in the throne-room vision of Rev. 4-5, which is fundamental for the throne motif.³

While multi-ethnic worship has its theological basis in heaven, its practical basis is on earth. The focus of Revelation is secondarily on creating a biblical argument for multi-ethnic worship that wrestles with the universal motif. Aware of the doctrinal extremes of unlimited salvation and unlimited atonement, it cannot be ignored that Revelation boldly offers a cosmological shift from solely fixating on earth to heaven, but also a universal shift from solely fixating on one people group to many people groups. G. K. Beale summarizes the views of Albert Vanhoye on this topic: "The apocalyptist has a tendency to apply to the world what the OT applied only to Israel or to other entities."⁴ Because of Christ's work, there is no longer a place of privilege for Israel. While Christ surely died for all, not all appropriate His work through faith. Even those who stubbornly remain impenitent and hostile toward God will eventually be subjugated in the exercising of His dominion over heaven and earth.

The context of Revelation 5 suggests that worship is the ethos of heaven before the throne of God above. Encircling the throne and participating in heavenly worship are twenty-four elders, four living creatures, a myriad of singing angels and the speech of every creature on heaven, in earth, and in the sea. Envisioning the throne room of God, it is only natural to wonder "how Christological is heavenly worship?" James Hamilton further

³ Laszlo Gallusz, *The Throne Motif in the Book of Revelation* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 97.

⁴ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 91.

prompts the Christology of Revelation 5 by asking, “What would it be like if there was no Jesus?”⁵ The absence of Christ creates an utter hopelessness for the world because it will not have a Redeemer. The apostle John started to weep at the thought of Jesus’ mere death emptied of its redemptive qualities. In the heavenly search for a seal-breaker and scroll-opener, a Lamb instead of a Lion emerges and He alone has the ability to take, open, and read the scroll. This Christological breakthrough in heavenly worship casts a vision for multi-ethnic worship. Through this revelation, heavenly worship is amplified and a new song is released. It is not multi-ethnic worship in and of itself, but the elders and living creatures lyrically sing forth the new possibility for multi-ethnic worship because of the Lamb, that is Jesus Christ. Steven Grabiner observes, “The second part of the “ὄτι clause builds on the death of Christ and indicates that this death is the means of forming a worldwide people.”⁶ While there is always a reason to offer mono-ethnic worship, Christ’s redemptive work stimulates multi-ethnic worship. Two theological facts are stated in Revelation 5:9: Jesus is worthy, and Jesus has purchased or ransomed persons from *every tribe and language and people and nation*. Since this is the first occurrence of this merism, its origin or adaptation is in question. According to David Aune,

This polysyndetic list of four ethnic units, which cumulatively emphasize universality, probably based on the frequent mention of the three ethnic groups of “peoples, nations, and languages” in Daniel. The LXX expands the threefold Danielic phrase into a fourfold phrase in Dan 3:4, “nations and lands, peoples and languages.”⁷

Therefore, if there is a precursor for this four-word merism, it is the book of Daniel. Aune uses source criticism to show that the Book of Revelation leans heavily on other apocalyptic texts. If Revelation does indeed borrow from Daniel, the three-word merism

⁵ James M. Hamilton, *Revelation: The Spirit Speaks to the Churches*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 151.

⁶ Steven Grabiner, *Revelation’s Hymns: Commentary on the Cosmic Conflict* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 101.

⁷ David Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 52a (Dallas: Word, 1997), 361.

detailing the expanse of King Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian empire remains incomparable in vastness to the merism detailing the expanse of the Lamb's eternal empire. Returning to the universal motif, Robert Mounce states, "In contrast with the exclusivism of Judaism that prided itself on having been chosen out from among the nations, the church was genuinely ecumenical, recognizing no national, political, cultural, or racial boundaries."⁸ Therefore, there is a vision for multi-ethnic worship as the seven spirits of God are sent out to all the four corners of the earth looking for true worshippers. As one wave of worship finishes, another begins. The angels join in worship by agreeing about the worthiness of Jesus. In verse 13, the four-fold doxology climaxes where all of creation responds to the revelation of Christ. Hamilton stresses,

Those who worship Jesus are part of a vast multitude. We need to get the image of this multitude in our minds, because one way to deal with being sojourners—which is what we are—is to know where home is. Home for us, means joining in that multitude praising Jesus. But it doesn't stop with the multitude—it extends to "every creature."⁹

The profundity of this scene is that it not only reveals the multi-ethnic worship that is hoped for, but it is creational worship. The specification of heavenly, earthly, and aquatic creatures expands the anticipated scope of worship to include all animals. While humanity is God's prized creation, the remainder of His creation is not to be ignored, but included. Despite their limitations to speak intelligent words, there is an embedded sound and capacity for worship in every creature. In the span of one chapter, Revelation 5 moves from impossibility for multi-ethnic worship to realized multi-ethnic worship to magnificent creational worship. The foundation set in Revelation 5 is critical for the developments made in Revelation 7.

In the continuing sequence of throne room experiences, Revelation 7 provides the next revelatory clues in bolstering an argument for multi-ethnic worship. An

⁸ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1977), 136.

⁹ Hamilton, *Revelation*, 159.

innumerable multitude from *every nation, tribe, people and language* have an audience before God in His throne room. Whatever distance that once existed no longer seems to be an issue. The meaning of transcendence and immanence takes on new meaning when human beings are caught up in the heavens in their eternal state and are gifted with close proximity to the throne of God. The sealing of the 144,000 Israelites in Revelation 7:1-8 followed by the multi-ethnic multitude of Revelation 7:9-17 implies that Jesus is the means of salvation bridging Jews and Gentiles into a mixed multitude. Beale affirms this view: “Therefore, the multitude in Rev. 7:9 are the consummate fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise and appear to be another of the manifold ways in which John refers to Christians as Israel.”¹⁰ The grand narrative of the Bible moves from mono-ethnic Israel to the full integration of the nations of the world. This multi-ethnic worship comes in the form of a cry, dynamically in a loud voice. Recipients of salvation sing multi-ethnic songs of salvation. The participants sing out of their personal experience. Christ is the source of this salvation, so their song is declarative praise about His salvific work. This singing is followed by the elders and living creatures joining in worship by prostrating themselves facedown before the throne, offering “a double amen.” The dialogue of verses 13-14 provide clarity by identifying those who are robbed in white through the blood of the Lamb. These people are those who exit the Great Tribulation through martyrdom or natural death. Regardless of one’s eschatological position, the supposed mid-tribulation people are truly multi-ethnic in composition and worshippers at heart. Verse 15 indicates the eternal service of these people, no longer afflicted by hardship, now positioned before God’s throne, in credit to the Lamb, participating in ceaseless multi-ethnic worship. They need not worry about anything else but worship because they are eternally provided with shelter, food, water, shade, and protection.

¹⁰ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 427.

In stark contrast to the worship of the beast in Revelation 13, Revelation 14:1-7 returns to the topic of worship, specifically the mono-ethnic worship of the 144,000 in heaven and an angelic call to multi-ethnic worship on earth. The location of the Lamb and the 144,000 in verse 1 is Mount Zion, the heavenly seat of His reign. The 144,000 have their foreheads stamped with the Father's name rather than the mark of the beast, displaying their unadulterated worship of the one true God. The call to worship is signaled by the loud peals of thunder and a roar of rushing waters. Aune notes the proper instrumentation: "The author has a clearer impression of the sound he hears and uses a simile drawn from human life, namely, the sound of a group of kithara players, to characterize the sound."¹¹ This sound is interpreted as the ancient harp or derivatively the modern guitar. It was in Revelation 5:8 earlier where the twenty-four elders were depicted as harpists. The 144,000 are now given the heavenly instrument of choice and verse 3 explains that the 144,000 alone are able to rehearse the new song before the four living creatures and twenty-four elders. The next pericope reveals the proclamation of three angels. The first angel informs the multi-ethnic worship of earth. The sixth occurrence of the merism is found in verse 6, addressing *every nation, tribe, language and people*. While Revelation 5 and 7 speak of people who have a positive disposition toward God, Revelation 14 speaks of people who have a negative disposition to God. Beale confirms, "These are unregenerate multitudes, the majority of which are not expected to respond favorably to the gospel announcement."¹² Hence, the angel speaks in a loud voice so that all may hear and be warned of imminent judgment. The proclamation of the eternal gospel requires fearing God, glorying God, and worshipping God, who is maker of the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the springs. If this worship takes place, there is potential for

¹¹ David Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 52b (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 808.

¹² Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 749.

another outburst of multi-ethnic worship; however, if the eternal gospel is rejected, multi-ethnic worship will be hindered and worship of the beast inevitable.

Anti-Doxological Merisms

Four other anti-doxological merisms ought to be mentioned, though their full examination goes beyond the scope of this study. Revelation 10:11 is the entrustment of a prophecy contained on a little scroll from an angel. John eats the scroll which tastes like honey, but it turns sour in his stomach. This vision is meant to describe the content of the prophetic message. John is charged with the responsibility of prophesying about *many peoples, nations, languages and kings*. Revelation 11:9 describes the ministry of the two witnesses who prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. After their appointed time of ministry, the beast will kill them, and their corpses will remain on display before *every people, tribe, language and nation*, before being resurrected from death to life and ascending from earth to the heavens. Revelation 13:17 is a reversal of multi-ethnic doxology as the beast becomes the object of earthly worship. The beast is given authority over *every tribe, people, language and nation*. All unbelievers whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life are subject to this multi-ethnic false worship. Therefore, multi-ethnic worship is an area of cosmic contention. Midway through Revelation, the question can be posed, "Who will the inhabitants of the earth worship eternally?" Changing images to the prostitute who sits by many waters in Revelation 17:15, the water represents *peoples, multitudes, nations and languages* and the prostitute represents the great city, later known as Babylon. After much lamenting, repeated warning, and many woes, the city of Babylon falls, along with the people of the earth who were within proximity to her. Stallsmith concludes,

The next five [four-word merisms] (10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15) describe humans of every nation, tribe, language, and people under the influence of the evil beast. Richard Bauckham writes that this transition into Revelation underscores one of the

main themes in all of scripture: God invites people from every nation to be in the business of redeeming people from all nations and societies.¹³

Revelation 14:6 was handled earlier with Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 due to the positive invitation it makes to *every nation, tribe, language, and people* to join in multi-ethnic worship before God rather than the beast.

Before concluding this biblical theology of Revelation, two other one-word multi-ethnic anomalies deserve to be mentioned. The sea of glass reveals the location of this worship as the throne room. Revelation 15:3-4 offers the praise of multi-ethnic overcomers accompanied by harps. The composer is God's servant, Moses. The song is filled with doxological content about a deliverance motif associated with both Moses and the Lamb (multi-ethnic doxology). The allusion to a deliverance motif draws thematically rather than lyrically from previous Scripture. According to Mounce, "We are not to understand two songs, but one. The deliverance of which Moses and the people sang in Exodus 15:1-8 prefigured the greater deliverance wrought by the Lamb."¹⁴ The defeat of Pharaoh and the defeat of the beast are alike because of the multi-ethnic worship both finished works elicit. The song is then Christocentric because it is a song not only of Moses, but of the Lamb. Transitioning to the content of the song, worship in Revelation 15 makes much of the character of God: His greatness, marvelousness, justice, truth, fear, glory, holiness, and righteousness. Verse 4 alludes to universality by referring to *all nations*. Grabiner comments, "The second clause picks up the universalistic strand implied by the question, and indicated that all nations will come and worship in God's presence. Undoubtedly, the rhetorical question is designed to admit only the answer 'no one.'"¹⁵ This is similar to what is found in Moses and Miriam's song—"Who among the gods is like you, LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working

¹³ Stallsmith, "Worship from the Nations," A25.

¹⁴ Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 285.

¹⁵ Grabiner, *Revelation's Hymns*, 190.

wonders?” (Exod. 15:11). Once again, acknowledging the temptations of universalism, God’s theodicy is made known as the universal multi-ethnic worship of the beast is overcome by the universal multi-ethnic worship of the Lamb. The King of the nations commands the worship of all nations. Beale writes,

“All the nations” is a figure of speech (metonymy) by which the *whole* world is substituted for a part of it in order to emphasize that many will worship, which is in line with 5:9; 7:9ff.; and 14:3. The whole for the part is clearly the meaning where *πᾶς* (“all”) occurs with *ἔθνος* (“nation”) elsewhere. The sense in these verses is not “all without exception but “all” with distinction.¹⁶

Beale masterfully deals with the motif of universalism in Revelation. His interpretative preference for “with distinction,” rather than “without exception,” helps his readers understand the range of meaning without falling into doctrinal error.

The *great multitude* of Revelation 19:1-8 provides the final multi-ethnic scene filled with explicit doxology. Introducing the text, Aune states, “Rev 19:1-8 is the longest, most complex, and final hymnic section in Revelation containing five hymnic text units. This lyrical section has aptly been described as a great hymnic finale to Revelation.”¹⁷ This appears to be the same great multitude found in Revelation 7:9. “Hallelujah!” is repeated four times in Revelation 19 and becomes the common worship vernacular of the great multi-ethnic multitude (vv. 1, 3, 6) in addition to the affirming “Amen, Hallelujah!” of the twenty-four elders and four living creatures (v. 4). Citing Pierre Prigent, Grabiner reiterates, “These are the only occurrences in the NT of this familiar OT expression.”¹⁸ The term “Hallelujah!,” once popularized in the Book of Psalms, first appearing in Psalm 104 and appearing numerous times in Psalm 148 and 150, now finds new meaning in Revelation 19. It is an ancient-future word that can be repeated by the same people as is demonstrated in verse 3. It can never be exhausted. In no way is the “Hallelujah!”

¹⁶ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 797-98.

¹⁷ David Aune, *Revelation 17-21*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 52c (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1021.

¹⁸ Grabiner, *Revelation’s Hymns*, 203.

restricted to the multi-ethnic multitude, but in verse 4 the heavenly elders and creatures lay prostrate and cry “Amen, Hallelujah!” The term can be both shouted and cried in any worshipful position or posture. Like a call and response, one last “Hallelujah!” is offered by the great multitude in verse 6 in view of the ready bride of Christ.

Conclusion

The book of Revelation offers narrative insights into heavenly worship that excite its readers for the imminent return of Jesus. The apostle John’s record ought to be credited for its high Christology, the very catalyst for multi-ethnic worship. Whatever cosmic conflict is to come has a predetermined end. The question remains, to what extent does knowing the future inform the present worship practices, both mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic, of the twenty-first-century evangelical church? A biblical theology behind multi-ethnic worship cannot isolate the book of Revelation from the entire corpus of Scripture. While Revelation ends with multi-ethnic worship, it is certainly not the beginning of multi-ethnic worship. The Old Testament is not silent on this matter and multi-ethnic worship, as proved in chapter 2 using the “nations” motif, needs to be rediscovered, appreciated, and applied. It is also clear that the reconciliation the New Testament encourages is the only viable option for removing the stains of racism. All racism that deters multi-ethnic worship is rooted in cosmic conflict. Cosmic conflict is not the only characteristic of the book of Revelation selectively observed, but the entire Bible holistically observed. Therefore, the liberation of multi-ethnic worship is now and the liberation of multi-ethnic worship is also to come.

CHAPTER 4
A CASE STUDY OF WORSHIP AT WATERLOO
PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY

To anchor the argument of this thesis in a twenty-first century context, an ethnographic case study of the nations at worship at Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly (WPA) from October 2016 to April 2018, was conducted. WPA is a Canadian evangelical church in Waterloo, Ontario.

The cultural convergence in Waterloo and its impact on the local church is a phenomenon deserving more study. In Waterloo Region, multi-ethnic Mennonites coexist alongside multi-ethnic migrants. While the Canadian context surely differs from the context of the Mennonite communities in the United States (i.e., the Pennsylvania Dutch of Lancaster County), this case study still yields insights useful for the broader North American context.

The Region of Waterloo is made up of three cities (Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo) along with four townships (North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich). The last national census conducted in 2016 records Waterloo Region having a population of 535,154 people.¹ It is the tenth largest city in Canada and is both the fourth largest city and has the fourth highest growth rate in the Province of Ontario.² Furthermore, the

¹ Census Profile. “2016 Census—Waterloo. Regional Municipality, Ontario, Government of Canada, Statistics Canada,” February 8, 2017, accessed July 12, 2018, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CD&Code1=3530&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=waterloo&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=Population&TABID=1>.

² “Census Bulletin: Population, Age and Sex, Region of Waterloo,” accessed July 6, 2018, <https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/resources/Census/Census-Bulletin-1-Population-Age-and-Sex-access.pdf>.

National Household Survey (2011) indicates that Waterloo Region is Canada's fifth largest in regards to foreign-born persons per capita.³

As a preamble, this chapter will trace the multi-ethnic growth of Waterloo Region, along with the multi-ethnic growth of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, to set a wider context for the multi-ethnic growth of the congregation at WPA.

The Multi-Ethnic History of Waterloo Region

Finding their spiritual origin in the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the term "Mennonite" is the categorical name identifying followers of Menno Simons of the Anabaptist tradition. As James Urry writes in his forward to *One Quilt, Many Pieces: A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada*, "The problem of too many names and too many varieties of Mennonites for any outsider to possibly comprehend is apparently longstanding. . . . In terms of time and space, Mennonites have become a diverse people."⁴ Therefore, even in what might seem strictly a mono-ethnic beginning, there are multi-ethnic aspects to this community.

Prior to Mennonite settlement, the original inhabitants of the land were six indigenous tribes (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora) collectively referred to as the Haudenosaunee. Nearing the turn of the eighteenth century, Canada was not yet an independent nation, but still a British province. Germans were the first ethnic group to settle the new frontier of Upper Canada in the early 1800's. Historian Heinz Lehmann summarizes the arrival of the first German immigrants to Waterloo:

Here we are dealing with the core area of the Germans in Ontario. From the very beginning, as we saw, Germans participated in the opening up of the young

³ NHS Profile, "Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, Census Metropolitan Area, Ontario," 2011, accessed July 12, 2018, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=541&Data=Count&SearchText=Kitchener%20%20Cambridge%20%20Waterloo&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=541&TABID=1>.

⁴ Margaret Loewen Reimer, *One Quilt, Many Pieces: A Guide to Mennonite Groups in Canada*, 4th ed. (Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 2008), 9.

province. Most important, however is the fact that Germans were also the first to penetrate decisively into the interior of the country. Until 1800, large settlements had remained confined to the shore districts of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, the bands of the St. Lawrence and the Niagara. . . . From this point in 1800, two Mennonite families advanced in true pioneer spirit and under great difficulties—they had to cross a large area of swamp—to the Grand River, thus laying the foundation for the German stronghold in Ontario, Waterloo County.⁵

According to the Canadian Mennonite Family Tree,⁶ there were two main groups of Mennonites inhabiting Southern Ontario. For approximately two centuries, Old Order Mennonites/Amish of the Swiss-German Branch have been well established in Ontario with main pathways of immigration coming from Pennsylvania and eastern Europe. More recently, Old Colony Mennonites of the Russian-German branch have resettled back in Southern Ontario after living in Mexico, followed by two waves of immigration from Russia. Though schismatic, the diversity of the Mennonites suggests that what is now Waterloo Region was always multi-ethnic in respect to its first settlers.

Waterloo County began to flourish under pioneering Mennonites. Lemann chronicles,

The small hamlet that [Mennonites] founded was named Ebytown after its largest family. Because Eby, who was elected preacher in 1809 and elder in 1912, had his estate there, Ebytown became the center of the entire township. In 1825, it was named Berlin. It [grew] slowly, became the country seat of Waterloo County in 1852, and the cultural center of the Germans in western Ontario in general.⁷

Eventually, Waterloo County's population increased as a result of the northward migration of Pennsylvanian families and westward migration of a new wave of immigrants from Europe across the Atlantic Ocean. Waves of Scottish, British, and Irish arrived between 1820-1870, but they were never fully integrated and remained on the fringe of the dominant Mennonite culture of seclusion. Geoffrey Hayes, Associate Professor of History at the

⁵ Heinz Lehmann, *The German Canadians: 1750-1937*. (St. John's, Newfoundland: Jeperson Press, 1986), 66.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

University of Waterloo notes that in 1912, Berlin became Canada's eighteenth city.⁸ To populate such a large country, immigration was Canada's choice for viability and vitality. With the onset of World War I, Canada joined the global scene and propaganda fueled anti-German sentiments that led to a favorable vote for anglicizing the city of Berlin to Kitchener in 1916. With the forced closing of German schools, religion alone preserved the German dialects and propagated the values of German heritage in Waterloo Region into the twentieth century.

Among the South Asian immigrants, Private Buckam Singh from Punjab, India is a worthy mention. After four years of military service from 1915-1919, this Indo-Canadian veteran died from tuberculosis at Freeport Hospital in Kitchener and is remembered as "one of the first Sikhs to live in Ontario, and one of nine who served with Canadian forces during World War I."⁹ During the war, "a group of 47 unmarried women from Newfoundland had left their homes to make the 1,500-mile trip to Hespeler (Cambridge), Ontario"¹⁰ to meet the labor demands for local wartime industries. This would be one of the early examples of inter-provincial migration. With the development of immigration laws and the economic boom following World War II, the Waterloo Region Museum records, "one of the first groups of non-English and non-German speaking immigrants to arrive in large numbers in Waterloo Region [were the] Portuguese"¹¹ and from 1965-1989, "many of [today's present] residents left Romania

⁸ Geoffrey Hayes, "From Berlin to the Trek of the Conestoga: A Revisionist Approach to Waterloo County's German Identity," *Ontario History* 91, no. 2 (1999): 134.

⁹ Wall text, "What Makes Us Who We Are," "Welcome Newfoundland," Waterloo Region Museum, Waterloo, ON.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Wall text, "What Makes Us Who We Are," "Arriving in Ontario," Waterloo Region Museum, Waterloo, ON.

during [communist dictator] Nicolae Ceausescu's reign, hoping to make a better life in Canada."¹²

In its main floor exhibit called "What Makes Us Who We Are" at the Waterloo Region Museum, a wall text describes immigration to the area from all over the world under three different immigration categories:

Economic immigrants come as skilled workers, entrepreneurs, or investors and are often coming from Romania, India, China, and the United Kingdom. . . . Refugees are fleeing persecution in their home country and have been sponsored by either the government or a group in Canada . . . coming from Afghanistan, Col[o]mbia, Ethiopia, and Bosnia-Her[z]egovina. . . . Family class immigrants are joining a partner or parent who is already a permanent resident in Canada and are often coming from India, Vietnam, The United States, and Pakistan.¹³

The demographic landscape of the Waterloo region is more of a "mosaic" rather than a "melting pot," a celebration of diversity over assimilation. In regards to languages, the Waterloo Region Museum summarizes,

Currently the top five non-English languages spoken at home by geographic areas include: Cambridge—Portuguese, Punjabi, French, Chinese, Spanish . . . Kitchener—Serbian, Spanish, Romanian, Polish, and Vietnamese . . . Waterloo—Chinese, Persian (Farsi), German, Korean, Spanish . . . Rural Townships—German, Dutch, Portuguese, Polish, and French.¹⁴

English as a second language in the multi-ethnic Waterloo region is a reality.

The Multi-Ethnic Sectors of Waterloo Region

Two major sectors draw people from all over the world to the Waterloo Region. Beginning with academic institutions, Waterloo Region is an intellectual home to two secular universities: The University of Waterloo and Laurier University. In the 2017 Student Headcount for the fall term, the University of Waterloo boasted of 36,528

¹² Wall text, "What Makes Us Who We Are," "Immigration to Canada," Waterloo Region Museum, Waterloo, ON.

¹³ Wall text, "What Makes Us Who We Are," "Coming to Canada," Waterloo Region Museum, Waterloo, ON.

¹⁴ Wall text, "What Makes Us Who We Are," "Sounds of Diversity," Waterloo Region Museum, Waterloo, ON.

undergraduate and graduate students, made up of 14,648 regular students and 21,880 co-op students.¹⁵ In particular, the University of Waterloo has a strong representation of international students mainly from the Asia-Pacific region. In the 2017 Student Headcount for the fall term, Wilfred Laurier University, about half the size of the University of Waterloo, boasted of 18,463 undergraduate and graduate students, made up of 15,512 full-time students and 2,951 part-time students. In total, aside from colleges, Waterloo Region has 54,991 students.¹⁶ Multi-ethnic campuses directly impact the demographics of this ever increasingly multi-ethnic region.

Waterloo Region continues to be one of the most recognized high-tech corridors and start-up ecosystems in the world. The thriving narrative includes top private sector firms like Research in Motion (Blackberry), Google Canada, Christie Digital, OpenText and Desire2Learn alongside the next generation of engineers and information technologists from the University of Waterloo and their co-op programs. In chapter 8 of *Growing Urban Economies*, Tara Vinodrai ends her mixed review of Waterloo Region as Canada's Technology Triangle:

There is an increasing flow of immigrants into the region. . . . Local universities attracted immigrants and were critical in assisting in their subsequent integration into the community by creating spaces that were perceived as safe and free from discrimination. This suggests that universities—particularly in smaller and mid-sized cities—may become increasingly important institutions in talent attraction and retention, given the increasing internationalization of higher education, the global nature of labor markets for higher educated workers, and the growing importance of immigration as a source of new talent in Canada.¹⁷

¹⁵ University of Waterloo, “Institutional Analysis and Planning,” accessed July 12, 2018, <https://uwaterloo.ca/institutional-analysis-planning/university-data-and-statistics/student-data/student-headcounts>.

¹⁶ Wilfred Laurier University, “Laurier Fact Sheet,” accessed July 12, 2018, <https://www.wlu.ca/media/assets/resources/fact-sheet.html>.

¹⁷ Tara Vinodrai, “A City of Two Tales: Innovation, Talent Attraction, and Governance in Canada's Technology Triangle,” in *Growing Urban Economies: Innovation, Creativity, and Governance in Canadian City-Regions*, ed. David A. Wolfe and Meric S. Gertler (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 227.

The Multi-Ethnic Demographics of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada

It is also important to observe the history and growth trend of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) with whom WPA is affiliated. Stemming from the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, and founded in 1919, the PAOC is the largest evangelical fellowship in Canada with “1,100-plus churches, nine districts, two branch conferences and more than 275 missionaries to carry out their mandate effectively in communities all across Canada and around the world.”¹⁸ According to Fellowship Statistics, as of January 10, 2018, there are 39 primary language, ethnic, and culture group assemblies listed with a total of 1,060 assemblies throughout Canada.¹⁹ In Waterloo Region there are fourteen PAOC affiliated churches and five ethnic-specific churches speaking four languages: German (1), Spanish (2), Cantonese (1), Yugoslavian (1).

The PAOC and Its Branches

At present there are only two existing Branches Conferences of the PAOC. Sociologist Michael Wilkinson has documented the relationship between waves of immigration and the rise of Pentecostalism in Canada:

The history of Canadian Pentecostalism is also a story that includes the arrival of Pentecostal immigrants to Canada. . . . The response of the PAOC was to establish separate Branch Conferences for the new Pentecostal arrivals. A Branch Conference differed from traditional geographically organized District Conferences [in that the former were] oriented around ethnicity or language. In 1931 the Slavic Conference formed, followed by the Finnish Conference in 1939 and the German Conference in 1949. These Conferences operated in Canada under the umbrella of the PAOC with their own organization particularities until the 1990s. Italian Pentecostals form a separate denomination.²⁰

¹⁸ Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, “What We Do,” accessed July 12, 2018, <https://paoc.org/family/what-we-do>.

¹⁹ Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, “Fellowship Statistics,” accessed July 12, 2018, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/fellowship-services-docs/fellowship-stats-2017-at-10-jan-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=6>.

²⁰ Michael Wilkinson, *The Spirit Said Go: Pentecostal Immigrants in Canada* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 47.

The old model of branch conferences was historically created to incorporate European immigrant populations into the Canadian context, but is no longer sustainable for incorporating new South American, Asian, and African immigrants. The solution is not more branch conferences which create ethnic conclaves, but instead more multi-ethnic assemblies.

A Brief Note on Romanian Pentecostals

In his case study in Romanian Pentecostalism, Corneliu Constantineanu echoes a phrase by Croatian Pentecostal scholar Peter Kuzmic who once referred to Romania as “the Korea of Europe.”²¹ The spiritual of Romanian Pentecostals, who have endured much persecution under communist regimes, has been resilient. While the PAOC has little history in relation with Romanian Pentecostals, three PAOC missionaries are currently ministering in Romania. All share in common ministry to victims of human trafficking. In the Canadian context, however, there are many Romanian Pentecostal churches, but they are not to be mistaken as affiliates with the PAOC. For example, Biserica Penticostala Romana din Kitchener (Romanian Pentecostal Church of God of Kitchener) has over seven hundred adherents and continues to thrive as a mono-ethnic church in the Waterloo Region. The church chose to affiliate with the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) rather than the PAOC. Romanian Pentecostal churches are not exempt from internal conflict and often exercise church discipline through excommunication.²² Adherents will leave in search for a new inclusive congregation rather than an exclusive congregation where they will be pastored and can process their emotional hurts. These excommunicated Romanian Pentecostals tend to also bring and sometimes even impose their literal interpretation of Scripture and traditional views on worship into their new

²¹ Corneliu Constantineanu and Christopher J. Scobie, eds., *Pentecostals in the 21st Century: Identity, Beliefs, Praxis* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018), 256.

²² Barbara Rose Lange, *Holy Brotherhood: Romani Music in a Hungarian Pentecostal Church* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

church. Multi-ethnic PAOC churches have become a safe haven for excommunicated Romanian Pentecostals.

A Brief Note on Nigerian Pentecostals

A short excursus about West African Pentecostalism by way of comparison may be helpful here. While the PAOC was effective in establishing mission work in southeast Africa, the Assemblies of God was more effective in establishing mission work in Islamic strongholds, particularly in northwest Africa. According to Allan H. Anderson, Nigerian Pentecostalism can be categorized into three categories: Classical Pentecostals, Old Church Charismatics and Neo-Pentecostals.²³ While the majority of established Canadian Pentecostal churches were established by pastors holding to classical Pentecostal doctrine, to which Canadian Nigerians attend, the majority of newer Canadian Pentecostal church plants cannot be described as Classical Pentecostals. In particular, Nigerian Pentecostals from one of the largest Pentecostal churches in the world, Redeemed Christian Church of God, founded in Lagos, Nigeria, have over 50,000 adherents in attendance across all branches, including Canada, specifically one in Kitchener.

A Brief Note on Kenyan Pentecostals

The PAOC has had a long-standing history in some of the nations around the world as a direct result of its worldwide missionary endeavors. Wherever the PAOC missionaries were commissioned to minister, immigrants from these nations who come to Canada find theological beliefs and systems of church polity identical to that which they left in their homeland. PAOC missions work commenced in Kenya in 1918, with the development of a formal educational literacy system by missionaries Marian Wittich and her second husband, Otto Keller, by which and “the Kenyans were first taught to read and

²³ Allan H. Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 7.

write their own languages and the basic educational system of the colony was established” according to missions historian T.W. Miller.²⁴ This work was expanded by Nellie Hendrickson, “considered the ‘mother’ of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God school system in Kenya,”²⁵ who created the educational infrastructure for the continued training of next generations of Kenyan leaders for both church and governing leadership. The PAOC transfer of denominational leadership from Western missionaries to indigenous leaders is a true success story. An example of this is the multisite church named Christ Is the Answer Ministries (CITAM),²⁶ which has over 45,000 adherents across ten campuses and was started by PAOC missionaries. Because of the positive reputation of the PAOC in Kenya, Kenyans who immigrate to Canada are quick to integrate into multi-ethnic PAOC churches and prefer not to congregate as mono-ethnic churches.

A Brief Note on Ethiopian and Eritrean Pentecostals

Michael Wilkinson traces the establishment of mono-ethnic PAOC congregations throughout Canada by case-study. The Ethiopian Pentecostal groups, while using a church governance structure (presbyterian) that differs from that of the PAOC (congregational), have occasionally contemplated coming under the auspices of the PAOC on a case-by-case basis. Wilkinson reports:

Finnish Pentecostal missionaries, who apparently had a different form of church government, evangelized the Ethiopian Pentecostals who came to Canada. . . . The Ethiopian congregations, therefore, based their own congregations on a similar form of organization or church government, transplanting it in Canada.²⁷

²⁴ Thomas William Miller, *Canadian Pentecostals: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada* (Mississauga, ON: Full Gospel Publishing, 1994), 227.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 228.

²⁶ Christ Is the Answer Ministries, “Strategic Plan,” accessed July 12, 2018, <http://www.citam.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/CITAM-Strategic-Plan.-2016-2025-rvsd-1.pdf>.

²⁷ Michael Wilkinson, ed., *Canadian Pentecostalism: Transition and Transformation* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2009), 259.

Ultimately, the Toronto and Ottawa-based Ethiopian Pentecostal churches failed to officially join the PAOC. Many of their adherents moved away from their mono-ethnic churches in the midst of church controversy to join multi-ethnic churches like WPA. On the other hand, Wilkinson reports the experience of their Eritrean neighbors: “The Eritrean congregation [in Toronto] is still in the process of organizing. While they have not officially joined the PAOC, one elder explained to me that when the time is right they will talk about whether or not to join.”²⁸ According to Wilkinson, Eritrean families are moving away from the city and relocating to cities like Waterloo. Eritrean congregants at WPA have expressed their preference to attend a PAOC English-speaking, multi-ethnic church in the morning due to well-structured children’s ministry and the opportunity to strengthen their English, which is their second language.

The Multi-Ethnic History of Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly

WPA’s origin does not necessarily begin with the PAOC itself, but can be traced to several schisms directly proceeding the Azusa Street Revival of 1906. This provides historical precedent for WPA being a multi-ethnic church. The formation of Open Bible Standard Churches (Des Moines, IA) originated when followers of Florence Crawford from the Apostolic Faith Mission, moved to Eugene, Oregon. Disagreements about church property and about biblical teaching on divorce and remarriage caused the Open Bible Standard Churches to disassociate with Aimee Semple McPherson’s Foursquare ministry. As this evangelistic Open Bible movement made its way to Canada in 1945, “Armand Ramseyer complete[d] the building of the first Open Bible church in Canada”²⁹

²⁸ Wilkinson, *Canadian Pentecostalism*, 260.

²⁹ Sean Elliot, “The Beginnings of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement in North America and How It Influenced the Development of Open Bible,” Open Bible Faith Fellowship, accessed July 12, 2018, [http://www.obff.com/Forms/Open%20Bible%20Faith%20Fellowship%20of%20Canada%20-%20Beginnings%20in%20North%20America%20\(OBFF%27s\).pdf](http://www.obff.com/Forms/Open%20Bible%20Faith%20Fellowship%20of%20Canada%20-%20Beginnings%20in%20North%20America%20(OBFF%27s).pdf).

in 1949, named First Church of the Open Bible in Waterloo, Ontario. After his departure to serve other Open Bible churches in the United States, the church managed to survive until 1960, when it was in decline and ready to close its doors. In the same year, the Western Ontario District of the PAOC accepted a proposal to purchase the church's assets and adopt existing congregation members. In 1962, the timeline restarted when John Shrier took the pastorate of Waterloo Pentecostal Tabernacle, at the time a congregation of forty people. By 1965, the congregation had grown to one hundred and twenty and relocated its present location in 1965.³⁰ Through weekly radio ministry, an extensive bus ministry for Sunday school, and a vibrant music ministry, Waterloo Pentecostal Tabernacle grew in numbers rapidly during the next decade. The name of the church was changed to Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly in 1975. The church grew progressively from 120 to 700 by 1980. After decades of both growth and decline, 2016 marked the end of seven pastorates over fifty-five years of ministry under the PAOC and ten pastorates over seventy-one years of existence starting with Open Bible. WPA's narrative extends back to 1945 with Open Bible, instead of 1960 with the PAOC. WPA is also not considered a PAOC church plant, but a PAOC church adoption.

Interviews with WPA Longtime Members

The two longest-standing members of WPA of non-European descent, who are still active members, were interviewed about the church's history and their role in it. The first non-European was a Black Nova Scotian man named Bernie Talbot. Mr. Talbot married his wife Mrs. Betty Talbot, a white Canadian; the first interracial marriage in the congregation. Together, they joined WPA in 1967 when the church's name was still Waterloo Pentecostal Tabernacle and became formal members of the assembly. Bernie served several terms as a deacon. With optimism regarding the multi-ethnic future of the

³⁰ That location is 395 King St North. Waterloo, ON. N2J 2Z4.

church, he said, “We have today a great pastor . . . preaching . . . a good word and [I] love the congregation and I think we are headed for great things!”³¹

Jeremiah Peats is another longstanding member of WPA. While his country of origin is St. Kitts, he and his wife Mrs. Elvina Peats lived in England where they were educated, married, and started their family. Immediately after emigrating to Canada in 1972, they both officially joined WPA as members of the assembly in the same year, when the church’s name was still Waterloo Pentecostal Tabernacle. He also served several terms as a deacon and also as an elder.

In the interview, Mr. Peats credited the multi-ethnic growth of WPA to the multi-ethnic growth of the local universities and the church’s geographical proximity to both institutions. Mr. Peats reminisced, “The church is really blessed to have such a close proximity to both universities. Students have always come to the church . . . [with] more significant multi-ethnic growth in the last two years.”³² With a fall 2017 enrollment of over 55,000 students, WPA benefits from its geographical position to two flourishing universities blended with international students. The demographics of the neighborhood surrounding the church has changed from homes filled with young families into rental student housing. Mr. Talbot and Mr. Peats, respected statesmen of the church, explicitly mentioned that they were immediately welcomed, never experienced racism in any form, and after a year of participation in the formative years of the church both were elected to church leadership positions. They both attribute the growth they now witness at WPA as a direct result of the church’s leadership electing a non-European lead pastor, in addition to biblical preaching. Regarding the multi-ethnic composition over the years, the church has predominantly come from German heritage with a few from English, Dutch, Irish, and Scottish heritage. It is only in the last decade that the ratio of adherents from European

³¹ See appendix 1, interviewee 1, July 11, 2018.

³² See appendix 1, interviewee 2, July 11, 2018.

heritage to non-European heritage has moved from a ninety to ten split, to a sixty to forty split.

A recent congregational census conducted on Sunday, May 6, 2018, a Missions Sunday, revealed that a minimum of forty-two nations are represented and forty-one languages spoken (see appendix 2). Of those engaged in the census, the top ten countries of origin, aside from Canada, are Nigeria, Ghana, Jamaica, Romania, England, Brazil, Eritrea, Philippines, and Germany. Of those engaged in census, the top ten languages spoken, aside from English, are Yoruba (Nigeria), French, German, Igbo (Nigeria), Romanian, Portuguese, Twi, Tigrinya and Swahili, and Tagalog. Under the designation “Canada,” there are certainly some former Mennonites who are no longer able to understand or speak Low German.

Worship Culture at WPA

While WPA is multi-ethnic in representation, it has not become multi-ethnic in terms of integration. The church’s worship practices presently fail to accurately represent the diverse people groups that worship at WPA. Worship at WPA bears several characteristics of the Contemporary Christian Music movement, often criticized as stereotypes. All worship songs are sung in English, which is reflective of a shared Canadian context, however, English is a second language for many congregants that have immigrated to or sought refuge in Canada. All music is played by a standard rhythm section (keyboards, drums, bass guitar, acoustic and/or electric guitars) and fails to integrate the indigenous instruments of other nations. Hymnals have been removed and the congregation has become more musically illiterate. In light of the recent multi-ethnic growth, the church leadership at WPA have discerned that the time has come where the lead pastor in partnership with the worship pastor can begin to introduce global songs into congregational worship to help the multi-ethnic congregation grow in their mindfulness of the global church and in respect of ethnic background of one another.

Conclusion

It is important to identify what kind of correlations exist between regional growth, denominational growth, and the dramatic multi-ethnic growth of Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly. In this case, as in most cases, correlation does not necessarily mean causation. Even in the context of the region's strong multi-ethnic growth, other churches in Waterloo Region are not experiencing the same percentage of multi-ethnic growth that WPA is experiencing. Instead, ethnic visitors to the church seem to be responding to WPA's welcoming of the nations. Many are being reconciled to God through saving faith in Christ. Bernie Talbot and Jerry Peats communicated in their interviews that there were no racial tensions in the church in the past. Neither are there any racial tension in the church at present to the best of my knowledge. With forty-two nations represented, first-time visitors have an increased sense of belonging when they immediately meet people from their own ethnicity or from neighboring ethnic groups. Some express that they feel like they are with family rather than feeling like strangers in the church. The church at WPA certainly represents the demographics of the city and the hope of the leaders is that its multi-ethnic growth will continue into the future. WPA must now take the necessary steps to diversify its worship practices to more fully engage ethnic congregants. This church needs musical resources, practical application tools, and strategies for both anticipating and overcoming potential barriers to continue its move from being multi-ethnic in representation to becoming multi-ethnic in integration.

CHAPTER 5
MINISTRY APPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

C. Michael Hawn admonishes his readers to respond “to D. T. Niles’ plea to take the potted plant of the gospel, break the pot, and set the plant in your own soil.”¹ This famous metaphor can be modified to refer to songs or hymns that “break out of” songbooks and hymnals of a particular cultural context and are now taught in new North American evangelical church contexts. The *telos* of multi-ethnic worship is to allow the nations to sing in the intelligibility of their language and creativity of instrumentation to generate a new awe of God in the host culture.

While the major thrust of this thesis has been to expand the biblical foundations for multi-ethnic worship, this chapter builds on this biblical theology and the case study in chapter 4 to address how a congregation practically moves from Western worship by a multi-ethnic representation toward integration. This chapter will encourage and challenge the church leadership of WPA to intentionally develop a long-term pattern of integrating multi-ethnic worship. This also means becoming more familiar with the rhythms of the liturgical church calendar. This chapter directs curious readers in search of adaptable global worship music to already available resources, print hymnals, and songbooks that can resource North American evangelical churches like WPA with an initial database of global songs. The tendency for worship planners to search for music through videos on public domains like YouTube is no substitute for biblical training and resources in this

¹ C. Michael Hawn, *Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 61.

field. This chapter concludes by recommending strategies for WPA, identifying potential barriers and obstacles for WPA, and making recommendations for further research.

Recommended Resources for Global Hymnody

As the use of hymnals declines and congregations become less musically literate, there is an urgent need for churches to rediscover the value of hymnals as unique repositories of global worship entries and discover what countries and languages are represented. Leading multi-ethnic worship can be the very catalyst that causes churches to need to become musically literate again. It is a sign of progress for denominations to recognize when their once mono-ethnic churches have become multi-ethnic churches and respond by publishing a hymnal or songbook filled with multi-ethnic songs. This early part of this chapter will review several hymnals for their global worship content and make recommendations for multi-ethnic churches looking for concrete resources.

Table 1. Comparison of the global song contents of several hymnals.

Title	Total no. of hymn	No. of global hymns	No. in multiple languages
UM Hymnal (1989)	377	18	2
Baptist (1991)	665	9	5
Baptist (2008)	674	0	0
Celebrating Grace Hymnal (2010)	707	13	1
Psalms for All Season (2012)	150	26	-
Glory to God PCUSA (2013)	853	32	14
Lift Up Your Hearts (2013)	850	36	10
Sound the Bamboo (2015)	315	44	-
Let the Asian Church Rejoice (2015)	135	23	-

One example of denominational progress was produced by The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) in partnership with the Reformed Church in America (RCA). In the preface to the hymnal, *Lift Up Your Hearts*, the editorial team envisions,

A book available for use both within and beyond the two thousand worshipping communities that make up these two bodies. One of the privileges of living in today's

world is the opportunity to learn from and explore a wide variety of the songs of God's people from many musical cultures across time and space. . . . With such a rich abundance of songs, musical styles, and even varying versions of the same text, it seems wise, then, to appoint a curator to assemble a core collection of biblically faithful, theologically sound, and congregationally accessible music for worship.²

Maintaining the standard hymnal arrangement, but with the addition of basic chord markings, *Lift Up Your Hearts* offers 850 songs and 115 prayers. The first hymn in the collection, "All People That on Earth Do Well," set to the tune OLD HUNDRETH is strategically printed alongside translation into twelve languages—English, French, Dutch, Hungarian, German, Indonesian, Spanish, Swahili, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. The last hymn, "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow," uses the same tune as the first hymn. Its textual treatment also mirrors that of the first hymn, as it is also printed with parallel translations in twelve languages—English, Cherokee, Mohawk, Navajo, German, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Korean, Japanese, and Mandarin. In total, 36 languages are represented³ in the book; 10 hymns are given with translation into three or more languages each. The most frequent language after English is Spanish, with 28 hymns. While there were no translations provided for the "contemporary" choruses, their inclusion in the collection modernizes the hymnal making it relevant to twenty-first-century North American evangelical churches.

Compiled by the same editorial team as *Lift Up Your Hearts*, the collection *Psalms for All Seasons* takes a similar approach in the hymnal, which is suited for followers of the regulative principle, preferring a biblically literal and non-instrumental approach to worship. While not appreciated by all evangelicals, some will engage with Psalm singing to broaden their worship horizon or trace the historical development of worship. In the introduction to the *Psalms for All Seasons* hymnal, the editorial team envisions a book "to encourage thoughtful and faithful engagement with the text of each

² John D. Witvliet et al., *Lift Up Your Hearts: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs* (Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian, 2013), vii.

³ *Ibid.*, 1054.

psalm; to feature musical choices that are singable and accessible; and to be hospitable to a relatively wide range of traditions and cultures.”⁴ For those who may be unfamiliar with the musical background of the Psalter in worship during and after the Reformation, it is important to become familiar with the multiple forms and styles of Psalm singing. The editors carefully distinguish between the main approaches and indicate effective uses of each in worship:

The reading or chanting of a psalm is ideal for engaging with the text in an unobtrusive way, free from the constraints of any single interpretive move. *Metrical psalms*, with regular meter and often rhyme set to familiar hymn tunes, are ideal for encouraging congregational singing. Their regularity improves their accessibility and facilitates their memorization. *Responsorial psalms*, with a repeated refrain sung by the congregation, are ideal for directing the congregation to a central thrust of the psalm. *Improvisational prayers* based on psalms are especially ideal for contextually applying the psalms to present circumstances. *A dramatic reading* of the psalm may be ideal for highlighting the implicit script in a psalm, a literary feature that is obscured in other forms.⁵

As a collection, it engages all 150 Psalms and none are omitted or neglected. The hymnal displays the unlimited possibilities in arranging each Psalm. In total, 26 languages are represented.⁶

The United Methodist Hymnal (1989)⁷ deserves credit for being one of the forerunners in incorporating global worship songs and hymns, many with stanzas in the original language. The hymnal revision committee prefaces,

Much care has been taken to provide hymns and prayers from our rich ethnic diversity. More than 70 hymns are included to represent the Afro-American,

⁴ John D. Witvliet et al., *Psalms for All Seasons: A Complete Psalter for Worship* (Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian, 2012), ii.

⁵ *Ibid.*, v.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1107.

⁷ The United Methodist Church has begun work on the next hymnal. It is scheduled to be released in 2021. For more information and updates, see <http://www.umc.org/>.

Hispanic, Asian-American, and Native American heritages, prayers and other worship materials from these traditions are also included among the hymns.⁸

In total, there are 377 hymns, choruses, and canticles beside the Psalter and order of services. In total, there are 18 languages represented and 2 songs with translation in three or more languages.

The Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) hymnal, *Glory to God* (2013), was an eight-year long project from authorization to publication. The editors defend the integrity of the hymnal as one built upon the theme of the history of salvation and committed to reflecting inclusive language pertaining to the people of God. With respect to global hymnody in the collection's Theological Vision Statement, they clarify,

The framework of the history of salvation offers a theological rationale for asking us to learn songs that come from cultures different from our own. . . . We do not sing hymns and songs because they were birthed in our culture; we sing them because they teach us something about the richness that is in God.⁹

The languages most frequently appearing after English were Spanish (27) followed by Korean (12). The hymnal contains 853 hymns and choruses, representing 32 languages in total, and 14 of the songs appear in three or more languages. *Glory to God* is comparable in size to the *United Methodist Hymnal* and the number of global hymns (32) is nearly equal to that in *Lift Up Your Hearts* (36).

The *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* unlike the *Baptist Hymnal* (2008)¹⁰ samples a few hymns and choruses in other languages. The editor's preface reads, "Through this hymnal, congregations and church musicians will sing the songs of different eras and cultures while creating songs of their own."¹¹ Among the 707 songs, 13 songs are

⁸ *The United Methodist Hymnal: Book of United Methodist Worship* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), v.

⁹ David Eicher and Presbyterian Church (USA), *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013), 917.

¹⁰ *Baptist Hymnal* (Nashville: LifeWay Worship, 2008).

¹¹ *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* (Macon, GA: Celebrating Grace, 2010), v.

represented in 7 languages with one song translated in three or more languages. Baptist denominations like The Southern Baptist Convention, with its strong mission's vision and thrust, has largely ignored the incorporation of global worship in its most recent hymnal.

I-to Loh (1936), the scholar, champion of indigenous hymnody and contextualized worship, and pioneer of Asian hymnody from Taiwan, has made a compilation of Asian hymnody called *Sound the Bamboo* with 315 hymns in 44 languages from 21 countries.¹² While it does not bear the distinctive of a particular denomination, it is a joint effort between an editorial committee led by general editor I-to Loh and the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music. Singing these songs will require an introduction to the pronunciation rules of each language and reading the transcribed music will require an understanding of musical ornament markings specific to the Asian contexts. I-to Loh is also the chief editor of *Let the Asian Church Rejoice*, a supplementary multilingual hymnal “consisting of 135 hymns in 23 languages/dialectics from 18 countries.”¹³ It can provide teaching and learning opportunities, stimulating creativity and innovation in the local church.

For implementation at a local church level, *Lift Up Your Hearts* or *Sound the Bamboo* would be helpful purchases for worship pastors and leaders of multi-ethnic churches. *A Panorama of Christian Hymnody* is a foundational textbook and survey of historical and global hymnody.¹⁴ Ultimately, the real transformation must take place in the mindset of the modern worship leader who may never have thought of being open to adopting music beyond what is defined as “contemporary” or modern worship by the

¹² Christian Conference of Asia, *Sound the Bamboo: CCA Hymnal 2000* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2006), 352-57.

¹³ I-to Loh, Mary Y. T. Gan, and Judith Laoyan-Mosomos, eds., *Let the Asian Church Rejoice* (Singapore: Trinity Theological College, 2015).

¹⁴ Erik Routley and Paul Akers Richardson, *A Panorama of Christian Hymnody* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2015).

Christian worship music industry. Those who have forsaken hymnody are encouraged to re-engage with hymnody through the lens of global worship.

Evangelical churches who are members of Christian Copyright Licensing International can access the SongSelect service to legally print music and even translate some of the popular English worship songs into other languages. This can only be accomplished with the permission of the respective publishers. For example, translations of “How Great Is Our God” can be instantly downloaded in Dutch, German, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish. While the intent of singing Western worship songs in translation may be to relate to or appease a specific nationality represented in a multi-ethnic congregation, this action disrespects the musical heritage of that specific nation. Engaging the language of various people groups is simply one component of learning their “heart songs.” North American churches should be cautious about imposing their idolized Western doxology on the nations of the world. While many nations have multiple languages, some countries widely separated geographically share the same language spoken across a wide diaspora. An example of the same language spoken by people in different geographical, social, and cultural contexts are Portuguese songs from both Brazil and Portugal.

Ethnodoxologists have great riches to offer the church in their anthropological and musicological observations. They offer insights about indigenous people groups from all over the world through scholarly publications. Musical exposure to global worship songs and demonstrations as well as multi-ethnic hymn festivals offered to small groups are a feature of some conferences. More North American worship conferences should include such training and exposure.

Apart from the academic realm, there is an opportunity to strengthen the relationships between ethnodoxologists, missionaries on the field and on leave, and North American evangelical churches. Ethnodoxologists may or may not gravitate to churches where global worship is cherished, but multi-ethnic churches need more exposure to the

field of ethnodoxology. How can a multi-ethnic church musically appreciate ethnicities represented in their congregations without the shared wisdom of ethnodoxologists? A practical suggestion would be for worship pastors of multi-ethnic churches to identify an ethnodoxologist that has studied the most populous ethnicities represented in their congregation and invite them to speak, perform or collaborate in corporate worship. Such a partnership might also lead naturally to a church's financial support of an ethnodoxologist or promotion of their work.

Practical Applications for Multi-Ethnic Worship

Josh Davis, a former longtime music missionary to the Dominican Republic, and Nikki Lerner, an experienced worship leader and multi-ethnic worship specialist, have been practitioners in the North American evangelical church for many years. Both are experts providing the practical teaching and models that the local church needs in order to learn and sing global worship songs. Chapter 14 of their book challenges readers to stop making assumptions about people and that they speak English. In their instructions on how to teach a global song, they encourage worship leaders to adopt seven tactics:

1) Have the lyrics for a song in a different language on the screen, even if you do not sing in that language; 2) Take a short section (even one word of a familiar song and sing it in a different language; 3) Create a medley with a traditional hymn and a global song in a different language; 4) Sing a call and response song; 5) Sing a chorus simultaneously in a bunch of different languages; 6) American Sign Language adds a different language on top of the sung English; 7) Sing an entire verse of a song in one language.¹⁵

Davis and Lerner further propose four models of worship, evaluating the benefits and challenges, using the imagery of a dishes in a meal: “1 Main Dish (rotates) / 1 Side Dish (rotates) Model; 1 Main Dish (static) / Multiple Side Dishes (rotates) Model; Smorgasbord / Constant Blending Model; New Cultural Space / Fusion Model.”¹⁶ While no model fits

¹⁵ Josh Davis and Nikki Lerner, *Worship Together in Your Church as It Is in Heaven* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015), chap. 14, Kindle.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

every congregation, these authors are quick to note that leaders in the local church can experiment with and determine which model serves their congregation best.

In appendix F of *The Next Worship*, Sandra Maria Van Opstal refers her readers to the short list of popular songs compiled by The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students and published in their collection of World Assembly Conference Songs:

[This] gathering of global leaders from eighty different countries meets every four years to gain vision for their movement around the world. . . . The song package used reflects the official languages of the gathering. (Song usage represented: English 30%, Spanish 30%, multilingual 15%, French 10%, language of key speakers 15%).¹⁷

This gathering has already done the hard work of sifting through numerous databases and bringing awareness of what ought to be sung globally. To receive this information, a person would need to contact the organization or contact one of the eighty global leaders engaged in the assembly. One of the drawbacks of Van Opstal's work is that her study deals largely with student worship settings in parachurch campus ministries and conferences; thus, she addresses the worship needs of university and college students more than those of the local church.

Specifically, the biennial Urbana student missions conference hosted by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, for which Van Opstal was the worship leader/planner for years, is an event intended to bring together students, faculty, graduates, pastors, leaders, missions organizations, and schools for the purpose of fueling the missionary movement and strengthening global church identity. It is a good place to meet ethnodoxologists in person. In a video by Urbana Missions,¹⁸ Urbana 15 Worship Director

¹⁷ Sandra Maria Van Opstal, *The Next Worship: Glorifying God in a Diverse World* (Downer Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017), 195.

¹⁸ Erna Hackett, "How Are Worship Songs Chosen for Urbana?" YouTube video, 4:17, posted by Urbana Missions, December 22, 2015, accessed July 18, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_iCByUcROU. For more information about the worship in Evangelical Conference Worship, particularly Urbana and Passion, see Monique M. Ingalls, "Singing Heaven Down to Earth: Spiritual Journeys, Eschatological Sounds, and Community Formation in Evangelical Conference Worship," *Ethnomusicology* 55, no. 2 (Summer): 255-79.

Erna Hackett identifies four criteria used in the song selection for an Urbana conference: (1) songs about being a global church, (2) songs as prayer for the persecuted church, (3) songs about the diversity of the North American church, and (4) songs from the global church. Pastors should better monitor the resources of global worship-oriented organizations, expose their worship teams to such events, and incorporate recommended songs into their multi-ethnic congregation.

How does a worship pastor stay current about developments and resources in the field of ethnodoxology? It would be mutually beneficial for ICE to promote their services to multi-ethnic church worship pastors and for multi-ethnic church pastors to become active members of ICE. Through the network, a worship pastor can search for local expressions of global worship happening in their own community. As one example, Toronto-based Indian fusion-style worship songwriter, Christopher Dicran Hale, along with his wife Miranda Stone, lead a vibrant monthly worship of approximately fifty people in the city of Toronto called “Yeshu Satsang,” for which Hale and others write Indian fusion worship songs in the genre he calls Christ-bhajan. A *satsang*, “gathering of truth,”¹⁹ uses the devotional genre of the Hindustani bhajans, a highly popular genre of Hindu devotional song originating in North India, which is a mixture of chant, call and response, and antiphonal singing. This bears resemblance to the apostle Paul’s preaching in Athens in Acts 17; however, in the context of a *satsang*, the preaching is accomplished through song. The lyrics, mainly in Hindi and a few in Nepali, drawing from the ancient Sanskrit language, are explicitly Christocentric. The instrumentation includes acoustic guitar, bass guitar, sitar, harmonium, tabla, and occasionally a cello or chimta. The

¹⁹ Christopher Dicran Hale, “Where Hindu and Christian World Meet: Through the Yeshu Bhakti Music of Aradhna,” in *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*, ed. James Krabill et al. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), 296.

environment is darkened, illuminated only by candlelight, and incense is burned.²⁰ The end of the service is celebrated with fellowship over chai. Yeshu Satsang Toronto has made an audio recorded and published three free audio volumes of live worship entitled *Bhakti Geet*, which means *Devotional Songs* with a fourth volume soon to be released.²¹ This ministry led by Chris Hale is one snapshot of many communities across North America that worship pastors can study from afar, dialogue with, participate alongside, and collaborate with.

Recommended Strategies for Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly

Any local church's move toward multi-ethnic worship must take place in multiple phases. Since the congregation of WPA became multi-ethnic organically, meaning that the church did not seek the nations, but the nations sought after the church, the people of WPA are the greatest resource that can guide church leadership to a shared multi-ethnic future. The church leadership, as new pastoral-ethnodoxologists, are encouraged to listen for and learn from the various "heart songs" or "heart languages" of the ethnicities represented in the congregation.

Intentional sermon planning is an essential way to introduce and keep key values before a congregation. In November 2018, WPA will work through a sermon series entitled, "We Are One." Acknowledging that there are 195 countries in the world and 7,097 living languages,²² this four-week series will help congregants discover the biblical arc of God's design for the multi-ethnic church. The first sermon in the series will focus on "Of One People, Many Nations," based on the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 and its

²⁰ This information is derived from my personal experience having served as the bass guitarist at Yeshu Satsang Toronto since 2008.

²¹ "Yeshua Satsang Toronto," Bandcamp, live worship, accessed July 20, 2018, <https://yeshusatsangtoronto.bandcamp.com>.

²² "Ethnologue: Languages of the World," accessed October 6, 2018, <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

diaspora in Genesis 11. The second sermon in the series will focus on “Life in a Foreign Land,” based on Psalm 137. This sermon will sensitize native Canadians in the congregation to the physical and emotional challenges related to immigration and displacement through Israel’s personal experience of the Babylonian captivity. The third sermon in this series will focus on “A New Humanity,” based on Ephesians 2 concerning the Jew and Gentile friction. The final sermon in this series will focus on “A Multi-Ethnic Church,” based on Acts 11; the story of the multi-ethnic church in Antioch. The worship pastor will introduce four new global songs to the congregation, one each week, to support the goals of the sermon series. This will give WPA the first of many exposures to a biblical theology in support of multi-ethnic churches and worship.

Use of Church Year

It is rare practice for Pentecostals to fully appreciate the liturgical calendar and the focus it can bring to the local church. Church leaders at WPA can annually leverage several dates and Scripture readings to better emphasize their desire for multi-ethnic worship. The first date is The Epiphany, also known as Three Kings’ Day, which falls twelve days after Christmas. The biblical narrative associated with this date commemorates the manifestation of God’s Son to the peoples of the earth. The Old Testament reading is taken from Isaiah 60:1-6. More specifically, verses 3 and 4 convey the phenomenon of multi-ethnic worship that characterizes this event when it says, “Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ‘Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip.’” A similar observation can be found in the Psalms reading taken from Psalm 72:1-14, a royal psalm celebrating David’s monarchy, but also a Messianic psalm in its many references to the eternal reign of a future King from the Davidic line. Verses 8-11 provide the call to worship in light of the justice of God:

May he rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. May the desert tribes bow before him and his enemies like the dust. May the kings of

Tarshish and of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him.

The gospel reading taken from Matthew 2:1-12, specifically verse 11, indicates that the magi from the East “bowed down and worshiped him.” These Mesopotamian magi are the first individuals to worship the incarnated Christ. All these verses reinforce a biblical reason for multi-ethnic worship.

The second date is the Presentation of the Lord, which takes place forty days after Christmas. The gospel reading is taken from Luke 2:22-40, which includes the Canticle of Simeon. In verses 32-33, Simeon elucidates, “For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.” Simeon affirms Jesus as the fulfillment of prophetic hope, the source of salvation for the nations (as well as the Light to God’s people Israel), and the object of multi-ethnic worship of Jews and Gentiles alike.

The third date is The Day of Pentecost, which takes places forty days after Easter. Pentecostals remember to celebrate this date due to their distinct Pentecostal pneumatology. The New Testament reading is taken from Acts 2:1-21. While verse 5 presents “God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven” as multi-ethnic witnesses, verse 11 confirms, “We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues.” If the ethnic and lingual barriers to worship in the Spirit have been broken down, then this event sets a spiritual precedent for other barriers like gender, age, and class to also be broken down.

Following the liturgical calendar schedules multi-ethnic worship into the liturgy of the church. WPA, other Pentecostal churches, and evangelical churches ought to reconsider engaging with “ancient-future”²³ tools that can help guide present day worship. In this way, Scripture inspires multi-ethnic worship through biblical exegesis rather than eisegesis. There is a rich theology behind why the multi-ethnic church should

²³ Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God’s Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008).

sing. The lyrics of songs sung in multi-ethnic worship, as in any worship, must become servant to the biblical text.

Potential Barriers to Overcome at Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly

WPA will face several barriers as it begins to move from representation to integration. A first barrier may arise when a particular ethnic group within the multi-ethnic congregation at WPA feels misrepresented. If the worship pastor chooses to bypass those in the congregation who belong to a certain ethnicity in the process of learning their “heart music,” the worship experience will be marked by the incorrect pronunciation of words or inaccurate musical rhythms. It is relatively easy to blur or generalize the worship practices of two neighboring nations. For example, a Nepalese congregation recently started to rent a worship space from WPA.²⁴ In an attempt to understand their worship practices, WPA could easily ignorantly superimpose Indian worship norms in their attempt to understand Nepalese worship since both countries neighbor each other.

A second barrier may arise when a particular ethnic group within the multi-ethnic congregation at WPA feels underrepresented. There is a strong representation of Nigerians at WPA, but Nigeria has nine major languages. If the worship pastor at WPA teaches and sings a song in Yoruba as an attempt to represent the Nigerian people, but not in Igbo or Edo, a group of Nigerians will naturally feel under-represented. I experienced this on June 10, 2018, when making a multi-ethnic emphasis while preaching on vertical

²⁴ Since September 2, 2018, Carrefour Nepali Church (a mono-ethnic church) has been gathering at Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly (a multi-ethnic church). During one of WPA’s service, I met a Nepalese man who was unable to speak English. Though he understood nothing sung in worship or said in preaching, he continued to attend WPA. In desperation to serve this man, I prayed asking God to send me a Nepali person who could help translate for me. In matter of week, I received a phone call from the pastor of a Bhutanese/Nepali congregation of fifty who recently emigrated from Quebec City, Quebec to Waterloo, Ontario, and were in search of a place of worship. These types of partnership can bridge the gap between mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic churches.

and horizontal worship in a series entitled “Worship Matters.” I attempted to say, “Praise the Lord,” a sampling of nine different languages (German, French, Romanian, Swahili, Spanish, Yoruba, Tamil, and Mandarin). After the service, some Nigerian congregants expressed how they felt underrepresented since not every Nigerian speaks Yoruba. One might consider the Cameroonians, who are geographic neighbors to the Nigerians, but are a very small representation at WPA. While many Cameroonians speak French due to colonization, there are hundreds of indigenous languages in Cameroon. Since their representation in the congregation is small in comparison to the Nigerians, there is a temptation to ignore the Cameroonian “heart song.”

A third barrier may arise when ethnic groups within the multi-ethnic congregation at WPA feel that they are represented by false equality with minimum effort. Tokenism should not be the goal of the multi-ethnic church, but one of the underlying goals of this thesis is that evangelical North American churches will become more aware of the needs of multiple people groups that create ethnic diversity in a congregation. For example, tokenism occurs when there are selections of a single nation from each continent. Referring to people in broad continental categories like North American, South American, European, Asian, or African ignores uniqueness of worship practices and does not represent ethnicities fairly. A better metaphor to compare the multi-ethnic worship church is the Olympic event. Churches must learn how to welcome all nations, celebrate their clothing, honor their national flag, respect their national anthem, and celebrate each participant and their achievements.

A fourth barrier in the attempt to engage in global worship at WPA is a lack of understanding and empathy for the historical development of the songs of different people groups that have experienced colonialism, slavery, or civil war in the past. Many global songs are impacted by external oppressive forces and internal crisis. It is important to sing with sensitivity the songs of the persecuted church. Indigenous songs may originate somewhere on the continuum between captivity theology and liberation theology. One

example of this is the British colonization of India in 1858, followed by their independent/liberation in 1947. There needs to be a historical perspective to ethnodoxological efforts because every country has been and will continue to be in flux.

The ethnic unity that WPA presently enjoys is to be prized. As the church leadership of WPA moves from representation to integration, there is a possibility that celebrating diversity may adversely affect celebrating oneness in Christ. Even multi-ethnic churches still have majorities that tend to dominate and minorities that tend to subordinate.

Recommendation for Future Research

While chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis offer a wider sample of Old Testament and New Testament biblical theology, another theologian could build upon this thesis to produce a complete biblical commentary series written through the lens of multi-ethnic worship. This could be in the form of one all-encompassing commentary on the Bible or a multivolume commentary with volumes on books of the Bible. A second opportunity could engage more contributors and value the exegetical skills of many theologians. This would require the expertise of theologians fluent in the original languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

Local churches such as WPA need resources that will guide church leaders through a discovery phase so that they can progressively move their congregation from being a mono-ethnic congregation to a multi-ethnic congregation. The process begins by presenting a multi-ethnic vision for the local church to church leadership. This would require a joint leaders retreat between pastors/elders, deacons and worship leaders where a compelling vision is shared, the biblical truth explored, assessments of the local church are made, strategic conversations are had, and a church finishes this process with a five-year action plan for shifting the congregation's worship practices. This requires the expertise of a parachurch organization that offers consultancy to the local church across denominations. This is does not necessarily have to replace an existing church vision,

rather it is to be rightly seen as part of the churches' mission to reach the populations living in their city.

Furthermore, it would be extremely beneficial if ethnodoxologists would partner with theologians to create a Bible study curriculum to address the concerns of the local churches in regards to multi-ethnic worship. The intention would be to answer the question: "What does the Bible have to say about multi-ethnic worship?" This could be a six to twelve-week study, either in DVD or digital format with a facilitator's guide to assist leaders in leading discussion questions and a workbook for participants. Small groups provide smaller sample sizes to test new and innovative ministry ideas. For example, WPA has a vibrant small group ministry currently consisting of thirty groups, that involves nearly 50 percent of the congregation. These groups could utilize a curriculum such as this.

When considering print music, some churches may be looking for a traditional hymnal and contemporary songbook of global songs. This can be a two-work volume with a new edition printed every five years to stay current as music can quickly evolve. This hymnal/songbook should also be in both print and digital forms. Integration with Christian Copyright Licensing International would make these resources globally accessible and stems/multitrack creation for every contemporary song would provide the background loops or supplement the instrumental or vocal layers that are missing on a worship team. The worship team at WPA regularly prints their music from this database, and incorporates multitracks to embellish the worship experience.

The recommendation is for evangelicals to start or continue publishing resources like hymnals and songbooks for and accessible to multi-ethnic churches. Evangelical denominations would do well to learn from the example of the progressive CRCNA/RCA and (PCUSA) in appointing a curator of global hymnody or assembling an editorial team to collect and transcribe global music represented in their affiliate congregations.

James R. Krabill ends his introduction in the *Ethnodoxology Handbook* by referring to the resources available in the accompanying manual entitled “Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals.”²⁵ Krabill lists some practical suggestions that this manual will provide for empowering the local church: “In bite-size portions (single sessions), appetizer samplers (weekend seminars), multicourse meals (Sunday school or small-group study series), weekly specials (one-week intensives, or full-menu buffets (semester-long courses with broad curricular focus).”²⁶

Another recommendation, a large undertaking, is for the ICE to produce a songbook for multi-ethnic churches, possibly as a sequel to the organization’s masterful handbook, to accompany their academic introduction to the field of ethnodoxology. As in the massive collaborative effort that produced the handbook, numerous ethnodoxologists could share the newest compositions of a country or people group they have been studying and transcribe their interpretation accurately into Western musical notation that can be shared with multi-ethnic evangelical churches in North America.

Conclusion

As pioneers of a still relatively young academic and ministry discipline, ethnodoxologists have dedicated their lives by fully immersing themselves in a foreign culture, living among the people they study. In ethnodoxology, the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, and musicology intersect with theology. The preceding thesis has argued for an expansion of the theological underpinnings for research and publications so that the biblical lens is not limited to the book of Revelation. In addition, this thesis has traced the “nations” motif in the Old Testament through Psalms, Isaiah,

²⁵ Brian Schrag, and James R. Krabill, ed., *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities to Reach Their Kingdom Goals* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013).

²⁶ Krabill, introduction to *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, xxvii.

and Daniel and the “unity” motif in the New Testament through 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians, yielding numerous passages in support of multi-ethnic worship. Serious engagement with these Scriptures should inspire local churches to actively foster multi-ethnic worship now rather than wait passively for eternity. As North American multi-ethnic churches begin to see themselves as part of the global worshipping church and understand the scriptural imperatives for inclusive worship, they will be able to move from demographic representation of various ethnicities in their congregations to a greater appreciation and fuller integration of the respective indigenous worship expressions of the ethnicities represented in their corporate worship. Immigration patterns have positively challenged the North American mold of worship. The field of ethnodoxology can influence multi-ethnic church leaders to become more sensitive to the musical heart languages of their parishioners and offer practical tools and strategies to implement culturally diverse worship and culturally appropriate practices in their congregations. As King David declared (and John Piper has echoed in his sermons and writings based on this text), ““May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you”” (Ps 67:3-5). As this biblical Psalm and so many other passages make clear, the mandate to worship Yahweh is clearly not exclusive to Israel, but is an invitation to the world to join in worship of Yahweh, Israel’s God, but also the one true and living God of the ages. The future of multi-ethnic worship is bright. It rests on the irrevocable truth that in the church, members from every branch of the human family can be reconciled to God and to one another through the Holy Spirit, and in the person and finished worship of Jesus Christ, who has made of many one, to the eternal praise of His glory.

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEWS WITH CHURCH LEADERS FROM THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF WATERLOO PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY

Transcript of Interviewee #1

Date: September 4, 2018

Time: 1:00 pm

Place: Lead Pastor's Office, 395 King St. N. Waterloo, ON.

Participants: Christopher Padiath and Bernie Talbot

Relationship: Lead Pastor and congregant

Christopher: What is your name?

Bernie: My name is Bernie Talbot.

Christopher: What year did you come to WPA?

Bernie: I came to WPA in 1967.

Christopher: And why did you come to WPA?

Bernie: I had visited WPA in 1962 and ah, heard a pastor, and ah, so when I moved into the area, I went, decided that that would be a good church for me. And I probably was the first black man here. My wife and I interracial marriage... couple and ah, served on the worship team and board of Deacons, so it was a good stretch... yeah.

Christopher: What do you remember of the early years at WPA?

Bernie: Ah, never ah, never experienced anything, any racial problems. The background then I would say mostly German, and ah, but there was, even at that time, even some, you know ah, other nationalities, but it was a I would say mostly German background, yes.

Christopher: What would you credit for the multi-ethnic growth of WPA?

Bernie: I think the biblical preaching, um, um, that the pastor, um, preach right from the Bible, you know, not one's opinion. But experiencing a greater depth to today's preaching, um, can't be denied. Having a non-European pastor is right about multi-ethnic groups.

Christopher: Is there anything else you would want to share?

Bernie: No, I think, I think, we have today a great pastor, um preaching, um a good word and love the congregation and I think we are headed for great things!

Transcript of Interviewee #2

Date: September 4, 2018

Time: 2:00 pm.

Place: Lead Pastor's Office, 395 King St. N. Waterloo, ON.

Participants: Christopher Padiath and Jeremiah Peats

Relationship: Lead Pastor and congregant

Christopher: What is your name?

Jeremiah: Jeremiah P.E.A.T.S Peats.

Christopher: What year did you come to WPA?

Jeremiah: Sometime in 1972.

Christopher: Tell me, why did you come to WPA?

Jeremiah: We were Pentecostal believers from the island of St. Kitts where we were born and lived in England, and we came here and heard about Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly and we came here... in 1972. Of course we joined and we came here and fellowshiped and enjoyed it immensely. I was a carpenter by trade, and of course, I became a real estate agent after that.

Christopher: What do you remember about the early years of WPA?

Jeremiah: Ah, there were a handful of students here. The church was situated on the outskirts of the city. Ah, the congregation was English speaking, from German, Dutch and English heritage. We identified many Europeans as well. As a black man, I enjoyed it immensely and with my family, again coming from St. Kitts in the Caribbean. Many, many, many Mennonites were around and we fellowshiped with them and visited with them and had good great fun with them. We heard about racism in the public sector, but we have never experienced any such thing. Our kids came from school and said, um, you know um, they have had some... um slurs... some remarks, but I asked them, "What did you tell them?" and they said that, my kids says, "When they call me a blacky, I call them a whitey!" and that was the end of it. So there was no problem at all with that. Well, the fellowship instantly welcomed us here in the congregation and I had the privilege of serving on the board as deacon... for many years... then as an elder, in the church here. And we know our children are raised here and have gone on in their lives and are still serving the Lord, so it was very good.

Christopher: What would you credit for the multi-ethnic growth of WPA?

Jeremiah: The correlation between the universities – ah multi-ethnic growth and church multi-ethnic growth. The church is really blessed to have such a close proximity to both universities. Students have always come to the church, more significant multi-ethnic growth in the last two years. You cannot deny that having a non-European pastor has brought about multi-ethnic growth in our church today.

Christopher: Is there anything you would like to add?

Jeremiah: No, we, we were, we were here from the start and we are certainly here from the beginning because everything, all that we need is right here. Our children are all grown and gone and ah, we are here and when they come just to visit us, they come to

church with us. And of course we are enjoying the ministry of the Word and the families of the church. This is home! We have no other place to go.

APPENDIX 2

CENSUS OF COUNTRIES AND LANGUAGES
REPRESENTED AT WATERLOO
PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY

Table. Countries and languages of origin

Country of Origin	Census	Language of Origin	Census
Antigua	1	Akan	2
Barbuda	1	Amharic	3
Belgium	1	Bemba	2
Brazil	7	Bisaya	1
Burundi	1	English	49
Cameroon	1	Cantonese	3
Canada	49	Cree	1
Colombia	3	Dutch	1
China	2	Edo	1
Congo	1	Filipino	1
Cuba	3	French	11
England	7	German	7
Eritrea	6	Hausa	2
Ethiopia	2	Hebrew	1
First Nations	1	Idoma	1
Germany	5	Igbo	7
Ghana	8	Indonesian	1
Greece	1	Kiganda	1
Guatemala	1	Kinyanga	1
Guyana	2	Kinyarwanda	2
Holland	1	Kirundi	1
Hong Kong	1	Korean	1
Hungary	1	Lingala	1
India	5	Luo	1

Table continued

Indonesia	1	Malayalam	2
Ireland	1	Mandarin	1
Jamaica	8	Nyika	1
Kenya	3	Patois	4
Korea	1	Pidgin	3
Nigeria	24	Portuguese	7
Northern Ireland	2	Romanian	7
Panama	1	Shona	1
Philippines	6	Serbian	1
Romania	7	Spanish	4
Rwanda	1	Swahili	5
Serbia	1	Tagalog	4
Singapore	2	Tamil	3
Scotland	1	Tanga	1
Sri-Lanka	1	Tigrinya	6
Trinidad & Tobago	3	Twi	7
USA	1	Yomba	2
Zambia	2	Yoruba	12
Zimbabwe	3		
Total Nations Represented	42	Total Languages Represented	41

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ABSTRACT

RECONCILED IN CHRIST: AN INTERTEXTUAL BIBLICAL MODEL FOR ETHNODOXOLOGY PRACTICE IN LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY

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This thesis seeks to broaden foundations for a biblical theology of multi-ethnic worship, offer a model for ethnodoxology practice specifically geared to North American local church ministry, and serve practicing ethnodoxologists with an expansion of current ethnodoxological research.

The first two chapters provide (1) literature review for interrelated topics of ethnodoxology, biblical theology, and multi-ethnic worship; (2) a biblical theology of multi-ethnic worship derived from an examination of the “nations” motif in the OT and the “unity of believers” motif in the NT, respectively. Chapter 3 examines the multi-ethnic nature of heavenly worship through a comparative study of doxological and anti-doxological merisms in Revelation. Chapter 4 is a historical case study of Waterloo Pentecostal Assembly (Ontario), 1945-2018. Chapter 5 reviews currently available collections of and resources for global hymnody for the local church, recommends strategies for transition to more culturally/ethnically inclusive worship, and proposes areas for future research.

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