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THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH:
PNEUMATOLOGICAL EXCLUSIVISM
FOR THE UNIVERSAL PRESENCE OF
CHRIST IN THE PEOPLE OF GOD

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THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH:
PNEUMATOLOGICAL EXCLUSIVISM
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To my beloved wife, Jeong-mi

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AG* *Ad gentes*: The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church (1965)
- ANF* *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. 10 vols. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
- CCC* *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. New York: Doubleday, 1995
- GS* *Gaudium et spes*: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today (1965)
- Institutes* Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Henry Beveridge. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008
- LG* *Lumen gentium*: The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (1964)
- NA* *Nostra aetate*: The Declaration on the Church's Relation to Non-Christian Religions (1965)
- NPNF*¹ *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 1. 14 vols. Edited by Philip Schaff. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
- NPNF*² *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2. 14 vols. Edited by Philip Schaff. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994
- UR* *Unitatis redintegratio*: The Decree on Ecumenism (1964)

PREFACE

Can the Holy Spirit mediate salvation in Christ to the unevangelized? This question is not just soteriologically crucial but also ecclesiologically critical. If we assume that the answer is “yes,” then we lose the significance of the hearing of the gospel as the divine message containing the saving knowledge of the person and work of Christ. We also lose the significance of the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing forth saving faith in the hearers of the gospel and mediating the salvific presence of Christ to them for incorporation into the body of Christ which is the church catholic. And so, while we absolutely say “no” to the question above, we are engaging in a project articulating the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of the hearers of the gospel and constitution of the church in which the living Christ is universally abiding.

Gregg R. Allison, my doctoral supervisor, provided an invaluable inspiration of this project through our fascinating discourses and interactions in classes and seminars. Above all anyone else, he offered unparalleled contributions to and influences over the shaping of my Christian theology especially in ecclesiology and pneumatology, the major areas of doctrines for this research project. I also give hearty words of thanks to Bruce A. Ware for his robust theology of the triune God and his commitment to Scripture. He enlightened me with theological lens of trinitarianism through which I adore the triune God as revealed in Scripture. Again, I owe no less thanks to Kyle D. Claunch for his scholarly devotion to systematic theology within evangelicalism, his sustained enthusiasm for church ministry, and his compassionate interaction with a wide range of students at school. My thanks also go to Stephen J. Wellum for his critical engagement in contemporary theology and theological method in light of Scripture as a whole. Furthermore, evangelicals in some way or another would subscribe to his remarkable

exposition and defense of classical Christology. Lastly, I am overwhelmingly thankful for the faculty of department of systematic theology and all the faculty at SBTS for their commitment to Scripture and faithfulness in the ministry of teaching and research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The New Testament portrays the constitution of the church, or the body of Christ, with a logical pattern:¹ (1) the external calling—the proclamation of the gospel; (2) the internal calling—God’s effective calling of the elect;² (3) the appropriation of the gospel; (4) conversion experience—repentance of sins and faith in Christ; (5) and the incorporation into the body of Christ through baptism with the Holy Spirit. This soteriological reality of the church of the new covenant is Christologically and pneumatologically exclusivistic:³ the Holy Spirit does not mediate saving faith in Christ

¹ This pattern is founded upon Christological and apostolic warrant. The dominical commission of evangelism and discipleship (Matt 28:19–20) prompted the disciples, since the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1 ff.), to preach the gospel through which the Spirit called the elect and regenerated them, effecting the conversion and incorporation into the body of Christ. For my concern, the key is the proclamation of the gospel as the beginning point of the constitution and salvation of the church, apart from which the pneumatological application of all redemptive merits fulfilled by Christ is utterly absent. Whether the hearing of the gospel is imperative for the Spirit to bring forth saving faith in Christ operates as the point of severance between exclusivists and inclusivists. The paper holds that exclusivistic soteriology tied to Christological and pneumatological exclusivism is biblically and theologically warranted.

² Scripture demonstrates that the effective calling is appropriated to the Father God (John 6:44; Rom 8:30; 1 Cor 1:9). Yet, in accordance with the inseparable operations, the effective calling is also the shared work of the Son and the Spirit. Bruce Demarest offers a fine definition of the internal/effectual call in which he mentions the role of the Spirit as follows: “By the internal, effectual call we mean that act of divine power, mediated through the proclaimed Word, by which the Spirit illumines darkened minds, softens stubborn wills, and inclines contrary affections toward the living God, thus leading the unregenerate to trust Christ in a saving relation.” Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation: The Doctrine of Salvation*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), 221. In this regard, I can argue that the Spirit renders the gospel call effective as he illuminates the mind to appropriate the gospel, regenerates the elect, convicts them of their sins, empowers them to repent, and produces in them saving faith in Christ.

³ Exclusivism is grounded upon two Christological affirmations: (1) the ontological finality of Christ as the one and only Savior and (2) the epistemological appropriation of the saving work of Christ in the hearing of the gospel. The concept of exclusivism as defined is Christological, and what underlies Christological exclusivism is twofold: (1) the necessity of evangelism and (2) the Spirit’s divine enablement for faith in Christ and repentance of sins through the appropriation of the gospel. Thus, pneumatological exclusivism—that the Spirit produces saving faith in Christ exclusively upon the gospel preached—essentially constitutes Christological exclusivism. Indeed, “no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). See Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 93–94; Gregg R. Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 180; Allison, *The*

apart from the hearing of the gospel. Unfortunately, the affirmation of exclusivistic soteriology tied to the principle of Christ-centered-and-pneumatological-driven-dynamic for the constitution of the church of the new covenant has faced polemics of pneumatological inclusivists.⁴ They argue that salvation in Christ by the work of the Spirit is possible other than through the hearing of the gospel.⁵ They affirm the finality of

Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), s.v. “exclusivism”; Newton Flew and Rupert E. Davies, eds., *The Catholicity of Protestantism* (London: Lutterworth, 1950), 23, 31; Millard J. Erickson, *How Shall They Be Saved? The Destiny of Those Who Do Not Hear of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 49–64, 259–61; R. Douglas Geivett and W. Gary Phillips, “A Particularist View: An Evidentialist Approach,” in *More Than One Way? Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 211–45.

⁴ Todd LeRoy Miles also noticed challenges of inclusivistic and pluralistic polemics within Christendom against exclusivism. In order to defend exclusivism and deny their claim that the Holy Spirit is at work in world religions for the possibility of salvation of their adherents apart from Christ, he centers on the essential relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the economic Trinity; he argues that the mission of the Spirit is to glorify the Son. While I find there is a commonality between his theological position and mine that the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit is essentially bound to, and in harmony with, that of Christ—which rebuts the possibility of salvation of non-Christians by the Holy Spirit present and active in them—a significant difference between his thesis and mine is that, in affirming the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit in bringing about saving faith in Christ through the epistemological appropriation of the death and resurrection of Christ, he centers on the undivided relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit while I center on the work of the Holy Spirit in the making and salvation of the church catholic. Though Miles and I would sustain the same theological outlook on pneumatological exclusivism, he approaches it in Trinitarian grammar in general and the linked relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit in particular while I approach it with emphasis on the church catholic in fulfillment of Trinitarian redemption in general and the application of the Holy Spirit of the salvific work of the Son to the church catholic in particular. See Todd LeRoy Miles, “Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 1–9.

⁵ Pneumatological inclusivists do acknowledge the identity of Christ as the one and only Savior in fulfillment of the outworking of Trinitarian redemption through his life, death, and resurrection. Yet, their critical point of view arguing against exclusivistic counterparts lies in the proposal that the hearing of the gospel is not necessary for salvation by faith in Christ, and so the adherents of world religions who have not heard the gospel might be saved in Christ through the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in them. I narrow the extent of the dissertation to pneumatological inclusivism as the discussion partner with pneumatological exclusivism. Pluralism will not be dealt with. See Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “inclusivism”; Erickson, *How Shall They Be Saved?*, 103–39; Clark H. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” in *More Than One Way?*, 93–123; Daniel Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelized: An Analysis of Inclusivism in Recent Evangelical Theology* (Carlisle, UK; Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2001), 32–39.

I interact with the Roman Catholic Church, Jürgen Moltmann, and Amos Yong as the interlocutors of pneumatological inclusivists. They not only contend for the possibility of salvation of the adherents of world religions and the unevangelized by the work of the Holy Spirit, but they also extend their soteriological contention to ecclesiastical bearings which will be discussed later. Thus, as discussion partners, they fit into my project addressing pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic. One might wonder why I have not referred to Terrance L. Tiessen and David Bentley Hart as interlocutors for this project. Tiessen mainly focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit in eliciting faith in Christ for the possibility of salvation of the unevangelized. He does not offer a discussion about how those saved outside Christianity by divine revelation and enablement of the Holy Spirit might be related to the church catholic. And so, I do not incorporate him into my project though he might be a major figure of pneumatological inclusivists within evangelicalism. See Terrance L. Tiessen, *Who Can Be Saved? Reassessing Salvation in*

salvation in Christ as the one and only Savior. However, the hearing of the gospel as the divine instrumentality for faith in Christ is not necessary. People might get saved in Christ without hearing the gospel by virtue of the work of the Holy Spirit as they are (1) related to the visible Roman Catholic Church;⁶ (2) universally redeemed in God through

Christ and World Religions (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 11–30. Hart’s approach to soteriology has little bearing on my project. His view of soteriology is universalism or God’s salvation of all human beings in the eschaton. He grounds his denial of eternal punishment and the reality of hell upon his metaphysics that the wholly good God who created all things good must be compatible with what God is in himself; thus, the just God condemning the reprobate and punishing them in the everlasting fire of hell is metaphysically untenable. Though I could engage in a fascinating theological project against his view, my primary focus on the current project is to highlight pneumatological exclusivism in relation to the church catholic over against pneumatological inclusivism. And so, I do not incorporate him into my project. See David Bentley Hart, *That All Shall Be Saved: Heaven, Hell, and Universal Salvation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), 1–6, 199–209.

⁶ The Roman Catholic Church as the continuation or prolongation of the incarnate Christ takes on the mediatorial role of salvation. There is no salvation outside the visible Roman Catholic Church. The reality of the Roman Catholic Church’s soteriology since Vatican Council II is the endorsement of the possibility of salvation for (1) the adherents of world religions; (2) industrious God-seekers; and (3) atheists. For Roman Catholicism, the Spirit is the divine agent offering the possibility of salvation to those who have not heard the gospel. Though the Vatican Council II suggested inclusivism alternative to exclusivism, it was Karl Rahner who substantiated it with theological argumentation in his writings of *Theological Investigations*. I will label the particular vision of the pneumatological inclusivism of Roman Catholicism as “institutional inclusivism.” See Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*, 163–67, 174–80; Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 2:849–62, 2:1017, 2:1081–83; Erickson, *How Shall They Be Saved?*, 103–20; Francis A. Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992), 141–81; Karl Rahner, “Anonymous and Explicit Faith,” in *Experience of the Spirit: Source of Theology*, vol. 16 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. David Morland (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1979), 58; Rahner, “The One Christ and the Universality of Salvation,” 199–224; Karl Rahner, “Anonymous Christian,” in *Concerning Vatican Council II*, vol. 6 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. Karl-h. and Boniface Kruger (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1969), 390–98; Karl Rahner, “Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions,” in *Later Writings*, vol. 5 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. Karl-H. Kruger (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966), 115–34; Karl Rahner, “On the Importance of the Non-Christian Religions for Salvation,” in *God and Revelation*, vol. 18 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. Edward Quinn (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 288–95; Karl Rahner, “Anonymous Christianity and the Missionary Task of the Church,” in *Confrontations 2*, vol. 12 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. David Bourke (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), 161–78; Karl Rahner, “Atheism and Implicit Christianity,” in *Writings of 1965–67*, vol. 9 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. Graham Harrison (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972), 145–64; Karl Rahner, “The Church and Atheism,” in *Science and Christian Faith*, vol. 21 of *Theological Investigations*, trans. Hugh M. Riley (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 137–50.

the work of the Holy Spirit;⁷ (3) and bestowed with the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh.⁸

⁷ Jürgen Moltmann, a German Reformed theologian, draws a futuristic eschaton of hope in which the godforsaken and godless world will be reconciled to God. The cross work of Christ in which the Trinitarian community of mutual surrender and other-centered love was revealed in human history fulfilled the reality of the universal reconciliation to God which had been formerly anticipated from the eschatological kingdom of God. Because he does acknowledge the crucified Christ as the divine subject delivered up by the Father to be identified with the godforsaken and godless world, Moltmann is at least not a pluralist. Yet, he posits that the whole creation inflicted with sin and evil—which he describes as *nihil* (Nothingness)—is spatially abiding inside God who withdrew into himself to make it happen, and so God’s being in himself as purely good necessitates universal reconciliation from the beginning of creation. The dynamic presence of the Spirit in it brings the love of God and a new life to it. I will label Moltmann’s particular vision of pneumatological inclusivism as “universal inclusivism.” Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 3, 6, 18, 161–62, 164, 184; Thomas R. Thompson, “Jürgen Moltmann,” in *The Routledge Companion to Modern Christian Thought*, ed. Chad Meister and James Beilby (Oxfordshire, London; New York: Routledge, 2013), 232, 234; Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, trans. James W. Leitch (London: SCM, 1967), 16, 46; Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1985), 9, 14–17, 59, 72–75, 86–88, 93–98; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1981), 57–60, 172–74, 177; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*, trans. R. A. Wilson and John Bowden (New York: SCM, 1974), 237–46; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1989), 174–77; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (1992; repr., Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 56–57, 112, 212, 219, 221, 230–31, 233, 285; Nigel G. Wright, “Universalism in the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 84.1 (2012): 33–39.

⁸ Amos Yong openly admits that he is not an exclusivist. He would identify his view of soteriology most likely with that of pneumatological inclusivists like Clark H. Pinnock. Yong integrates it with Pentecostalism in which, according to Yong, the fulfillment of Joel’s prophetic anticipation for the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh on the day of Pentecost (cf. Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:1–21) might indicate the possibility of salvation for the adherents of the non-Christian world religions. What must be noted is that Yong shows ambivalence in his discussion on soteriology. On the one hand, his theology of salvation aims to defend the Christocentric-and-pneumatologically-driven dynamic for the appropriation of salvation. On the other hand, he insists on inclusivism for the adherents of world religions as the possible recipients of salvation by virtue of the Pentecostal outpouring upon all flesh. Though Yong’s soteriology is somewhat confusing, I can label his particular proposal of pneumatological inclusivism as “Pentecostal inclusivism.” The three types of pneumatological inclusivism suggested by Roman Catholicism as institutional inclusivism, Jürgen Moltmann as universal inclusivism, and Amos Yong as Pentecostal inclusivism will be discussed in Part 2 of the dissertation. Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014); Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Amos Yong, *Who Is the Holy Spirit? A Walk with the Apostles* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete, 2011); Amos Yong, *Learning Theology: Tracking the Spirit of Christian Faith* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018); Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000); Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996); Strange, *The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelized*, 41–107, 137–264; Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God’s Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992); Amos Yong, “Whither Theological Inclusivism? The Development and Critique of an Evangelical Theology of Religions,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (1999): 327–48.

Thesis

Over against pneumatological inclusivism arguing for the work of the Holy Spirit in the possibility of salvation for the adherents of the non-Christian religions in particular and the unevangelized in general, pneumatological exclusivism has biblical and theological warrant for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.⁹ In other words, the church of the new covenant grounds its catholicity upon the Holy Spirit¹⁰ mediating the universal and salvific presence of Christ to the people of God who have heard the gospel and responded to it by faith in Christ and repentance of their sins.¹¹ In this dissertation, I define the catholicity¹² of the church of the new

⁹ The church catholic I refer to in my dissertation is the church of the new covenant or the body of Christ (Eph 1:23; 4:12; Col 1:24). While there is a debate whether the saints of the Old Testament should be included in the church catholic, I affirm that the church catholic as the new covenant reality in fulfillment of Trinitarian redemption refers to the fellowship of believers alone enjoying new covenantal relationship with Christ from the day of Pentecost to the inauguration of the new heaven and new earth. Thus, in my dissertation, I do not incorporate the genuinely redeemed believers of Israel under the administrations of various covenants of the Old Testament into the church catholic of the new covenant. I will not engage in discussing the saints of the Old Testament in terms of the possibility of their incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant.

¹⁰ I could have focused on Christological ecclesiology or soteriological ecclesiology, yet I chose to discuss pneumatological ecclesiology, centering on the work of the Holy Spirit. Again, pneumatological ecclesiology drew my attention because the three interlocutors showed pneumatological emphasis on ecclesiology and soteriology.

¹¹ The part of thesis incorporates Gregg R. Allison's definition of the church. He defines the church as "the people of God who have been saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and have been incorporated into his body through baptism with the Holy Spirit." See Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology Series (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 29. The thesis extends Allison's definition with emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in the constitution and salvation of the catholic or universal church of the new covenant ratified through the blood of Christ, co-created by Christ and the Spirit, and inaugurated on the day of Pentecost.

¹² The term "catholic" or "catholicity" conveys the notion of universality, having to do with what is whole and general. This term in ecclesiological context refers to the universal or whole church where the living Christ is present. The catholicity of the church as defined above is heavily indebted to Allison's definition of the universal church. He defines the universal church as "the fellowship of all Christians that extends from the day of Pentecost until the second coming, incorporating both the deceased believers who are presently in heaven and the living believers from all over the world." See Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 29. Still, my focus concerning the catholicity of the church is on pneumatological exclusivism for its constitution and salvation tied to the proclamation and appropriation of the gospel.

My definition of the catholicity of the church as the universal presence of the living Christ in believers finds a closest parallel in Ignatius' letter to Smyrnaeans where he affirmed, "Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." See Ignatius, *Smyrnaeans* 8.2 (ANF 1:90). Other concepts of the catholicity of the church include: (1) One of the four identification marks or attributes of the church according to the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, (2) The whole and all-embracing church consisting of all local churches throughout the world. See *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* Salutation (ANF 1:39). See also *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* 19 (ANF 1:43), (3) The entire universal church. See Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* 5.16.9 (NPNF² 2:232), (4) The church extending over the whole earth. See Augustine, *The Letters of Petilian, the Donatist* 2.38 (NPNF¹ 4:554), (5) The

covenant as the universal presence of the living Christ in both the living believers on earth and deceased believers in heaven—the church which commenced on the day of Pentecost¹³ and extends to the inauguration of the new heaven and earth.¹⁴ I focus the catholicity of the church on pneumatological exclusivism: the work of the Holy Spirit as the divine enablement for faith in Christ and repentance of sin is essentially tied to the antecedent hearing of the preached gospel. My goal is to deny inclusivistic arguments for the possibility of salvation in Christ apart from the hearing of the gospel as I demonstrate that exclusivistic soteriology, tied to pneumatological exclusivism for saving faith in Christ, defines the nature of the catholicity of the church.

Methodology

In order to defend pneumatological exclusivism over against pneumatological inclusivism, my theological task is first to present constructive arguments, according to Scripture as a whole, for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant in keeping with pneumatological exclusivism. And, founded upon—and drawing on—pneumatological exclusivism as the essential principle for the constitution

orthodox church extending over the whole world against schismatics and heretics. See Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 18.23 (NPNF² 7:139–40), (6) The elect of God joined together with Christ as their head. See Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.2, and (7) The universal and invisible gathering of the elect under Christ who is its head. See *The Baptist Confession of Faith*, 26.1. The text is available in *The Baptist Confession of Faith and the Baptist Catechism* (Port St. Lucie, FL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2018), 54.

¹³ For a discussion on the day of Pentecost as the inauguration of the church of the new covenant, see Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 30–31, 118; Gregg R. Allison and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2020), 417, 455; Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 56, 751; Flew and Davies, *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, 22–23; Clowney, *The Church*, 51–55; Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Theology of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 211–13.

¹⁴ I extend the scope of the fellowship of the believers until the inauguration of the new heavens and new earth, provided that, according to premillennialism, there will be the massive conversion of unbelievers who will submit to the reign of Christ during the millennium after the risen Christ returns. If one opts for amillennialism as more biblically convincing than premillennialism, then the catholicity of the church will terminate on the day of the second advent of Christ. Thus, the endpoint of the catholicity of the church varies depending on one’s view of millennialism. The dissertation holds to premillennialism, and so it views that the incorporation of believers into the catholic church by baptism with the Spirit will extend to the day of inauguration of the new heaven and new earth.

and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, my theological task is then to articulate, analyze, assess, and refute the polemical system of pneumatological inclusivism represented minimally as institutional inclusivism of Roman Catholicism, Jürgen Moltmann’s universal inclusivism, and Amos Yong’s Pentecostal inclusivism.

History of Research

The subject of the catholicity of the church tied to pneumatological exclusivism has been intrigued by studies of Roman Catholicism, Christology, the doctrine of Trinity, ecclesiology, and pneumatology. Though catholicity—one of the four identification marks of the church according to the Constantinopolitan-Nicene Creed—was a fascinating research topic in consideration of church history, it was too broad a concept to be reckoned as an adequate theme for a dissertation. Indeed, the concept of catholicity as the all-embracing and universal church requires a parameter giving precision to what underlies the catholicity of the church. That parameter or cause of the church catholic of the new covenant is the outworking of Trinitarian redemption the application of which hinges upon the person and work of the Holy Spirit as the co-creator of the new covenant community alongside Jesus Christ, the achiever of Trinitarian redemption designed by the Father.

And so, commitment to the Scripture as a coherent whole and the credal formulations of the fourth to fifth centuries concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, pneumatology, and Christology is substantially crucial for engaging in a robust ecclesiology and subordinating its catholicity to the divine economy. Indeed, conservative theologians of evangelicalism¹⁵ unanimously affirm the scriptural teachings

¹⁵ Conservative theologians of evangelicalism that I refer to will be those who understand the church within the traditional grammar of the Trinity entailing substantial unity and personal distinction. They also maintain the shared thoughts on inseparable operations, and so the creation of the church of the new covenant is tied to Trinitarian achievement of divine missions. Roman Catholicism, according to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, teaches its members the same belief in the triune God. However, the maxim, “There is no salvation outside the Catholic Church,” goes too far when the Roman Catholic Church

and church tradition on the singularity of divine nature, the plurality of divine persons, the hypostatic union of Christ, and the full divinity of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ While there is a general agreement concerning these areas of doctrines between evangelical exclusivists and other inclusivists, a stark difference between them lies in the understanding of the nature of the church catholic and the extent of the work of the Holy Spirit in mediating salvation.

Pneumatological Exclusivism

My discussion of the catholicity of the church in light of pneumatological exclusivism articulates and defends it over against pneumatological inclusivism. I define pneumatological exclusivism of evangelicalism as the salvation of believers in Christ utterly depends upon the Spirit who renders the hearing of the gospel appropriated, produces saving faith and repentance of sins in the hearers of the gospel, and mediates the salvific and abiding presence of Christ to them. For evangelical theology, the catholicity of the church can be defined as the universal presence of the living Christ.¹⁷ Concerning this definition, evangelicals may have inherited from Ignatius of Antioch a Christocentric statement as he affirmed: “Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.”¹⁸ For evangelical theology, such Christ-centered affirmation of the catholicity of the church entails soteriological exclusivism, that is, the finality and exclusiveness of salvation in

identifies itself with the prolongation of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, thus arguing that it is the visible medium of salvation and incorporation into it is necessary for salvation.

¹⁶ Craig A. Carter may call such consensus of evangelicalism and Roman Catholicism on the doctrine of Trinity “trinitarian classical theism.” He argues that Trinitarian classical theism is a consolidating tenet of the whole branches of Christendom since the creeds of early ecumenical councils concerning it were documented and promulgated. He confesses that Trinitarian classical theism is what makes him belong to the church catholic. See Craig A. Carter, *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 52.

¹⁷ See Flew and Davies, 23.

¹⁸ Ignatius, *Smyrnaeans* 8.2 (ANF 1:90). See Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977), 348–49.

Christ alone by faith in him and repentance of sins through the hearing and appropriation of the gospel.¹⁹ Evangelicals would argue that saving faith in Christ is impossible without the hearing and appropriation of the gospel, and the latter utterly depends on the work of the Holy Spirit in accordance with Trinitarian redemption.

Bruce Demarest argues that the effectual calling of the Spirit renders the proclamation of the gospel appropriated, thus making a conceptual distinction between internal/effectual calling and regeneration.²⁰ Gregg R. Allison rather sees the proclamation of the gospel as the vehicle for the regenerative work of the Spirit. He refers to James 1:18 and 1 Peter 1:22–23 as he demonstrates “the instrumentality of the gospel, or Word of God, for regeneration.”²¹ Steven J. Duby, while interacting with Turretin’s statement concerning the supernatural role of the Spirit in producing faith by means of the Word of God, affirms that “when the Spirit incites the exercise of faith on the part of the human person, he does so not by bypassing the mind but by utilizing the instrument of the Word of God (so Rom 10:14).”²² In discussing the proper connection between

¹⁹ Regardless of differences in theological views, churches or denominations professing to be evangelicals unanimously affirm that the gospel is central in consolidating them into a broad movement as evangelicalism. A key tenet of evangelicalism is the necessity of the hearing of the gospel as the divine means through which conversion—faith in Christ and repentance of sins—occurs. In this regard, evangelical attitude in light of soteriology is qualitatively exclusivistic, meaning that saving faith in Christ is available only when there is the proclamation of the gospel. Allison affirms the interconnectedness of the gospel and conversion as follows: “They [Repentance and faith] are tied to the *evangel*, or gospel, and are thus prompted by grace (Acts 18:27) and urged by the messengers of the gospel (1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 5:17–21). Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*, 39. See also Bruce Hindmarsh, “Evangelicalism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 290–92; Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “evangelicalism.”

²⁰ Demarest opines, “The preceding Scripture texts... indicate that effectual calling is conceptually distinct from regeneration. The power that brings sinners to Christ inheres in the Spirit’s effectual call rather than in the new birth itself. That is, the Spirit’s effectual call is a movement preliminary to regeneration; it stops short of effecting in believers a radical re-creation (2 Cor 5:17), whereby the latter participate in the divine nature (2 Pet 1:4).” Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 227. Cole comments on Demarest’s argument as “an interesting alternative. He [Demarest] contends that the effectual calling imparts to the sinner the ability to repent and believe, and regeneration follows.” Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 215n28. Cole hesitates to affirm the effectual call by the Spirit because of “no real exegetical evidence for this specialized role of the Spirit.” Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 215.

²¹ Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 369n7.

²² Steven J. Duby, *God in Himself: Scripture, Metaphysics, and the Task of Christian Theology*, Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 102.

Word and Spirit, Michael S. Horton states that the external witness of the gospel and internal witness of the Spirit entails salvation centering in Christ.²³ The work of the Spirit in rendering the proclamation of the gospel effective is grounded upon the proper connection between the Word of God and the Spirit of God.²⁴ Thus, conservative theologians of evangelicalism stress the essential connection between the appropriation of the gospel and the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit.

Institutional Inclusivism

My discussion of the catholicity of the church in light of, and in defense of, pneumatological exclusivism includes institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church as the discussion partner whose theological tenets befit pneumatological inclusivism. I define its institutional inclusivism as the salvation of religious others and the unevangelized through the visible medium of the Roman Catholic Church. For Roman Catholicism, the Roman Catholic Church is catholic “because of (1) the presence of Christ in it, and (2) the universal commission given to it by Christ.”²⁵ Since Vatican Council II, the catholicity of the church belongs to the Church of Christ subsisting in the Roman Catholic Church; thus, “the fullness of catholicity was not obtainable except in

The Word of God is equivalent to the word about Christ which is the message of the gospel (see Rom 10:14–17). Thomas R. Schreiner understands “the word about Christ” (Rom 10:17) is “the message about Christ [which] centers on his death and resurrection.” Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 2nd ed. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 554.

²³ Michael S. Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 209–11. The main purpose of his discussion on the connection between Word and Spirit is to articulate the work of Spirit as the inner teacher in illuminating human minds to grasp genuine meanings of scriptural texts with the Augustinian principle of faith seeking understanding. Though he does not specifically address the issue of external and internal calling within the discussion, the way he refers to Calvin and Berkouwer demonstrates that salvation centering in Christ is mediated through the conjoining operations of external proclamation of the gospel and inner testimony of the Spirit. For the relevant references, see Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.9.1; 2.5.5; 3.2.6; G. C. Berkouwer, *Studies in Dogmatics: Holy Scripture*, trans. Jack Rogers (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 49.

²⁴ The Word of God refers to Scripture.

²⁵ Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*, 163. Allison refers to CCC 830–31 in defining the nature of the catholicity of the Catholic Church.

communion with Rome.”²⁶ But the Council saw God’s universal salvific will as the ground for the Roman Catholic Church being ordained as the instrument and medium of salvation even for those without hearing the gospel.²⁷ Based upon this conciliar statement, the Roman Catholic Church endorses inclusivism when it affirms that people who have not heard the gospel can belong to the Roman Catholic Church through which salvation is mediated to them.²⁸ According to the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit is the divine agent offering them salvation in Christ by relating them in a manner known to God alone to the Paschal mystery, that is, the death of Christ for all men.²⁹

Francis A. Sullivan maintains that the conciliar documents suggesting inclusivistic soteriology (e.g., *AG* 7; *GS* 22) prompt us to assume that, according to the council, the Holy Spirit mediates saving grace in Christ to people—regardless of whether they adhere to some form of religions—who have not heard the gospel.³⁰ Karl Rahner is optimistic about the salvation of members of the non-Christian religions because he contends that “many of them, without explicit Christian faith, are nonetheless living in the grace of Christ.”³¹ Pope John Paul II, through his encyclicals and messages, developed the conciliar teaching of the role of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of non-Christians. He believed that the Holy Spirit who is universally present and active in individuals and non-Christian religions communicates saving grace in Christ by virtue of

²⁶ Avery Robert Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 21. For a reference, see *LG* 8; *UR* 4.

²⁷ *LG* 9, 13.

²⁸ Included in the category of those being saved by divine grace but without hearing the gospel are the adherents of the non-Christian religions—Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and so forth—seekers of God, and atheists. For references, see *AG* 7; *GS* 22; *LG* 16; *CCC* 836–45.

²⁹ *GS* 22.

³⁰ See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 163–70.

³¹ Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 174. Sullivan understands that the conciliar document upon which Rahner grounds their salvation is *Gaudium et Spes* 22 stating that the Holy Spirit in ways known to God alone associates all human beings with the grace of Christ achieved through his death and resurrection.

the accomplishment of atonement, thus making universally available to them salvation in Christ mysteriously mediated through the Roman Catholic Church.³²

Universal Inclusivism

My discussion of the catholicity of the church in light of, and in defense of, pneumatological exclusivism includes Moltmann's universal inclusivism as the discussion partner whose theological tenets befit pneumatological inclusivism. I define his universal inclusivism as the redemption of all things in God through the Holy Spirit. I ground his pneumatological understanding of universal inclusivism upon his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Jesus.

³² For an understanding of Pope John Paul II's affirmation on the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in non-Christians and their religions, refer to his encyclicals: John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis* [The Redemption of Man], encyclical letter, March 4, 1979, 6, 12, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html; John Paul II, *Dominum et vivificantem* [Lord and Giver of Life], encyclical letter, May 18, 1986, 53, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_18051986_dominum-et-vivificantem.html; John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio* [The Mission of the Redeemer], encyclical letter, December 7, 1990, 4, 6, 8, 28–29, 55–56, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html. The portions of encyclicals are available in Joseph G. Donders, ed., *John Paul II: The Encyclicals in Everyday Language*, New updated ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001). John Paul's messages are also available in Jacques Dupuis, ed., *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, 6th ed. (New York: Alba House, 1996). Gavin D'Costa argues that, according to his Spirit-centered-Trinitarian approach, the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit outside the Church entails Trinitarian presence in non-Christians, and the latter suggests the possibility of salvation for them by their sociocultural and historical elements anticipating the presence of the kingdom of God in them and working as the preparation for the gospel. See Gavin D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 109–17. He finds in several sections of John Paul II's encyclical *Redemptoris missio* an affirmation of the work of the Spirit outside the Church. Like D'Costa, Jacques Dupuis draws on Vatican II's documents and Pope John Paul II's encyclicals and messages affirming the possibility of salvation of the members of the non-Christian religions in Christ by virtue of the universal active presence of the Spirit in them. See Jacques Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions: From Confrontation to Dialogue*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 59–73, 195–213. However, he goes further when he argues that the non-Christian religions and traditions, where the Spirit is universally present and active, might work as unique mediations of salvation finding culmination in the Christological event where God's saving activity for human beings is supremely revealed. See Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions*, 253–57. Dupuis calls his particular position of soteriology between inclusivism and pluralism "pluralistic inclusivism" or "inclusive pluralism." The major distinction of his position from inclusivism and pluralism is that, while he affirms the finality and supremacy of Christ as the Savior, he argues that the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the non-Christian religions and traditions before and after Christ is a significant part of God's one saving plan for all human beings, and so they serve as autonomous mediations of salvation for their adherents without being incorporated into Christianity, but the salvation of their adherents culminates in Christ and his accomplishment of death and resurrection. Overall, he is more positive toward inclusivism than pluralism but would deny being identified as a conventional inclusivist.

Moltmann would endorse universal inclusivism through the Holy Spirit according to his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Jesus.³³ The cross and resurrection of Jesus maintain bipolar opposites between the reality of the godforsaken and godless world which conflicts with the nature of God and the reality of the new creation which conforms to it. In terms of the cross of Jesus, God overcomes the contradiction arising from the conflict between the world and himself through the cross of Jesus revealing the suffering love of the Trinitarian history of God³⁴ in solidarity with the godlessness and godforsakenness of the world to save it.³⁵ The Holy Spirit proceeding from the event of the cross is the personal medium through whom God is immanent in the whole realities of the godless and godforsaken world³⁶ and reaches them with reconciling love.³⁷

In terms of the resurrection of Jesus, God overcomes the contradiction arising from the conflict between the reality of the godless and godforsaken world and the reality

³³ Dialectical theology is the theological method of the Neo-orthodox movement of the early decades of the twentieth century in reaction to liberalism. It seeks to search for synthesis by putting opposites—thesis and antithesis—against each other. The bipolar oppositions sustain paradoxical tension in relation to each other. Such paradoxical polarities include transcendence and immanence, Christ as God-man, grace and law, faith and work, and so forth. In the process of seeking synthesis, the two poles must remain intact without diminishing the integrity of the other, which will result in unavoidable contradiction or crisis between them. See Robert V. Schnucker, “Neoorthodoxy,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 582; Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “dialectical theology”; John W. Cooper, *Pantheism—The Other God of the Philosophers: From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 34–35; Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *Twentieth-Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 173.

³⁴ Richard Bauckham offers a comprehensive definition of Moltmann’s concept of the Trinitarian history of God as follows: “The divine Trinity is involved with the world in a history of reciprocal relationship whose determining center is the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 133–34. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 153 where Bauckham defines God’s Trinitarian history as “the history of God’s involvement in the world in the history of Jesus and the Spirit by which he brings the world to its eschatological goal.”

³⁵ See Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 160; Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244–45; Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 135. Bauckham understands that Moltmann’s expression “the godless and godforsaken world” indicates “the plight both of sinners who suffer their own turning away from God and of those who are the innocent victims of pointless suffering.” Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 11. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 12, 15, 134, 153, 155, 158.

³⁶ See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 9–11, 14–16, 96–97, 289; Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 10–12, 42, 46–47; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 18.

³⁷ See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 15–16; Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 245; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 153–55.

of the eschatological kingdom through the resurrection of Jesus revealing God's promise of new creation of all things in him. The Holy Spirit, who "arises from the event of the resurrection of Christ,"³⁸ mediates the divine promise of new creation to the world between the history of Jesus and the coming of the eschatological kingdom of God.³⁹ The Holy Spirit will fulfill this promise of the new creation in God's kingdom of the eschatological future by uniting all things in God and glorifying God in all things (1 Cor 15:28).⁴⁰

³⁸ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 211.

³⁹ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 13, 131–32, 157; Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 14–16.

⁴⁰ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 124, 134, 154, 159–62. I can further ground Moltmann's pneumatological understanding of universal inclusivism upon his concept of perichoretic pantheism. John W. Cooper provides the following definition of Moltmann's perichoretic pantheism: "For Moltmann, all things consist in a vast perichoretic network. Perichoresis is the structural dynamic of all reality. It functions as Moltmann's implicit ontology: to be is to be perichoretically involved. Since the God-world relation is perichoretic, Moltmann's mature theology can be labeled *perichoretic pantheism*" (Emphasis original). Cooper, *Pantheism—The Other God of the Philosophers*, 252.

In terms of perichoresis, Moltmann avers that the divine life for all eternity is characterized by the mutual indwelling or interpenetration of three persons because of their eternal love. He describes the mutual indwelling of three persons with the following formula: "The Father exists in the Son, the Son in the Father, and both of them in the Spirit, just as the Spirit exists in both the Father and the Son." Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 174–75. The three persons, while they sustain their personal differentiation, indwell one another because of their eternal love to such a degree that they are one. Such concept of perichoresis features the Trinitarian grammar of the social Trinity: God is the eternal community of three different subjects, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit "whose unity is constituted by mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration." See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, viii. See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 16; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 16–17, 160; Cooper, *Pantheism—The Other God of the Philosophers*, 243; Thompson, "Jürgen Moltmann," 232; Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2004), 3, 305. The Holy Spirit is the subject who illuminates the perichoretic unity and community of the three persons. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 177–78.

In terms of pantheism, Moltmann draws the relationship of God and the world as the mutual indwelling or reciprocal interpenetration, namely, "God in the world and the world in God" (Emphasis original). See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 17. Perichoresis as the essential character of divine life is the determining source in creation of the world to be the perichoretic community. Correspondingly, God's relationship to the world is of the mutual indwelling or reciprocal interpenetration. God transcends the world which he created, and so he is essentially different from it. Nonetheless, he is immanent in it, and conversely, the world which he created is immanent in him. The Holy Spirit makes possible the mutual indwelling of God and the world because he is the Spirit of God through whose power God is present in it. In the relationship of perichoresis, God opens his Trinitarian history through the cross of Jesus to reconcile all things in him through the Holy Spirit. In the relationship of perichoresis, God continues his Trinitarian history through the resurrection of Jesus to mediate the new creation of eschatological kingdom to the world through the Holy Spirit. The eschatological goal of the perichoretic relationship of God and the world is the unification of all things in God and the glorification of God in all things through the work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, according to Moltmann's dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Jesus and his understanding of perichoretic pantheism, all things would be saved and reconciled in God through the Holy Spirit. For resources of pantheism to enhance the understanding of Moltmann's perichoretic pantheism, refer to Philip Clayton, "Pantheism," in *The Routledge Companion to Modern*

Moltmann discloses the implication of universal inclusivism in his understanding of the catholicity of the church as the participation in the catholicity of the eschatological kingdom.⁴¹ He suggests two ways of participation that the church of Christ identifies its catholicity with the catholicity of the coming kingdom. First, it engages, with the assurance of the universal lordship of Christ, in global mission to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8) in obedience to the dominical imperative (Matt 28:18–20).⁴² Second, it engages in “a qualitative mission” for other world religions by means of interfaith dialogue.⁴³ Both missions share an aim to bring into realization upon the world universal redemption of all things in God through the work of the Holy Spirit that is already anticipated in the all-embracing kingdom of God.⁴⁴

Pentecostal Inclusivism

My discussion of the catholicity of the church in light of, and in defense of, pneumatological exclusivism includes Amos Yong’s Pentecostal inclusivism as the discussion partner whose theological tenets befit pneumatological inclusivism. I define his Pentecostal inclusivism as the salvation of all flesh upon whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out since the day of Pentecost. Yong sees the day of Pentecost as soteriologically crucial in understanding who is to be incorporated into the range of all flesh. He relates the nature of all flesh to the all-embracing concept of catholicity of the church beginning with the outpouring of the Spirit which the prophet Joel anticipated (Joel 2:28–32) and which, Peter proclaimed, was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts

Christian Thought, ed. Chad Meister and James Beilby (London; New York: Routledge, 2013); Philip Clayton and Arthur Peacocke, eds., *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being: Panentheistic Reflections on God’s Presence in a Scientific World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); Cooper, *Panentheism—The Other God of the Philosophers*, 237–58.

⁴¹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 339.

⁴² Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 152, 349–50.

⁴³ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 152, 159–60.

⁴⁴ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 153–54, 350.

2:16–21).⁴⁵ He suggests that the catholicity of the church possibly extends beyond the church to people of other religious traditions⁴⁶ in which the Spirit is universally present and active.⁴⁷ Thus, all flesh might globally encompass religious people of other faiths whose sacred texts, rituals, indigenous cultures, moral systems, and more mirror the Pentecostal manifestations⁴⁸ by virtue of the Spirit’s presence and activity in them.⁴⁹

Yong grounds his understanding of a pneumatological theology of religions upon his Pentecostal inclusivism. He presents the nature of a pneumatological theology of religions as follows: “[I]t is precisely because the Spirit is both universal and particular, both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Jesus the Christ, that pneumatology provides the kind of relational framework wherein the radical alterity—otherness—of the religions can be taken seriously even within the task of Christian theology.”⁵⁰ And so, Yong sees inevitable theological engagement in the soteriological question of inclusivism, that is, the possibility of the universal presence and activity of the Holy

⁴⁵ Yong, *Who Is the Holy Spirit?*, 12, 15.

⁴⁶ Yong, *Learning Theology*, 84; Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 40.

⁴⁷ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 60, 62–63, 104, 133–34, 141. Dissenting from institutional inclusivism of Roman Catholicism, Yong denies Roman Catholic theology of pneumatological salvation of people of other faith traditions through the visible mediation of the Roman Catholic Church. Instead, he focuses on interfaith dialogues through which the members of other religious traditions might be converted and redeemed by virtue of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them.

⁴⁸ Here, “pentecostal” refers to Yong’s definition: “A neocharismatic “catch-all category that comprises 18,810 independent, indigenous, postdenominational groups that cannot be classified as either pentecostal or charismatic but share a common emphasis on the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, pentecostal-like experiences . . . signs and wonders, and power encounters.” Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Mass, eds., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, rev. and exp. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), xx, cited in Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 18.

⁴⁹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 133–34. See also Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 99. In *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, Yong develops world pentecostal theology to explore the relationship between Christianity and other faiths. In this monograph as well, he sustains his central focus on the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:17) as the key principle of pneumatological theology to establish world pentecostal theology indicating that the Spirit might be comprehensively at work with “those engaged in ecumenical, multifaith, and religion-science dialogues and discourses.” Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 28. He observes the outpouring of the Spirit continuing in the lives and experiences of people worldwide, and he emphasizes that their shared experiences of the outpouring of the Spirit is salvific. Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 81.

⁵⁰ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 21.

Spirit in the non-Christian religions. Once again, he notes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh on the day of Pentecost as the central theme demonstrating the universal presence and work of the Spirit in other religious traditions beyond the church.⁵¹ Based on his conviction of the universal presence and activity of the Spirit in other faiths, he interacts with Clark H. Pinnock's theology of religions engaging in a comprehensive articulation of pneumatological inclusivism in opposition to evangelical exclusivism.⁵² While he views Pinnock's theology of religions as a model of evangelical inclusivism, Yong exhibits skepticism regarding Pinnock's optimism of general revelation and truths, embedded in religious traditions, working as "redemptive bridges" of the Holy Spirit.⁵³ Instead of justifying philosophical, biblical, and theological grounds of evangelical inclusivism over against evangelical exclusivism, he centers on thoughtful discernment about the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in other faith traditions where, he assumes, the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh is at work in their members in a possibly redemptive sense.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 40.

⁵² Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 32–33, 107–20. Pinnock laments evangelical soteriology of restrictivism or exclusivism because of its neglect of God's love for all people evident in his universal salvific will. On the contrary, by virtue of God's boundless mercy and reckless love, there is hope of salvation for the adherents of the non-Christian faiths who have not heard the gospel. He also notes the universal presence and activity of the Spirit in the non-Christian traditions as crucial for assuming the possibility of salvation of their adherents. The Spirit, who is "the presence of God everywhere," is possibly present and active in other faith traditions, and the Spirit could draw their adherents "into the range of Christ's saving work everywhere." See Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 192, 207. Indeed, the Spirit might provide the unevangelized with access to the finality of salvation in Christ. See Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 211–12. Though God did not likely appoint the non-Christian religions "as vehicles of grace," he could have intended that they be his means of general revelation through which people of other faiths would respond to him. See Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 201, 207.

⁵³ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 118–20; Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 201–4.

⁵⁴ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 129–92.

Significance/Contribution

Admittedly, a great volume of theological literatures has noted inclusivism as a viable doctrine of salvation in opposition to exclusivism.⁵⁵ A common tenet underlying inclusivistic argument for the possibility of salvation for the unevangelized is, according to their interpretation of Scripture, the ambiguity of the necessity of evangelism for salvation in Christ. While evangelicals and conservative Christianity have defended exclusivistic affirmation on faith in Christ through evangelism, they have often neglected ecclesiology in their dealing with inclusivistic polemics. What is at stake is the possibility of the incorporation of the unevangelized into the church of Christ when one assumes the constitution of the church from the theological perspective of an inclusivistic soteriology.

My contribution is first the integration of soteriological concerns with ecclesiological imperative as I center on the latter as the entailment of the former. Indeed, one cannot divorce the salvation of human beings from the redemptive plan and fulfillment of the triune God for his elect part of whom are the church of the new covenant.⁵⁶ By addressing ecclesiology as the constraint and entailment of soteriology, I

⁵⁵ See Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Christian Theology in the Pluralistic World: A Global Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019); John Sanders, *No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); John Hick et al., *More Than One Way?: Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995); Tiessen, *Who Can Be Saved?*; William V. Crockett and James G. Sigountos, eds., *Through No Fault of Their Own? The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991); Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes toward the World Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985).

⁵⁶ I affirm that there is one people of God consisting of both the genuinely redeemed Israel under the administration of various covenants in the Old Testament era and the church of the new covenant in fulfillment of the redemptive plan of the triune God achieved through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ the incarnate Son of God in whose finished work all earlier covenants and types find their fulfillment and culmination. This understanding of the church as the new covenant people of God distinct from the redeemed Israel, while both constitute one people of God according to his redemptive plan in eternity past before the creation of the whole world, derives from progressive covenantalism developed by Peter Gentry J. and Stephen J. Wellum in their co-authored monograph *Kingdom through Covenant*, a position different from covenantalism and dispensationalism in light of hermeneutic issue regarding continuity and discontinuity between the two Testaments.

In the theological section of the book, Wellum engages in the analysis of covenantalism and dispensationalism and puts forward the weaknesses of each in comparison to the position of progressive covenantalism. On the one hand, he maintains that, resting upon the covenant of grace of covenantalism overarching the whole administrations of the covenants of both testaments, covenantalists generally share a point of view seeing the new covenant people of God analogous in nature to the old covenant people of God as the mixed community of believers and unbelievers. Over against covenantalists' common theological outlook regarding the mixed nature of the community of both covenants, Wellum argues that

will confirm that exclusivistic affirmations, according to Scripture as a whole, of the uniqueness of Jesus the Savior and the necessity of gospel-faith for salvation deny inclusivistic suggestion for the availability of salvation in Christ apart from gospel-faith in him.

Second, my contribution is the recognition of theological outlook on pneumatological ecclesiology as I affirm that the Holy Spirit is the creator of the church of the new covenant on the day of Pentecost and he is the medium through whom believers are incorporated into the church, the body of Christ.⁵⁷ This recognition is crucial, given that the work of the Spirit in uniting us to Christ and forming the universal church logically involves effecting saving faith in Christ upon hearing the gospel. This pattern in no uncertain terms entails the outright rejection of pneumatological inclusivists' assumption of the mediatory work of the Holy Spirit beyond the proclaimed gospel in effecting salvation in Christ for the adherents of other religious traditions in particular and the unevangelized in general. Thus, my theological task always has in view the external calling of the gospel as the essential component in the redemptive plan of the

the new covenant people of God, established through the achievement of the messianic and redemptive works of Christ in fulfillment and culmination of all previous covenants and types, are all redeemed and regenerate members of the invisible church manifested in local congregations. According to this view, the members of local church of the new covenant are all redeemed and regenerate. On the other hand, he points out that dispensationalists commonly hold the awaiting of literal fulfillment of the land promise for the ethnic Israelites as their permanent dwelling place on earth in the future kingdom of God. Over against the literal interpretation of the land promise of dispensationalism, Wellum contends that Christ the true Israel is the fulfillment of all the promises of the Old Testament including the land promise of the Abrahamic covenant. He rather views that the land promise was already fulfilled partially in the times of Joshua and completely in the Davidic kingdom. According to his progressive covenantalism, we should caution against severance between the Israel and the church as the two discrete groups of the people of God. Though there exists covenantal distinction between them, they are essentially one people of God. See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 31–158, 647–839.

⁵⁷ According to the theological principle of inseparable operations, the triune God acted indivisibly in the creative work of the church of the new covenant on the day of Pentecost. As was promised, the Father and the ascended Christ as the co-source of the eternal procession of the Spirit sent to the gathering of believers on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit with whom Christ baptized them. Baptism with the Holy Spirit by Christ, or the new unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Spirit by Christ, on the day of Pentecost marked the day of the creation of the church of the new covenant. Thus, the Holy Spirit is the co-creator of the church of the new covenant along with the glorified Christ.

triune God for the accomplishment of the constitution and salvation of the church catholic.

Argument

In chapter 1, I have introduced pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic over against pneumatological inclusivism represented as institutional inclusivism of Roman Catholicism, Moltmann's universal inclusivism, and Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism. Then I have stated my thesis, drawn my methodology, presented the substance of sources relevant to research areas, suggested contributions to the current discussion about exclusivism and inclusivism, and drawn the outline of the remaining chapters.

In chapters 2 and 3, I will engage in articulating pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic. In chapter 2, I will demonstrate the work of the Holy Spirit in constituting the church catholic. In order to give precision to the nature of the church and minimize the confusion concerning it, I will speak of the church as the people of God of the new covenant ratified through the blood of Christ.⁵⁸

I will then delineate the church catholic of the new covenant as I will engage in rehearsing biblical promises of the new covenant in the Old Testament anticipating the establishment of the people of God in fulfillment of those promises in the New Testament. As I draw the anticipation and fulfillment of the new covenant inaugurating the church catholic, I will center on pneumatological themes: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and baptism with the Holy Spirit. I will affirm that they are integral components in constituting the church catholic of the new covenant.

⁵⁸ My definition of the church will differ from the view of covenantalism and dispensationalism in light of the hermeneutic issue of continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments. My view of the church will subscribe to moderate discontinuity position within the framework of progressive covenantalism.

In chapter 3, I will speak of the work of the Holy Spirit in the application of salvation to the church catholic of the new covenant. First, I will engage in discussing the external calling of the preached gospel as I will affirm that salvation demands the external calling as its essential component. I will then discuss the internal/effective calling which is appropriated to the Holy Spirit who makes people internally appreciate the general calling of the gospel. Second, I will rehearse the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration that involves the renewal of human heart through which the human response to the preached gospel in faith and repentance is enabled. Third, I will demonstrate the work of the Holy Spirit in union with Christ, that is, his work in mediating the salvific presence of Christ to the church catholic of the new covenant. Then, I will specifically discuss the effective work of the Spirit with respect to all the blessings of salvation that are included in Christ, namely, election, redemption, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification.

In chapters 4–6, I will engage in articulating polemics of pneumatological inclusivism accompanied by an analysis of their theological system in order that I would refute them in support of pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic.

In chapter 4, I will discuss the pneumatological inclusivism of Roman Catholicism. I will label it as institutional inclusivism in the affirmation of the Roman Catholic Church being the visible medium of salvation. I will further articulate the nature of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church as I will engage in surveying the relevant documents of Vatican II referring to the work of the Holy Spirit in offering salvation through the mediation of the Roman Catholic Church to the non-Christian religions and individuals who have not heard the gospel. I will then interact primarily with John Paul II's encyclicals and addresses defending, and developing, the soteriological position of pneumatological inclusivism of Vatican II. Lastly, on the ground of principles of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of

the church catholic of the new covenant, I will assess the polemic of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church.

In chapter 5, I will engage in discussing the pneumatological inclusivism of Jürgen Moltmann. I will label his theological view of pneumatological inclusivism as universal inclusivism indicating the eschatological redemption of all things in God through the Holy Spirit in the relationship of reciprocal interpenetration with them. I will demonstrate that Moltmann grounds his pneumatological soteriology of universal inclusivism upon his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Jesus and upon his understanding of perichoretic panentheism as the essential framework defining the relation of God and the world. I will then integrate Moltmann's theology of universal inclusivism with his ecclesiology as I will present Moltmann's understanding of the catholicity of the church as the eschatological movement toward, and missional participation in, the coming kingdom where salvation of all things in God will be realized. Lastly, on the ground of principles of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, I will engage in evaluating the polemic of Moltmann's universal inclusivism.

In chapter 6, I will discuss the pneumatological inclusivism of Amos Yong. I will label his theological concept of pneumatological inclusivism as Pentecostal inclusivism which refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh extending to the adherents of other faith traditions for the possibility of their salvation. I will show in Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism an interrelatedness between his understanding of the catholicity of the church and his concept of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh since the day of Pentecost. I will further demonstrate that Yong's understanding of the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh is the ground of his pneumatological theology of religions in which he builds a necessity for a constructive task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and other spirits in other religious traditions. Lastly, on the ground of principles of pneumatological exclusivism

for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, I will appraise the polemic of Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism.

In conclusion, I will reaffirm thesis that the Holy Spirit brings the salvific and universal presence of Jesus Christ to God's new covenant people alone who have heard the gospel and responded to it in faith and repentance. I will then recapitulate ecclesiastical and soteriological principles of pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant that were dealt with in chapters 2 and 3. Next, I will summarize polemics of pneumatological inclusivism discussed in the analyses of institutional inclusivism of Roman Catholicism (chap. 4), Moltmann's universal inclusivism (chap. 5), and Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism (chap. 6). I will conclude that pneumatological inclusivists fail to do justice to the hearing of the preached gospel as an essential component of salvation in the application of the redemptive plan of the triune God.

CHAPTER 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH CATHOLIC

This project championing pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant over against pneumatological inclusivism for the possibility of salvation of the adherents of the world religions in particular and the unevangelized in general focuses its primary task on articulating the themes and work of the Holy Spirit in the making¹ and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.² In this chapter, I will engage in rehearsing the former part of the argument, that is, the creation and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant tied to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, baptism with the Holy Spirit, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the hearing of and believing in the gospel entailing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins.³

To achieve the goal of this chapter, I draw on the new covenant as the essential framework defining the church catholic as the people of God in whom Christ is universally abiding by the indwelling Holy Spirit in conjunction with the outpouring of

¹ I use the term “making” in parallel to the constitution indicating the work of the Holy Spirit in creating the church catholic of the new covenant. Indeed, Graham A. Cole titled the second subsection of chapter 9 in his *He Who Gives Life* as “The Spirit and the Making and Saving of God’s People.” See Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Theology of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 213.

² Obviously, I must present my position of pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic before engaging in proper discussion about, and interaction with, the arguments of pneumatological inclusivism for the possibility of salvation of the adherents of the non-Christian religions in particular and the unevangelized in general. And so, in two chapters, I will proceed with articulating the themes and work of the Holy Spirit in the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.

³ In chapter 3, I will engage in rehearsing the latter part of the argument, that is, the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant tied to the work of the Holy Spirit in rendering the hearing of the gospel appropriated and mediating the salvific presence of Jesus to the new covenant people of God.

the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit as the entailment of their hearing and appropriation of the gospel.⁴ I will involve this discussion with (1) the anticipation of the dawning of the new covenant due to the obsolescence of the old covenant; (2) the creation and making of the church catholic of the new covenant in fulfillment of the outpouring and indwelling of the Spirit of the Lord and baptism with the Holy Spirit; (3) and the hearing of and believing in the gospel entailing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins as the prerequisite for rendering those pneumatological themes effective for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant.

The Anticipation of the New Covenant

In this section, this project will engage in delineating the unfolding of redemptive history in anticipation of the new covenant as a framework substantiating my definition of the church catholic.⁵ This project will involve this discussion with the old/Mosaic/Sinaitic covenant which God established with the people of Israel, demonstrating that (1) their failures entailed the rupture and obsolescence of the covenant and (2) the Lord was to establish the new covenant in place of the old covenant. This project will address the features or components of the new covenant functioning as the

⁴ This project affirms the traditional terminology of inseparable operations and personal appropriations governed by irreducible order immanent in the persons and their relations of origin. Concerning inseparable operations, the triune God acts inseparably in all external works by virtue of divine unity and personal distinctions. For resources, see Gregg R. Allison and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2020), 277–82; Michael S. Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit: God's Perfecting Presence in Creation, Redemption, and Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 38–39; Abraham Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, trans. Henri De Vries (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 15; Adonis Vidu, *The Same God Who Works All Things: Inseparable Operations in Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021), xiii–xix.

Concerning personal appropriations, while there is in divine activities a general order as the Father plans, the Son arranges, and the Spirit binds according to irreducible and immanent *taxis* in relation to the creation—from the Father, through and in the Son, to the Holy Spirit—some divine activities common to the three persons are nevertheless attributed to the specific person as the terminating agent whose personal property has affinity with them in conformity to his relation of origin. For more discussion and relevant resources, see Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 282–86; Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, 19–21; Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 73–74.

⁵ For my definition of the church catholic of the new covenant, see right above where I defined it as “the people of God in whom Christ is universally abiding by the indwelling Holy Spirit in conjunction with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit as the entailment of their hearing and appropriation of the gospel.” See also Thesis section.

distinguishing markers from the nature of the old covenant, namely, the circumcision of the heart, the implanting of the law into the heart, the forgiveness of sins, the renewal of the heart, the indwelling and outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord, and baptism with the Holy Spirit.

The Obsolescence of the Old Covenant

Regardless of one's hermeneutical position concerning the continuity and discontinuity between the two Testaments, the church means the people of God or their gathering.⁶ The triune God's eternal counsel of making his people involved creating human beings, male and female, in his own image (Gen 1:27; 5:2; Matt 19:4; Mark 10:6).⁷ After creating the man from the dust of the ground and with the breath of life (Gen 2:7),⁸ the Creator God as Yahweh (יהוה) engaged in establishing a structured

⁶ For relevant discussion, see Michael Allen, *Sanctification*, New Studies in Dogmatics (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 177–83; Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018); Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 27–30; Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology Series (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 39–43, 61–100; Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Covenant*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 300–1; Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.2, 2.10.1–5; Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, 52–55; Jonathan Leeman, *Political Church: The Local Assembly as Embassy of Christ's Rule*, Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 23–24, 246–54.

⁷ Indeed, Paul affirms that the redemptive plan of the triune God was in eternity past involving the election of his people in Christ (Eph 1:4; 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9; cf. Acts 13:48; 18:10; Rom 8:28–30, 33; 11:5; 2 Thess 2:13–14; 2 Tim 2:10; Titus 1:1; cf. 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 13:8; 17:8). This project does not subscribe to the concept of the eternal covenant though it acknowledges the eternality of the redemptive plan of the triune God which the Father designed, the Son obeyed, and the Holy Spirit sealed. See Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), s.v. “covenant of redemption.”

⁸ This project holds the holistic view regarding the composition of the nature of human beings, meaning that human beings consist of material element, that is, body and immaterial element, that is, spirit in full unity. This view departs from the position interpreting the forming of human beings as dualistic fashion going through two successive stages, the forming of body with the dust of the ground and the forming of spirit or soul with the breath of life. See Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “human nature,” “humanity/human being.”

relationship with Adam.⁹ In this relationship, the Lord¹⁰ bound the man to divine mandate forbidding him to “eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (v. 17).¹¹ The violation of divine command would entail the penalty of death meted out to him. Unfortunately, sin entered the world through the volitional disobedience and rebellion of Adam (Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:21; cf. Gen 2:17), resulting in the affliction of the whole mankind with the spiritual alienation from God and physical death (Rom 3:23; 6:23; Eph 2:1; Heb 9:27). The triune God, when he decreed the creation of the world, already foresaw the fall of man in his divine foreknowledge and permitted it.¹² In conformity to his divine decree for redemption of his people in Christ, he declared the proto-evangelium in anticipation of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen 3:15).

Until the triune God would fulfill his promise of the primitive gospel through the coming, sinless life, messianic mission, and ultimately death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, he engaged in establishing various covenants with his people in keeping with the unfolding of his redemptive-historical plan.¹³ Among the covenants of

⁹ I owe to Gregg R. Allison the expression “a structured relationship” as a component of four features of covenants. He states them as follows: “covenants (1) are unilateral (established by God and God only); (2) create or formalize a structured relationship between god and his covenant partners; (3) feature binding obligations; and (4) involve covenantal signs or the swearing of oaths.” See Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 64. Concerning the covenant of works, see See M. Eugene Osterhaven, “Covenant Theology,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 215–16.

¹⁰ Yahweh and the Lord refer to the divine name (cf. Exod 3:13–15; 33:19). They are interchangeable. This project prefers the latter.

¹¹ Translations of Scripture are from the NIV unless otherwise noted.

¹² Whether one is sided with supralapsarianism, that is, God’s decree of election and reprobation logically earlier than his decree to permit the fall, or with sublapsarianism, that is, God’s decree of election and reprobation logically later than his decree to permit the fall, Scripture affirms that God’s election of his people preceded the creation of the world (Eph 1:4; cf. 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9). See Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “sublapsarianism,” “supralapsarianism”; Fred H. Klooster, “Supralapsarianism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 848–49; Robert V. Schnucker, “Infralapsarianism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 429.

¹³ For the purpose of this project, I focus on the two covenants for comparison: the old covenant and the new covenant. Broadly, prior to the new covenant, the Lord established four covenants

the Old Testament prior to the fulfillment of the new covenant, this project centers on the old covenant which the Lord established with the people of Israel.

After liberating the descendants of Israel with his mighty hand (Exod 6:1), out of his unfailing love and in fulfillment of his promise to the patriarchs (Gen 15:13–14; 46:3–4; Deut 4:37; 7:7–9; 10:15; 33:3), the Lord led his people to Mount Sinai. Appointing Moses as the mediator between him and the people (Exod 19:3), he engaged in establishing the covenant with them at Sinai. In this covenant, he formalized a structured relationship with them. He declared: “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (vv. 5–6). For the sustenance and prolongation of the covenantal relationship, the people of Israel as the covenant partner with the Lord were to observe the covenantal stipulations, namely, the Ten Commandments (20:1–17) and ordinances (20:22–23:19) which were “applications of the fundamental principles in the Ten Commandments to specific social contexts.”¹⁴ The people of Israel on their part expressed agreement with obligations stipulated in the covenant. They bound themselves to the covenant with absolute loyalty as they affirmed: “When Moses went and told the people all the Lord’s words and laws, they responded with one voice, ‘Everything the Lord has said we will do’” (24:3; cf. 19:8). For the next procedure, the Lord God and the people of Israel conducted a solemnized ritual ratifying the covenant:

Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said. He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord. Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he

with his people in the Old Testament: the Noachic covenant (Gen 6–9); the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12–17), the old/Mosaic/Sinaitic covenant (Exod 19–24), and the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7). For a detailed analysis and articulation of biblical theology of these four covenants, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 179–485.

¹⁴ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 344.

splashed against the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey.” (Exod 24:4–7)

Moses announced to the people, confirming that the covenant was ratified: “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words” (v. 8).

Unfortunately, the people of Israel failed to observe the covenantal terms on their part. In consequence, they engendered the breach of the covenantal relationship and the rupture of the covenant:

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, “Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.” Aaron answered them, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.” So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord.” So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. (Exod 32:1–6)

In response to their rebellion, the Lord determined to administer to the disloyal Israelites his holy wrath that was to be expressed as utter destruction meted out to the entire nation (vv. 9–10). However, Moses as the mediator of the covenant interceded for them, asking in petition the Lord to recall his divine oath he had made to the patriarchs concerning the multiplication of their descendants and possession of the Promised Land, so that he would “turn from [his] fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on [his] people” (v. 12). The Lord heard him and, remembering his oath, withdrew from annihilating them (v. 14). Yet, due to the ruptured covenant and their broken relationship, he was to put into effect the renewal of the Mosaic covenant and reinstatement of the people of Israel into the covenantal relationship. Indeed, Deuteronomy 29:1 portrays that the Lord in the land of Moab issued the reestablishment and reaffirmation of the covenant

as a supplement to the covenant which he had established with them at Sinai:¹⁵ “These are the terms of the covenant the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the covenant he had made with them at Horeb” (Deut 29:1).

Anticipation of the Circumcision of the Heart

During the renewal of the covenant at Moab, Moses addresses the source of the failure of the people of Israel on their part with the covenant at Sinai. Reminding them of the marvelous deeds of the Lord in deliverance (Deut 29:2–3; cf. Exod 8:4–11:10; Josh 24:5; Ps 78:43–52), provision (Deut 5–6; cf. Exod 15:22–17:7; Deut 2:7; Neh 9:15, 21), and protection (Deut 7; cf. Num 21:21–3; Deut 2:24–37; Ps 135:10–12), he underscores that such extraordinary wonders displayed before them and performed for them were insufficient to enable their hearts to observe the covenantal terms without a failure.¹⁶ Indeed, Moses states that the fundamental cause of their failure was associated with the want of divine means, the means of a heart, eyes, and ears that were essential for their utter obedience and commitment to the Lord:¹⁷ “But to this day the Lord has not given you a mind (בִּלְ) that understands or eyes that see or ears that hear” (29:4). Because of such weakness of the covenant at Sinai and its renewed version at Moab (cf. Heb 7:18; 8:7) in which they were left unequipped with appropriate divine means, the people of Israel and their ongoing generations tied to this structured relationship in the old covenant

¹⁵ Peter Gentry says that there is an ongoing debate concerning whether Deuteronomy 29:1 operates as a subscript looking back to chapters 1–28 or a superscript pointing forward to what lies ahead, namely, the renewal of the covenant. He argues that, while the majority of scholars view the text as a subscript concluding chapters 1–28, the latter position is more convincing. Thus, he states that Deuteronomy 29:1 opens a new section displaying the renewal of the covenant. See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 416–26.

¹⁶ Gentry avers: “What Moses is saying is this: incredible displays of supernatural power in miracles and physical deliverance from slavery were insufficient to bring the hearts of the people to being completely devoted and loyal to Yahweh.” Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 430–31.

¹⁷ Gentry argues that the Lord God’s postponing of provision of a heart, eyes, and ears (Deut 29:4) is eventually “an alternative way of referring to ‘the circumcision of the heart’ in Deuteronomy 10:16 and 30:6.” Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 430.

(Deut 29:10–15) were to repeat their failures, and their recurring failures would culminate in the obsolescence of the covenant. Indeed, Moses foretold that their sustained disobedience would entail the affliction of them with curses as the due penalty in violation of the covenantal stipulations:

The whole land will be a burning waste of salt and sulfur—nothing planted, nothing sprouting, no vegetation growing on it. It will be like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, which the Lord overthrew in fierce anger. All the nations will ask: “Why has the Lord done this to this land? Why this fierce, burning anger?” And the answer will be: “It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the covenant he made with them when he brought them out of Egypt. They went off and worshiped other gods and bowed down to them, gods they did not know, gods he had not given them. Therefore the Lord’s anger burned against this land, so that he brought on it all the curses written in this book. In furious anger and in great wrath the Lord uprooted them from their land and thrust them into another land, as it is now. (Deut 29:23–28)

However, after narrating the dire predicament into which the people of Israel would be plunged due to their recalcitrant and repetitive disobedience to the covenantal terms, Moses conveys a remarkable statement concerning divine sovereignty and human responsibility:¹⁸ “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law” (v. 29). On the one hand, he appeals to divine sovereignty in the matter of salvific revelation: the Lord did not fully disclose divine means of salvation to the people of Israel. On the other hand, he acknowledges the responsibility on the part of the Israelites to observe the covenantal terms wholeheartedly (cf. Exod 20:1–17; 20:22–23:19). Admittedly, this statement betrays contradiction to what Moses previously affirmed: the incapability of full obedience on the part of the Israelites because of their being unsupported with proper divine means in this structured relationship with the Lord. With this obvious tension between their responsibility and incapability in the background, Moses predicts a

¹⁸ See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 432.

postexilic day of restoration of Israel which will involve the circumcision of their hearts¹⁹ as the divine means warranting their full fidelity to the Lord in keeping with their wholehearted love of him: “The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live” (Deut 30:6). Moses further affirms that, with the circumcision of their hearts at a future time, they will be enabled to “obey the Lord and follow all his commands” (v. 8).

Indeed, the people of Israel needed the circumcision of the heart in order to obey divine instruction which was “in their heart” (Deut 30:14). In other words, there were two necessary requirements to be met for obeying the covenantal stipulations: (1) the Ten Commandments and ordinances which were already given at Sinai and (2) the circumcision of the heart in which divine instruction—the Ten Commandments and ordinances—was put. Because the first requirement was already achieved by the giving of divine instruction at Sinai, the second requirement awaited its fulfillment which, Moses assumed, could happen even “today” (v. 16) if the Lord would reveal “the secret things” (29:29). And so, Moses had proper ground to “command [them] today to love the Lord [their] God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws” (30:16). Given these two conditions fully achieved, the people of Israel were to receive the covenantal blessings of “life and prosperity” (v. 15) in keeping with their full obedience.²⁰

¹⁹ Concerning the discussion about the circumcision of the heart, see Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 67; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 177–78, 184; Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 143–45; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 709–10, 822; Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, *Contours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 25–26.

²⁰ See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 433.

Prophetic Anticipation of Various Features of the New Covenant

The prophets anticipate the establishment of the new covenant²¹ at a future time in fulfillment of Moses's prophetic utterances concerning the returning of the people of Israel into their land (Jer 32:37; Ezek 11:17–18; et al.), the renewal of their hearts (Jer 31:33–34; 32:39; Ezek 11:19; et al.), the assurance of their obedience (Jer 50:4–5; Ezek 11:20; 36:27), and the realization of the purpose and blessings of the covenant (Jer 32:38; Ezek 34:24–31; et al.). Among those prophecies, Jeremiah directly speaks of the new covenant as replacing the covenant at Sinai because of its brokenness triggered by the people of Israel acting in disobedience and infidelity: “‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them’” (Jer 31:31–32). Jeremiah then states the ground why the new covenant outweighs the covenant at Sinai.²² Namely, when engaging in establishing the new covenant, the Lord will provide the fundamental solution to the problem of the heart by means of the internalization of his law, that is, the inscription of his law upon the hearts of his covenant partners.²³ There will be an immediate effect when the Lord definitely resolves the problem of the heart through the inscription of his law upon it. The effect

²¹ Gentry argues that the prophets referred to the new covenant “in different places at different times in a variety of ways.” He then arranged the new covenant language with the following categories: “Five times they refer to the “everlasting covenant,” three times to a “covenant of peace,” and three times to a promise that God will give his people a new heart and a new spirit. Only there is the phrase “new covenant” actually used.” He avers that “all these phrases are referring to the same thing.” See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 488.

²² Horton catches discontinuity between the old and new covenants in this text. However, he would not agree with argument that the new covenant surpasses the old covenant because he holds to covenantalism as the theological system or framework according to which administration of all covenants after the Covenant of Works is governed by the overarching framework of the covenant of grace. Yet, he acknowledges the scriptural presentation of the new covenant which is unlike or different from the old covenant. See Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 145; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 221.

²³ Sinclair Ferguson well points out that the divine solution to sin engraved on the hearts of the people (Jer 17:1) is the inscription of divine law on their hearts. See Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 166.

will be the realization of the purpose of the covenant: “I will be their God, and they will be my people” (v. 33), the purpose that the Lord originally intended when he established the covenant with the people of Israel earlier at Sinai (Exod 19:5–6), but that was not actualized due to their sins. Further, Jeremiah communicates the extraordinary nature of this new covenant community. He affirms that all members of the new covenant community will enter into the new covenant relationship with the Lord. In this new covenant relationship, they will all know him “from the least of them to the greatest” (Jer 31:34; cf. Isa 54:13).²⁴ And this personal, intimate knowledge of him will arise from the forgiveness of sins once for all.

The prophet Ezekiel also utters divine words referring to the new covenant languages. Foreseeing the restoration of the Israelite exiles into the land (Ezek 11:17–18; 36:24; 37:21–22), Ezekiel speaks of the Lord’s purifying of them from their impurities and idolatry with clean water (Ezek 36:25), which echoes Jeremiah’s prophetic affirmation of the Lord’s forgiveness of sins as the feature of the new covenant (cf. Jer 31:34).²⁵ Again, in keeping with the renewal of the heart involving the inscription of the law in the hearts of the new covenant people as was foretold by Jeremiah (v. 33), Ezekiel proclaims the Lord’s work at a future time of postexilic era in implanting “a new heart” and “a new spirit” in them, which will involve the replacement of their “heart of stone” with “a heart of flesh” (Ezek 36:26; cf. 11:19). In addition to these two features—the purification of their sins with clean water and the implanting of a new heart in them—

²⁴ Gentry offers a helpful comment concerning the difference of extent in terms of the knowledge of the Lord between the members of the old covenant and new covenant. On the one hand, the incorporation into the community of the old covenant was decided by physical birth. On the other hand, the incorporation into the community of the new covenant was contingent upon not by physical birth but by “the new birth, which requires faith on the part of every person. Thus, only believers are members of the new community.” Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 433.

²⁵ Allison finds commonalities between the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel anticipating the establishment of the new covenant. First, he identifies Jeremiah’s utterance of forgiveness of sins (Jer 31:34) with Ezekiel’s metaphorical language of sprinkling with clean water (Ezek 36:25). Second, he indicates that the renewal of hearts which Jeremiah portrayed as the inscription of the law on the hearts parallels the implanting of a new heart as a replacement of the heart of stone according to Ezekiel. See Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 71. See also Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 136–37.

marking the new covenant, he anticipates the indwelling presence of the Spirit of the Lord in them.²⁶ Moved by the Spirit of the Lord indwelling them and being equipped with the divine means of a new heart in them, they will assuredly obey the covenantal terms (11:20; 36:27), and their obedience and faithfulness to the Lord their covenant partner will entail the realization of the purpose of the covenant: “They will be my people, and I will be their God” (11:20; cf. 34:30–31; 36:28; 37:27). This new covenant will endure forever (cf. Isa 55:1–5; 61:8–9; Jer 32:36–41; Ezek 37:15–28).²⁷

The prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Joel continue the new covenant theme associated with the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord. Isaiah speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord that will entail spiritual renewal of his people. In the current state, they were given over to “destruction” and “scorn” due to their sins and rebellions (Isa 43:27–28). Nonetheless, the Lord was immutable in divine election of the people of Israel as his servant (44:1). Identifying himself as their maker, originator, and helper (v. 2), he assures his beloved and chosen people of their continued existence in the postexilic era with divine promise of the outpouring of his Spirit on their offspring (v. 3). He warrants that the outpouring of his Spirit will entail not just prolongation of their physical existence in the land but also, more fundamentally, restoration of their spiritual predicament engendered by their sins to spiritual vivification “like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams” (v. 4). Ultimately, by virtue of the mighty work of

²⁶ This project will center on the indwelling of the Spirit as a key theme alongside the outpouring of the Spirit and baptism with the Spirit characterizing the community of the new covenant in the second section of this chapter. See Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 70–71. Horton expresses the forgiveness of sins and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as “the two principal gifts of the new covenant.” He understands that the two texts Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:25–27 address them as “twin benefits.” See Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 190.

²⁷ Gentry informs that “the term “everlasting covenant” occurs sixteen times in the Old Testament: two times of the covenant with Noah (Gen 9:16; Isa 24:5), five times of the covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:7, 19; 1 Chr 16:17; Ps 105:10; Ezek 16:60), once of the covenant with David (2 Sam 23:5; cf. 2 Chr 13:5), five times of the new covenant (Isa 55:3; 61:8; Jer 32:40; 50:5; Ezek 37:26), and three times of covenant signs (Gen 17:13; Exod 31:16; Lev 24:8).” He underscores that there is no mention of “an everlasting or permanent covenant” in the Old Testament with reference to the old/Mosaic covenant at Sinai. See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 588.

the Lord through the outpouring of his Spirit in rejuvenating his people who were spiritually dead and dry, a new community of people consisting of Israel and Gentiles²⁸ will emerge marked by unswerving loyalty to the Lord as his own people: “Some will say, ‘I belong to the Lord; others will call themselves by the name of Jacob; still others will write on their hand, ‘The Lord’s,’ and will take the name Israel’” (v. 5).

Ezekiel utters the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord that will warrant the permanence of covenantal relationship between him and his renewed Israel: “I will no longer hide my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit on the people of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord” (Ezek 39:29). In reality, the people underwent exile into Babylon as the due punishment of their recalcitrant infidelity and repetitive disobedience in their covenantal relationship with the Lord (v. 23–24). But now Ezekiel declares the Lord’s promise that he will in no way issue the second exile against his people. He delivers the Lord’s three affirmations upholding his promise: (1) his utter triumph over and definitive judgment of Gog the threatening force against Israel (38:1–39:20), (2) his salvific mercy in parallel with his compassion toward the wretched Israel (39:25), and (3) his zeal for the sake of preserving his own holy name (v. 25). As a consequence of his gratuitous works on behalf of his people, they “will forget their shame and all the unfaithfulness they showed toward [the Lord]” (v. 26). Together with the nations witnessing his unfailing love toward and commitment to them, they will acknowledge that their God is the covenant Lord reinstating his once-exiled-people into renewed relationship marked by the knowledge of him (vv. 27–28). Earlier, Ezekiel foretold the Lord’s giving of his Spirit in the people against the backdrop of their spiritual renewal and revitalization (36:25–27). Now he speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord

²⁸ Concerning the debate whether “some,” “others” (Isa 44:5) refer to Israel or Gentiles, see Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 138. John Oswalt speaks of the same debate in his commentary. He also presents arguments of each camp. Unlike Cole who refused to unveil his own view, Oswalt expresses his position that those referents rather indicate both Jews and Gentiles. See John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 167–68.

that will usher in perpetual relationship that will be established through the inauguration of the new covenant.²⁹ Indeed, the Lord “will no longer hide [his] face” (39:29) from his new covenant partners.

Anticipating the restoration of the covenantal blessings prompted by heartfelt repentance of the people, Joel foretells the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord that will rest upon all of them: “And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days” (Joel 2:28–29). Obviously, the Spirit of the Lord was at work among the leaders of Israel in the Old Testament through filling (e.g., Bezalel, Exod 31:3; 35:31; Micah, Mic 3:8), resting upon (e.g., seventy elders, Num 11:25), coming powerfully upon or rushing upon (e.g., Samson, Judg 14:6, 19; Saul, 1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6; David, 1 Sam 16:13), coming on (e.g., Othniel, Judg 3:10; Jephthah, Judg 11:29), clothing (e.g., Gideon, Judg 6:34), stirring (e.g., Samson, Judg 13:25), and coming to them (e.g., Ezekiel, Ezek 2:2). Over against the work of the Spirit of the Lord circumscribed to the selected people of Israel throughout the Old Testament, Joel anticipates the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord God at a future time that will be all-embracing.³⁰ Namely, the Lord will pour out his Spirit on the entire members of this new community (Joel 2:28).³¹ This new community

²⁹ Daniel Block underscores that the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord occurs only once in the book of Ezekiel. He conveys its significance in comparison with the Lord’s giving of the Spirit to which Ezekiel referred earlier. Namely, the Lord’s giving of the Spirit pertained to “the rebirth of the nation, her revitalization” while the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord “serves as a sign and seal of the covenant.” Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 488–89.

³⁰ Concerning the discussion about the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord, see Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 71–72; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 30, 32, 163; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 31; Leslie Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 99.

³¹ Horton points out well that believers receiving the outpouring of the Spirit will enter into the new covenantal relationship in which they will have the knowledge of God in fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy. Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 108. In the same vein, Leslie Allen finds a link between the universal outpouring of the Spirit on all people of God and the knowledge of the Lord God accessible to all members of the new covenant community. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 99.

consisting of the people of the Lord will feature no discrimination in terms of gender, that is, “sons and daughters” who will “prophesy”; age, that is, “old and young men” who will “dream dreams” and “see visions”; and social standing, that is, “male and female servants” upon whom he will pour out his Spirit.³² The Lord God will equip the whole members of this new community with the gifts of his Spirit, the gifts that were confined to his selected people alone in the Old Testament.

The New Testament Anticipation of Baptism with the Holy Spirit

As we move to the New Testament, the writers of the Gospels elevate the anticipation of the dawning of the new covenant in fulfillment of baptism with the Holy Spirit,³³ a new theme echoing the outpouring and indwelling of the Spirit of the Lord. This theme of baptism with the Holy Spirit comes to the fore in John the Baptist’s witness of the Messiah. He draws attention to the superiority of the one coming after him that will be marked by his messianic work in baptizing with the Holy Spirit: “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matt 3:11; cf. Mark 1:7–8; Luke 3:16). Though unaware of the messianic identity of Jesus when he uttered those words, he later affirmed it in Jesus’s baptism wherein he saw the Spirit descending on him. He declared that Jesus is the Messiah “who will baptize with the Holy Spirit” (John 1:33). Jesus to whom “God gives the Spirit without limit” (3:34) was to baptize his believers as their baptizer with the same Holy Spirit.

³² Köstenberger comments on the outpouring of the Spirit as being “not only universal on all humanity (contingent on their “call[ing] on the name of the Lord”) but also indiscriminate of gender (sons and daughters), age (old and young), or social status (even male and female servants), a fact Paul will seize upon in the NT.” See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 47–48. Douglas Stuart sees in the outpouring of the Spirit two elements: the fullness of the Spirit and the democratization of the Spirit. See Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, Word Biblical Commentary 31 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 260–61.

³³ I heavily owe the flow of argument concerning baptism with the Holy Spirit to Gregg Allison. Biblical references to baptism with the Holy Spirit that I am quoting are his. Wordings to present baptism with the Holy Spirit are mine though the flow of argument is his as I mentioned. See Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 72–74; Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 386–89.

The apostle John unveiled when Jesus would perform his work in baptizing his believers with the Holy Spirit:

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (John 7:37–39)

According to this text, baptism with the Holy Spirit was to occur later than his glorification. It awaited the fulfillment of Jesus’s messianic mission culminating in his death, resurrection, and ascension as the closing phase of his earthly ministry.³⁴

Later, in his final discourse with his disciples, Jesus confirmed the apostle John’s testimony to the occurrence of baptism with the Holy Spirit as being chronologically subsequent to his ascension. He associated baptism with the Holy Spirit with his work in sending the Holy Spirit after his ascension: “But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you” (16:7). The work of Jesus in sending the Holy Spirit would be an inseparably joint work with the Father. Indeed, Jesus would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit (14:16); the Father would send the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus his one and only Son (v. 26); simultaneously, Jesus would send the Holy Spirit from the Father (15:26). The Holy Spirit co-sent from the Father through Jesus would indwell the people of God: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you” (14:16–17). Jesus’s affirmation of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in his believers anticipated the imminent realization of Ezekiel’s prophecy

³⁴ In his discussion concerning the new eschatological life brought about by the Holy Spirit between the two advents of Christ, Horton clearly catches that the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh was also to occur no earlier than the glorification of Jesus. See Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 182. Jesus’s giving of the Holy Spirit, his baptism with the Holy Spirit, and his pouring out of the Holy Spirit all awaited the fulfillment of his glorification.

that the entire members of the new covenant community would be marked by the indwelling presence of the Spirit of the Lord (Ezek 36:27). Obviously, baptism with the Holy Spirit associated with the sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father through the Son would entail the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Baptism with the Holy Spirit would mark the entrance into the new covenant community³⁵ in which the Spirit of the Lord would indwell permanently.

In his post-resurrection appearance, Jesus recalled to the disciples his earlier utterance of sending the Holy Spirit from the Father: “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). He underscored the necessity of their being equipped with the Holy Spirit for carrying out his divine mandate to engage in witnessing to his death and resurrection and in proclaiming “repentance for the forgiveness of sins . . . in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (v. 47). At his impending return to the Father, the risen Jesus once again drew the disciples’ attention to his sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father: “On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about’” (Acts 1:4). Continuing his instruction, he revealed that his sending of the Holy Spirit to the disciples would entail him baptizing them with the Holy Spirit: “For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (v. 5). His remark anticipated the imminent realization of John the Baptist’s witness of the messianic work of Jesus Christ in baptizing his people with the Holy Spirit. The birth of the new covenant community was at hand. Indeed, it was to emerge “in a few days.”

³⁵ Allison takes baptism with the Holy Spirit as a major component of the order of salvation as other mighty works of God (e.g., regeneration, union with Christ, justification, and more). After rehearsing the historical development of baptism with the Holy Spirit, he underscores that baptism with the Holy Spirit is “a part of initial experiences of salvation.” See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 389–92. For a concise definition and explanation of baptism with the Holy Spirit, see Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “baptism with/in/by the Holy Spirit.”

In this section, this project has demonstrated that the triune God's eternal purpose of making his people since the creation of human beings and their fall involved his engaging in establishing covenants with them. Narrowing down to his covenant with the people of Israel, it has shown that the people of Israel entering into a structured relationship with the Lord in the old covenant at Sinai and its renewal at Moab were to repeat failures on their part which engendered the rupture and obsolescence of the covenant. As a substitute for the old covenant which became obsolescent, the Lord was to establish the new covenant with his people at a future time involving the circumcision of their hearts in parallel with the renewal of their hearts, the forgiveness of their sins, the indwelling and outpouring of his Spirit, and baptism with the Holy Spirit. In the following section, this project will address the birth of the church catholic of the new covenant on the day of Pentecost in fulfillment of baptism with the Holy Spirit, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The Birth of the Church Catholic of the New Covenant

This project is now engaging in rehearsing the creation and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant on the day of Pentecost in fulfillment of divine prophecies anticipating the outpouring and indwelling of the Spirit of the Lord and in fulfillment of John the Baptist's and Jesus's utterances anticipating baptism with the Holy Spirit. In the first part, this project will center on the fulfillment of baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. In the second part, this project will demonstrate that those three pneumatological themes, that is, baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, engender the birth and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant.

At Pentecost

The day of Pentecost marks the inception of the church catholic of the new covenant as the triune God's new creation of his new people in fulfillment of baptism

with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Before it addresses the relation of the creation and making of the church catholic of the new covenant to those themes of the Holy Spirit, this project centers on their fulfillment at Pentecost. First, we observe that baptism with the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Foretold by John the Baptist, Jesus was the Messiah who would baptize believers with the Holy Spirit and fire³⁶ (Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16; cf. Mark 1:7–8; John 1:33). In keeping with speaking of himself as the sender of the Holy Spirit from the Father (John 15:26; 16:7 cf. Luke 24:49), the glorified Jesus sent the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. In the logical order, he baptized the gathering of the disciples with the Holy Spirit:³⁷

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1–4)

Later Peter identified this experience of reception of the Holy Spirit with baptism with the Holy Spirit: “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit’” (11:15–16).

Second, we observe that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. To the converts to Judaism bewildered by hearing the disciples speaking in tongues that corresponded to their languages, Peter announced that Joel’s

³⁶ In his commentary on Matthew 3:11, D. A. Carson underscores that the Greek preposition ἐν “governs both “Holy Spirit” and “fire,” and this normally suggests a unified concept, Spirit-fire or the like.” D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, rev. ed. The Expositor’s Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 255 Kindle. R. T. France offers a more contextualized explanation. Fire denotes the judgment of God meted out to the unrepentant self-righteous (v. 10) and the chaff (v. 12). See R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 115–16.

³⁷ Evangelical authors with whom I primarily interacted in this project would exhibit consensus on baptism with the Holy Spirit as recurring and continuing work of the glorified Jesus for incorporation into his body. Contra this view, F. F. Bruce holds that baptism with the Holy Spirit which the gathering of the disciples experienced on the day of Pentecost “was an event which took place once for all.” F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, rev. ed. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 51. See also Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 70.

anticipation of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord was fulfilled on the day of

Pentecost:

[T]his is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ““In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”” (Acts 2:16–21)

Continuing his message,³⁸ Peter affirms what the gathering of the disciples experienced at Pentecost was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them. Indeed, the glorified Jesus was the agent “who has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what [the assembly of Jews and the converts to Judaism] now see and hear” (2:33).

Drawing on the biblical portrayal of what the gathering of the disciples experienced at Pentecost in keeping with Peter’s affirmation, we recognize parallelism between baptism with the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Both refer to the same work of the glorified Jesus in baptizing them with the Holy Spirit and in pouring out the Holy Spirit on them.³⁹

Third, we observe that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. In Jesus’s Upper Room Discourse, there is an implication of the fulfillment of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that will ensue from the dual work of the Father and the exalted Son in sending the Holy Spirit: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know

³⁸ Concerning the content of the gospel message, I will pick it up later in the next section.

³⁹ Allison identifies baptism with the Holy Spirit with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He affirms that baptism with the Holy Spirit is “[the] work of Christ to pour out the Spirit on new believers.” Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 383. John Stott also identifies baptism with the Holy Spirit with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He avers: “The two expressions were alluding to the same event and the same experience.” John Stott, *Baptism and Fullness: The Work of the Holy Spirit Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2021), 29. See also Stott, *Baptism and Fullness*, 54n9.

him, for he lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:16–17; cf. v. 26; 15:26; 16:7). As mentioned earlier, the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost entailed the fulfillment of baptism with the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, both of which refer to the identical work of the glorified Christ administered to the gathering of the disciples. Drawing on this pattern, the same principle likely holds true for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit: it was fulfilled at Pentecost logically subsequent to the sending of the Holy Spirit on the same day.⁴⁰ The gathering of the disciples “were filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4). It is another implication of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in them.⁴¹

The Holy Spirit and the Birth and Forming of the Church Catholic

Now this project turns to a demonstration of the birth and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant that was brought about by in fulfillment of baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Luke vividly portrays the birth of the people of God of the new covenant—or the inception of the church catholic of the new covenant—in fulfillment of those three pneumatological themes at Pentecost:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1–4)

⁴⁰ Allison identifies the temporal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son with the temporal mission, that is, the sending of the Holy Spirit. He seems to express outpouring and indwelling as the realized aspects or entailment of the sending of the Holy Spirit. See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 275–76. Concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the triune presence in believers, see Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, 523, 525.

⁴¹ In the Old Testament, fire refers to symbolism of divine presence for revelation (e.g., a burning bush with flames of fire [Exod 3:2]; the Lord’s descent on Mount Sinai [19:18, 24:17; Deut 4:11]); guidance and protection (e.g., a pillar of fire [Exod 13:21–22; Num 9:16; Deut 1:33]); judgment (e.g., a consuming fire [Num 11:1; 16:35; 1 Kgs 18:38; Joel 2:30]); and more. When John the Baptist anticipated baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire, there is an implication that baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire would entail the abiding of divine presence in its recipients.

According to this passage, the gathering of 120 disciples (1:15) were the first recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit jointly sent by the Father and the glorified Jesus at Pentecost. As rehearsed above, they experienced the work of the glorified Jesus in baptizing them with the Holy Spirit and pouring out the Holy Spirit on them. Again, they were filled with the indwelling Holy Spirit by whom Jesus was abiding in them. They became the incipient members of the new covenant community in which Christ is abiding permanently as its head (cf. Eph 4:15; 5:23; Col 1:18).

Besides the gathering of the disciples who were incorporated into the church catholic of the new covenant as its incipient members at Pentecost, Jesus added more members to his body on the same day. They consisted of the combined assembly of Jews and converts to Judaism who were observing the festival in Jerusalem:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Acts 2:37–41)

Thus, the church catholic of the new covenant began at Pentecost in fulfillment of baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It consisted of the gathering of the new people of God—120 disciples and about three thousand Jews and converts to Judaism—on whom the glorified Christ poured out the Holy Spirit and in whom he is present by the Holy Spirit indwelling them.⁴²

⁴² Allison avers that “the church began at Pentecost and did not exist prior to that monumental event.” Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 78–82. Similarly, Cole states: “In my view, Pentecost is the birth of “the body of Christ” . . . The community that emerges is new . . . The Spirit of the *risen* Christ now animates it.” Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 212. In contrast, Clowney entertains a view that “Pentecost did not create the people of God” and that the church of the new covenant is a part of the one continuous people of God sharing in Abraham’s seed (Gen 3:29). Clowney, *The Church*, 53–55.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit or baptism with the Holy Spirit which generated the inception of the church catholic of the new covenant at Pentecost continued in conformity to the risen Christ's affirmation: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Indeed, the rest of Acts depicts the progression and expansion of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit extending to the region of Judea (2:43–8:3), Samaria (8:4–25), and ultimately to the Gentiles (10:1–28:31) for incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant. Among these narratives, Luke surveys the inclusion of the Gentiles into the new covenant community marked by the nearly identical manifestations of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with those that appeared to the gathering of the disciples at Pentecost.⁴³ "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God" (Acts 10:44–46). This redemptive event is ecclesiologicaly significant in that it unfolds the triune God's counsel in eternity past with reference to the membership of the church catholic of the new covenant. Specifically, the membership of the new covenant community was to be all-embracing; not just the Jews alone but the Gentiles would also

⁴³ The parallel manifestations of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit between the gathering of the disciples experienced and Peter and those six Jewish believers (cf. Acts 11:12) witnessed were speaking in tongues (2:4; 10:46) and doxology (2:11; 10:46). Peter and his Jewish companions maintain reticence concerning the presence of fire in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles, the fire which Peter assuredly observed resting on the gathering of the disciples including him (2:3).

become incorporated into the church catholic of the new covenant⁴⁴ through the identical outpouring of the Holy Spirit that began at Pentecost and continued since then.⁴⁵

Indeed, Paul refers to baptism with the Holy Spirit as the common experience that occurs to both Jews and the Gentiles for incorporation into the one body of Jesus at the beginning of Christian life: “For we were all baptized by⁴⁶ one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Cor 12:13). Obviously, when Paul spoke of “all,” he collectively referred to himself (i.e., a Jew) and the members of the Corinthian church (i.e., the Gentiles) with reference to the recipients of the experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit. He affirms that no recognizable distinction exists between his and their experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit. Indeed, both Jews and the Gentiles were “all baptized [with] one Spirit.” They all shared in the identical experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit. Metaphorically, they all shared in drinking the one Spirit, “rivers of living water” that “will flow within them” (John 7:38). As a result, they were all incorporated into the one body of Jesus.⁴⁷ They all became the members of his body. “[W]hether Jews or Gentiles,

⁴⁴ Indeed, the inclusion of the Gentiles into the people of God alongside the Jews was anticipated when the Lord declared to Abram through whom “all people on earth will be blessed” (Gen 12:3). This anticipation was partly fulfilled in the Old Testament. The coming of the messianic King the bearer of the Spirit of the Lord was to bring it into full realization. Jesus was the messianic King and the Servant chosen by God to bring salvation to the nations (Matt 12:18–21). Now through Jesus, the Jews and the Gentiles commonly “have access to the Father by one Spirit” (Eph 2:18).

⁴⁵ This project reaffirms that the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was the one-time unrepeatable event in the history of redemption whereas the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or baptism with the Holy Spirit is the continuous and repeatable work of the exalted Jesus in the order of salvation.

⁴⁶ Throughout the New Testament, there are seven references to baptism with the Holy Spirit. The first six references to baptism with the Holy Spirit consistently convey that Jesus is the subject of baptism; the Holy Spirit is the medium of baptism; and believers are the object of baptism. After all, the Greek preposition ἐν in 1 Corinthians 12:13 refers to instrumental or locative. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 605.

⁴⁷ The Greek preposition εἰς in the text refers to be local or the goal of the action. For the former interpretation, they were baptized with the Holy Spirit into the locus of one body. For the latter interpretation, they were baptized with the Holy Spirit so as to become one body. Fee argues that the latter alternative fits in with the context better. See Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 179n363. Thus, he affirms: “In this sentence the goal of their common “immersion” in the one Spirit is “into/unto one body.” Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 181. See also Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 603n20, 606.

slave or free,” they all became the members of the church catholic of the new covenant through the universal experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Paul’s utterance provides two implications that are significant in this project’s argument that the creation and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant depends on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or baptism with the Holy Spirit. First, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or baptism with the Holy Spirit is the ongoing and repetitive work of the glorified Jesus not only in creating the church catholic of the new covenant at Pentecost but also in continuously making it by incorporating the people of God into his body until the inauguration of the new heaven and new earth. Obviously, there has not been, nor will there be, the repetition of the sending—or mission—of the Holy Spirit from the Father through the glorified Jesus since the day of Pentecost. The coming of the Holy Spirit co-sent from the Father through the glorified Jesus at Pentecost was the one-time unrepeatable event in the history of redemption. Yet, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or baptism with the Holy Spirit that logically followed the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost has continued, and will continue, until the full number of the elect of the triune God is incorporated into the church catholic of the new covenant.

Second, baptism with the Holy Spirit or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the common and universal experience of all the people of God notwithstanding their differences in gender, generation, social status, race, nationality, and culture. Paul’s utterance above echoes Joel’s prophetic anticipation of the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord that will be marked by no discrimination in gender, age, and social standing among the recipients (Joel 2:28–29). In addition to these dividing barriers, Paul includes in the list ethnicity or race whose distinctions have nothing to do with the common experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: “For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Cor 12:13); “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus”

(Gal 3:28). Elsewhere he adds to the list plurality of cultures though speaking of it within the context of new creation and election: “Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all” (Col 3:11). Differences in nationality do not withhold the people of God from the common receiving of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, either. Indeed, after narrating God’s universal acceptance of his people in all nations, Peter becomes the earliest witness to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles who were the Romans:

Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism. but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right . . . While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles.” (Acts 10:35, 44–45)

Thus, since the day of Pentecost all the people of God, men or women, in all generations, social positions, races, nations, and cultures have universally shared in the common experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the body of Jesus.

Turning to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, this project affirms that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit along with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit causes the inception and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant. Speaking of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that would be fulfilled to them at a future time, Jesus referred to it as the antecedent occasion to his “coming to [them]” (John 14:18).⁴⁸ By the Holy Spirit indwelling them, the glorified Jesus would be present in them. Fire resting upon the gathering of the disciples—when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit—referred to divine presence descending on them and filling them with

⁴⁸ Craig Keener comments that Jesus’s coming to the disciples within the immediate context of John 14:16–17 “must refer to his coming in 20:19–23 to impart the Spirit to them.” Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 2:973. Carson holds a similar view. See D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1991), 501.

the Holy Spirit, an unambiguous indication that they were indwelt by the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹ By this indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in them at Pentecost, Jesus became present in them. Conversely, they became the incipient members of the new covenant community in which Jesus was now abiding by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The identical formula holds true for all believers narrated in the rest of Acts (e.g., the assembly of the Jews and converts to Judaism [Acts 2:41–46]; the Jewish believers in Jerusalem and its vicinity [4:32; 5:14; 6:7]; the Samaritan believers [8:5–8, 12, 25]; Cornelius and his household [10:44–48]; the Gentile believers [11:17–18, 20–21; et al.]). Alongside the gathering of the disciples, they became the members of the new covenant church sharing in the universal presence of Jesus abiding in them by the Holy Spirit indwelling them. Putting these accounts together, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit gave rise to the birth and forming of the new covenant church whose catholicity in this project is identified with the universal presence of Jesus abiding in living believers on earth and deceased believers in the heavenly place.⁵⁰

In this section, this project demonstrated that the day of Pentecost marked the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophetic anticipation of the outpouring and indwelling of the Spirit of the Lord and John the Baptist’s and Jesus’s anticipation of baptism with the Holy Spirit. Subsequently, it showed that their fulfillment worked as the causal and continuing principle for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant. In the next section, it will engage in arguing the hearing of and faith in the gospel as the

⁴⁹ The sign of fire visible to their eyes demonstrated that the descent of the Holy Spirit on them was intended for the empowerment to carry out divine mission of evangelism in fulfillment of Jesus’s utterance (Acts 1:8). For relevant discussion, see Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 352–55; Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 156–59; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 45–48.

⁵⁰ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is also the key to understanding the temple of the living God as a metaphor of the church (1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21–22). Though the temple of God has bearing on this discussion, Scripture presents it in a broader context of consummation when “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Rev 21:22) in fulfillment of divine redemption. For relevant discussion, see G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press; Leicester: Apollos, 2004), 23–27.

requirement for bringing into effect those pneumatological themes for engendering the creation and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant.

The Gospel and the Church Catholic of the New Covenant

Constituting the finale of this chapter, this section centers on the hearing of and believing in the proclaimed gospel entailing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins as the precondition for making baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit efficacious for generating the birth and making of the church catholic of the new covenant. The discussion will proceed with two stages: (1) the analysis of the content of the gospel in the preaching of Peter at Pentecost and (2) the pattern of the hearing of and believing in the gospel entailing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins as the prerequisite for the putting into effect of those pneumatological themes for causing the creation and forming of the church catholic of the new covenant.

The Gospel According to Peter⁵¹

The dominant theme of Peter's gospel at Pentecost is the availability of salvation by "calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 2:21), that is, by faith in his name. In the process of identifying the crucified Jesus with the Lord, Peter employs four strategic argumentations: (1) the dawning of the last days in fulfillment of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord (vv. 16–21); (2) God's vindication of the death of Jesus by

⁵¹ Admittedly, Peter's proclamation of the gospel is one among many. In this sense, it would be an overstatement to say what he delivered in the proclamation of the gospel establishes a definite pattern to which all other presentations of the gospel must adhere. Yet, his gospel contains the central message, that is, the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus, the core of the gospel that must be held in all presentations of the gospel. Further, his gospel is significant in my discussion minimally for two reasons. First, his gospel was the earliest proclamation. Thus, we should give a thoughtful attention to what he preached during his presentation of the gospel. By doing so, we would find out what messages must be addressed in the proclamation of the gospel, the messages that put into effect those pneumatological themes for engendering the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant. Second, his gospel was proclaimed on the day of Pentecost when the church catholic of the new covenant was born. His proclamation of the gospel was the divine means by which those pneumatological themes became efficacious for causing the making of the church catholic of the new covenant at Pentecost. Thus, this project surveys the content of Peter's gospel.

raising him from the resurrection (vv. 22–24); (3) the identification of the risen Jesus with the Messiah (vv. 25–32); and (4) the identification of the exalted Jesus with the Lord (vv. 33–35).

First, announcing to the crowd, Peter spoke of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the gathering of the disciples as heralding the arrival of the last days: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people” (2:17). This outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days would be universally comprehensive.⁵² Aside from this bright aspect, the dawning of the last days would entail the manifestations of the ominous realities in nature that will usher in the coming of the cosmic judgment of the Lord on the last day (vv. 19–20).⁵³ In view of the imminent approach of the last day, invitation to salvation by invoking the name of the Lord is all the more urgent: “And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (v. 21).

Second, in defense of the death of Jesus, Peter draws on God’s vindication of him by raising him from the dead. He acknowledges in public that “Jesus of Nazareth was a man” (v. 22)⁵⁴ who was handed over, crucified, and dead (v. 23). Yet, he proclaims that “God raised him from the dead” (v. 24). By raising Jesus from the dead, God demonstrated the irrelevance of his death with any claims or suspicions of sin in the

⁵² Concerning the universality of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and its common experience, refer to the relevant discussion earlier above.

⁵³ Bruce refers the darkening of the sun and the turning of the moon into blood in the text to the natural phenomena that happened during the few hours in the afternoon of the crucifixion of Jesus. Such natural phenomena are working “as harbingers of the advent of the day of the Lord—a day of judgment.” See Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 62. In parallel with Bruce, I. Howard Marshall draws attention to the function of the signs as heralding the end of the last days at a future time. See I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (1980; repr., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 79.

⁵⁴ Wellum defines person as the acting agent or subject. He defines nature as the capacity of the person in and through the person acts. Thus, person acts whereas nature never acts. In Christology, the human nature of Jesus consists of body and rational soul, namely, human mind, heart, and will. See Stephen J. Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 260–63, 449–50.

minds of the crowd. The resurrection of Jesus operated as an unambiguous rationale for the reversal of their misguided judgment against him.

Third, Peter identified the risen Jesus with the Messiah whom David anticipated to come and rise from the dead. He quoted David's words in Psalm 16:8–11:

David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." (Acts 2:25–28)

After speaking of David's prophetic utterance foreseeing the resurrection of his messianic heir, Peter affirms the messianic identity of Jesus, the Davidic King that was to come, with his proclamation of and eyewitness to the risen Jesus: "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it" (v. 32).

Fourth, Peter's proclamation culminates in substantiating the identification of the exalted Jesus with the Lord the object of faith for salvation. On the one hand, the work of the exalted Jesus in pouring out the Holy Spirit reveals his identity as the Lord equal in divinity with the Lord the giver of the Spirit: "Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33).⁵⁵ On the other hand, the enthronement of the exalted Jesus to the right hand of God—the position of divine authority and power to reign supremely⁵⁶—reveals his identity as the Lord in fulfillment of David's prophecy: "For

⁵⁵ Bruce argues that the Greek dative article τῇ modifying the Greek dative noun δεξιᾷ is instrumental dative; thus, he interprets τῇ δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ as "by the right hand of God." Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 66n87. Barrett leaves the phrase open for either interpretation as instrumental (by the right hand of God) or locative (to the right hand of God). Yet, he favors the former, that is, instrumental, in view of "the agency of God" in exalting the risen Jesus. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 28. Schnabel also takes instrumental as more likely, considering Acts 5:31 where it is written: "God exalted him to his own right hand." Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 148.

⁵⁶ Derek Kidner comments on the text "Sit at my right hand" (Ps 110:1) as the Lord's address for bestowing his authority and power. See Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73–150*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (1975; repr., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 428. Bruce describes God's right hand as "the position of supremacy over the universe." Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 67. Schnabel sees the ruling work of the exalted Jesus at the right hand of God inseparable from that of God. See Schnabel, *Acts*, 150. Bock focuses on loftiness and sacredness of God's presence. And so, Jesus's being seated at

David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet’” (Acts 2:34–35; cf. Ps 110:1).

In conclusion, Peter provided the audience—whom he collectively called “all Israel”⁵⁷—with the recapitulation of his apostolic proclamation, namely, that “God has made this Jesus, whom [they] crucified, both Lord and Messiah” (Acts 2:36). As rehearsed above, Peter proved his theological conclusion in a chain of four reasonings in harmony with the testimonies of the Old Testament (Joel 2:28–32; Ps 16:8–11; 110:1): (1) the dawning of the last days in fulfillment of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord; (2) God’s vindication of the humiliated Jesus (i.e., his suffering, crucifixion, death, and burial) by raising him from the dead; (3) the identification of the risen Jesus with the Messiah; and (4) the identification of the exalted Jesus with the Lord. The central leitmotif unifying his preaching was the work of God in revealing the identity of Jesus. His work in raising him from the dead revealed the messianic identity of the risen Jesus. His work in exalting him and enthroning him at his right hand revealed the lordship of the exalted Jesus. The thrust of these works of God in revealing the true identity of his one and only Son Jesus lied in the explicit proclamation of his equivalent status in divinity with him as the bestower of the gift of the Holy Spirit and salvation to his people calling on his name by faith in the last days “before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord” (Acts 2:20; cf. Joel 2:31). Within a broader context considered, the Lord Jesus

God’s right hand permanently indicates “an intimate connection between Jesus and the Father and an equality between them.” And so, high Christology was a characteristic of the apostolic preaching and the early church. It was not a later development. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 134–35.

⁵⁷ All Israel or all the house of Israel refers to the assembly of Jews and Jewish converts in the immediate context (cf. Lev 10:6; Num 20:29; 1 Sam 7:2; Jer 9:25; Ezek 37:11). In view of this direct reference to Israel, I am hesitant to argue that the house of Israel would point to the new Israel or the church of the new covenant consisting of the redeemed Jews and Gentiles in Christ. Yet, I would argue that this reference to all the house of Israel minimally anticipates the influx of the Gentile believers into the already established community of the Jewish believers in Christ. Thus, the church catholic of the new covenant might be in view with this reference to all the house of Israel.

rightfully expresses his ruling power in saving his people as their Savior through his bestowal of the Holy Spirit between the arrival of the last days in fulfillment of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the dawning of the last day inaugurating the new heaven and new earth. Peter's apostolic proclamation paved the way for the hearing of and believing in the gospel on the part of the crowd as the prerequisite for rendering effective baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit for engendering the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant.

The Hearing of and Believing in the Gospel

In this section, this project sets forth the hearing and appropriation of the gospel entailing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins as the prerequisite pattern for putting into effect those pneumatological themes as the causal principles of the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant. This pattern is conspicuous in Luke's portrayal of the response of the crowd to Peter's proclamation of the gospel:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Acts 2:37–41)

The first component of the pattern, namely, the hearing of the gospel, comes to the fore in the passage. Indeed, the combined assembly of Jews and converts to Judaism were in view as the hearers of the gospel which culminated in the identification of Jesus whom they crucified with the Lord and Messiah. Convicted of their sins of complicity in the crucifixion of their Messiah and Lord (cf. John 16:8–9), they realized their dire predicament which was properly expressed in their lament: "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). In reaction to their dismay, Peter voiced a series of twofold urgent calls on

the part of the crowd: (1) repentance of their sins of crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ and (2) baptism with water in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as the outward and visible sign in conformity to their confession of faith in him and repentance of sins.⁵⁸ His next remark is pivotal in this discussion: “And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (v. 38).

While Peter spoke of baptism with water as if it was a preconditional component for the reception of the Holy Spirit, it is unlikely that baptism with water constitutes an essential part for the realization of the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, baptism with water within the context of Peter’s preaching is the sign and seal of the new covenant promise that those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and repented of their sins receive twin blessings of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁹ Given this reality, the administration of baptism with water has nothing to do with engendering faith and repentance as the essential elements for the reception of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit on the part of those being baptized. Rather, as the visible and outward sign, baptism with water signals and seals the genuine conversion experience confirming that those being baptized have responded to the gospel in faith and repentance entailing the appropriation of the forgiveness of sins and the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus, baptism with water is not prerequisite for the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ When Peter urged the crowd to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, he was referring to baptism with water that mandated the confession of faith in the lordship of Jesus Christ on the part of the baptized and that signified washing and cleaning of sins, that is, the forgiveness of sins as the entailment of repentance. See Bock, *Acts*, 142; Marshall, *Acts*, 86–87; Schnabel, *Acts*, 161.

⁵⁹ Concerning what baptism with water signs and seals, see Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 448–49; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 195–99. Elsewhere Allison refers to Acts 2:38 as the text in dispute concerning whether baptism with water is necessary for salvation or regeneration. See Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 358.

⁶⁰ Notwithstanding the argument that baptism with the Holy Spirit is not an essential component for the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit, I do not intend to diminish the significance of water baptism at all. Baptism with water is the dominical imperative (Matt 28:19), given to the church of the new covenant to observe it as an initiatory rite signifying the entrance into it. Scripture draws a pattern that baptism with water is immediately administered to converts (e.g., the Ethiopian eunuch [Acts 8:26–

And so, Peter affirms that the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit demands faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins through the hearing and appropriation of the gospel as the antecedent conditions for it to be effective. This soteriological principle of pneumatological exclusivism needs a further elaboration with reference to the hearing of and believing in the gospel as the requirement for bringing into effect baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the casual principles of the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant. Indeed, Peter's proclamation of the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit as the entailment of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins through the hearing and embracing of the gospel has in view the application of baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to the people of God in keeping with their saving faith in Christ and repentance of their sins through the hearing and appropriation of the gospel. Thus, the reception of the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit in consonance with the realization of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit requires as the antecedent precondition saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins indissolubly tied to the hearing of and believing in the gospel.

Luke's further testimony affirms that the purpose of this order—the hearing and appropriation of the gospel, faith and repentance, the receiving of the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit in connection with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit⁶¹—lies in bringing about the incorporation of the recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit into the church catholic of the new covenant. Indeed, he narrates: “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to

36]; Cornelius and his household [10:44–48]; Lydia and her household [16:14–15]; the Philippian jailor and his household [vv. 31–33]).

⁶¹ As mentioned earlier, this project does not entertain the necessity of baptism with water as a preconditional component for the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Rather, baptism with water is a physical and outward sign that signals and seals the new covenant promise of the indwelling Holy Spirit in the people of God.

their number that day” (v. 41). His statement implies that not all who heard Peter’s apostolic proclamation embraced the gospel. Those who heard the gospel and “accepted his message” alone demonstrated their confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins—namely, the heartfelt sorrow and confession of crucifying their Lord and Messiah and commitment to submitting to him wholeheartedly—by being baptized with water in obedience to Peter’s apostolic imperative. Indeed, their baptism with water signaled and sealed their conversion which was indissolubly tied to their hearing and appropriation of the gospel. Notwithstanding the silence of the text concerning their explicit reception of the Holy Spirit, Peter’s utterance of the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit in response to faith and repentance (v. 38) warrants that they became recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their reception of the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit indicates that, along with the gathering of the disciples, they shared in the identical and universal experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit as the entailment of their faith and repentance through the hearing and appropriation of the gospel. As a result, “about three thousand were added to their number that day,” indicating their inclusion or incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant in which Jesus was present by the indwelling Holy Spirit.⁶² Thus, these texts set forth the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant that ensues from baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the logical outcome of saving faith in Christ and the genuine repentance of sins through the hearing and embracing of the gospel.

⁶² Barrett is skeptical that the entire number of three thousand Jews and Jewish converts experienced the reception of the Holy Spirit, given that “Luke does not say that all the 3,000 received the Holy Spirit.” Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 33. Bock rightly argues that the verb “accepted” in Acts 2:41 has in view the aspects of “call on the name of the Lord” (v. 21) and “repent” (v. 38); thus, they refer to “a different dimension of the embrace of the gospel that saves.” Bock, *Acts*, 146–47. Marshall affirms that the addition of those three thousand believers into the gathering of the disciples is equivalent to their incorporation into the church. See Marshall, *Acts*, 87–88.

This pattern is explicit elsewhere in Peter’s evangelism of Cornelius and his household.⁶³ The content of the gospel which Peter delivered to those Gentiles is nearly identical with that of the first gospel which he proclaimed at Pentecost other than his utterance of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which signaled the inauguration of the last days:⁶⁴ (1) the narration of the works of God performed through Jesus (Acts 10:36–38); (2) the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus (vv. 39–41); (3) the identification of the risen Jesus with the Lord supremely reigning with divine authority (v. 42); and (4) the forgiveness of sins by faith in the name of the Lord Jesus (v. 43). The next scene portrays the coming of the Holy Spirit on the entire gathering of the Gentiles—consisting of Cornelius, his household (11:14), his relatives and close friends (10:24)—at his house who were hearing the gospel in Peter’s proclamation. Though Luke did not explicitly state in this narrative the elements of the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins—through their hearing and appropriation of the gospel—as the prerequisite for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them, there are minimally two grounds that warrant the reality of their conversion, namely, saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and genuine repentance of sins.⁶⁵

⁶³ Luke conveys two more passages in Acts that speak of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which occurs later in the order of salvation: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Samaritan believers (Acts 8:14–17) and on the Ephesian disciples (19:1–6). On the grounds of these two passages, Pentecostal and charismatic circles set forth the pattern of the two distinct stages of salvation as being normative, that is, baptism with the Holy Spirit logically or temporally subsequent to initial conversion experience. For relevant discussion, see Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 392–95; Stott, *Baptism and Fullness*, 41–48; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 192–96; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 81–87.

⁶⁴ Peter did not incorporate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit into his proclamation, probably because he could not have anticipated that the Gentiles would receive the same gift of the Holy Spirit as the Jews and Samaritans did. Indeed, he might not have felt the need to speak of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at all in his proclamation of the gospel.

⁶⁵ In opposition to inclusivists like Clark Pinnock and John Sanders who contend that Cornelius was already a saved believer in God before he heard Peter’s gospel and believed it, Matthew Barrett argues that their inclusivistic interpretation of Acts 10 is misleading and that the narrative of Cornelius’ conversion in Acts 10 falls into the category of exclusivism when it is viewed in the framework of redemptive history. See Matthew Barrett, “‘I Will Pour Out My Spirit on All Flesh’: Are Acts 2 and 10 Proof-Texts for Inclusivism?” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 17 (2012): 79–98.

First, Peter enjoined them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 48). Baptism with water was the visible and outward sign of the explicit confession of faith and repentance, just as he had earlier mandated baptism with water—confirming the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit—to be administered to the three thousand Jews and converts to Judaism who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and repented of their sins through their hearing and appropriation of the gospel (2:38, 41). His injunction upon the Gentiles to be baptized then indicates that he and the other six Jewish believers (cf. 11:12) visibly confirmed the explicit response of the Gentiles to the gospel in faith and repentance. Second, Peter affirmed that the Gentiles’ reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit was indissolubly tied to their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (11:17) and repentance (v. 18). His conviction derives from his experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in which he received the Holy Spirit by the same faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, “God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 17); again, “even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life” (v. 18). Thus, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles indicates that there was the authentic reality of conversion on their part which consisted of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the genuine repentance of their sins as the entailment of their hearing and appropriation of the gospel, “a message through which [he] and all [his] household [were] saved” (v. 14). Therefore, the same pattern holds true for the inclusion of the Gentile believers into the church catholic of the new covenant: the hearing and appropriation of the gospel, faith and repentance, the reception of the indwelling Holy Spirit in consonance with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the body of Christ.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ I demonstrated earlier the relation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, baptism with the Holy Spirit, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to the creation and making of the church catholic of the new covenant.

Similarly, Paul establishes a fixed pattern of the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit as the entailment of the hearing and embracing of the gospel. He affirms that the receiving of the Holy Spirit coheres with the hearing of and believing in the gospel: “I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?” (Gal 3:2). Again, God gives the Holy Spirit to his people hearing the gospel and responding to it in faith: “So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?” (v. 5). Elsewhere Paul draws on the hearing of the gospel as the causal means for saving faith: “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” (Rom 10:17). Specifically, this saving faith coming from the hearing of the gospel refers to the act of confessing the lordship of the resurrected Jesus:⁶⁷ “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (v. 9).

Elsewhere, he imposed this salvific formula in personal evangelism: “They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household’” (Acts 16:31). This confession of the lordship of the resurrected Jesus in keeping with the hearing and appropriation of the gospel involves the acknowledgment of his equivalent identity with the Lord the giver of the eschatological Spirit to save his new covenant people in the last days and ultimately from the eschatological judgment on the last day, just as Paul aptly quoted Joel: “For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’” (Rom 10:12–13; cf. Joel 2:32). Though he did

⁶⁷ In verse 8, Paul refers to the gospel as “the word of faith.” Schreiner states that this phrase should be understood as referring to both “the content of the faith” and “the act of trusting.” Namely, “[f]aith involves the doctrinal confession that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead.” Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 2nd ed. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 546. Alongside Schreiner, Douglas J. Moo sets forth “[t]he acclamation of Jesus as Lord” as the content of the word of faith. Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, 2nd ed. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 676.

not incorporate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit into his quotation of Joel, it is unlikely that he did not recognize it as the crucial element of the reception of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, he referred to baptism with the Holy Spirit as the common and universal experience of all the people of God at the outset of entering into the new covenant relationship with him: “For we were all baptized [with] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Cor 12:13). And the purpose of baptism with the Holy Spirit was “so as to form one body [of Jesus],” namely, the incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant. Thus, Paul draws the same pattern: saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins in response to the hearing and embracing of the gospel as the requirement for the reception of the indwelling Holy Spirit in consonance with the realization of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and baptism with the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant. The hearing and appropriation of the gospel constitutes a key part in the redemptive plan of the triune God to create and form the church catholic of the new covenant “because [the gospel] is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile” (Rom 1:16).

In this section, this project demonstrated the necessity of the act of the hearing of and believing in the gospel as the logical precondition for saving faith and repentance bringing into effect the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, baptism with the Holy Spirit, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the causal principles for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant. In the first part, it centered on presenting the content of the gospel in the analysis of Peter’s apostolic proclamation at Pentecost. In the second part, it established that the hearing and appropriation of the gospel is prerequisite for saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins entailing the realization of baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the causal principles of the forming of the church catholic of the new covenant.

Conclusion

In this chapter, this project engaged in spelling out my theological position of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant, the position that this project will employ over against pneumatological inclusivists that it will discuss later. It demonstrated that the birth and making of the church catholic of the new covenant draws on baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit tied to the hearing and appropriation of the gospel entailing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the genuine repentance of sins. In the next chapter, it will engage in rehearsing the rest of my theological position concerning pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.

CHAPTER 3
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SALVATION
OF THE CHURCH CATHOLIC

This project championing pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant over against pneumatological inclusivism for the possibility of salvation of the adherents of the world religions in particular and the unevangelized in general focuses its primary task on articulating the themes and work of the Holy Spirit in the making and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant. In this chapter, this project will engage in rehearsing the latter part of the argument, that is, the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant tied to the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling, conversion, and union with Christ in keeping with the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel.

In order to meet the goal of this chapter, this project draws on the hearing of the gospel as an essential component in the outworking of the redemptive plan of the triune God to save his new covenant people in keeping with the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling, conversion, and union with Jesus Christ. This project will involve this discussion with (1) the necessity of two aspects of divine call, namely, the external call of the proclaimed gospel and the effectual call of the Holy Spirit as the divine means of salvation of his new covenant people;¹ (2) the work of the Holy Spirit in engendering human response to the gospel in faith and repentance; (3) and the work of the Holy Spirit

¹ Bruce Demarest presents the four views of historical interpretation of divine calling. Among those positions, my view corresponds to that of the Reformed tradition which interprets that divine call to salvation consists of two aspects, namely, the general call through the preached Word and the special call effected through the work of the Holy Spirit. See Bruce Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation: The Doctrine of Salvation*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1997), 221. See also Abraham Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, trans. Henri De Vries (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 342.

in mediating the salvific presence of Jesus alongside all his merits of salvation to the new covenant people of God.

The Necessity of the Call to Salvation

In this section, this project engages in demonstrating that God's call of his new covenant people to salvation necessarily involves the external calling of the preached gospel and the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit. This discussion will proceed with two argumentations: (1) the necessity of the external calling of the proclaimed gospel as the divinely ordained means of salvation of sinful human beings and (2) the necessity of the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit that infallibly draws the new covenant people of God to salvation in conjunction with the external calling.

The External Call to Salvation

The *proto evangelium* or the first gospel revealed God's salvific intent that would involve the affliction of the woman's offspring with a wound: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Gen 3:15). In the unfolding of progressive revelation of the history of redemption, the wound or "the bruising of him on the heel" was to involve the vicarious atonement of the Suffering Servant for sinners through his punitive suffering and death to bring about their justification and forgiveness of sins (Isa 52:13–53:12). The coming of the Son of God, who took on full humanity, signaled the imminent fulfillment of his messianic ministry of substitutionary atonement in keeping with the redemption of the new covenant people of God (Matt 1:21; Luke 2:30–35; John 1:29; 1 John 2:2). When the hour came (John 12:27), Jesus fulfilled his messianic mission of the Suffering Servant of God through his suffering, death, and resurrection (Luke 24:26–27, 46–47). His substitutionary atonement for sinners fulfilled the first gospel as he destroyed "the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil" (Heb 2:14; cf. 1 John 3:8).

The risen Jesus commissioned his apostles to “preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15; cf. Matt 28:18–20). This gospel contains the message of salvation of sinners (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9). God’s call to salvation is to involve the proclamation of the gospel from without. This external call to salvation via the proclaimed gospel is universal in nature: “the gospel must first be preached to all nations” (Mark 13:10). In obedience to the dominical imperative, the apostles and believers vigorously engaged in proclaiming the gospel since the day of Pentecost. Invitation to embrace salvation is a key component of their proclaimed gospel. Peter’s apostolic preaching of the gospel sets a prototypical example of how God summons sinners to salvation by means of the proclaimed gospel from without:

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation. (Acts 2:38–40)

Indeed, God summons sinners to salvation through the gospel that is universally proclaimed by his spokesmen. This reality conforms to the pattern in Scripture that the proclaimed gospel from without is God’s salvific means. Scripture expresses the following formulae concerning the external calling as the initial step of God’s salvation:² preaching the word (Acts 8:4; 14:25; 16:6); proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (8:12); preaching the gospel (vv. 25, 40; 14:7, 21; 16:10);³ and more.⁴ Through the preached gospel of his agents, God

² See Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 848.

³ See also Rom 1:15, 20; 1 Cor 1:17; 9:14, 16; 2 Cor 2:12; 10:16.

⁴ Other formulae include announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36); telling the good news about the Lord Jesus (11:20; cf. 8:35; 13:32; 17:18); proclaiming the Word of God (13:5); speaking boldly for the Lord (14:3); preaching the word of the Lord (15:35); telling the way to be saved (16:17); speaking the word of the Lord (v. 32); preaching the Word of God (17:13); peaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection (v. 18); testifying that Jesus is the Messiah (18:5); preaching the kingdom (20:25); witnessing the kingdom of God (28:23); and proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 31).

universally summoned to salvation Jews, converts to Judaism (2:14–40; 3:11–26; 4:8–12), Samaritans (8:4–5, 25), and Gentiles (10:36–43; 11:20; 13:5, 26–39). Thus, the external calling of the preached gospel constitutes a key component of God’s salvation because the gospel is “a message through which [the people of God] will be saved” (11:14; cf. 1 Cor 15:2; Eph 1:13); it prescribes “the way to be saved” (Acts 16:17); and “it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). Therefore, the appropriation of salvation sustains an indissoluble connection with the gospel that is to be proclaimed: “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?” (Rom 10:14).

While God universally draws sinners to salvation via the external calling of the proclaimed gospel, Scripture portrays a reality that the hearing of the proclaimed gospel alone does not guarantee a salvific response to it, namely, the appropriation of the gospel marked by faith and repentance.⁵ The prophet Isaiah spoke of the unbelief of those hearing the words of God: “Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Isa 53:1). They do not believe the gospel (cf. John 12:38; Rom 10:16). They outright reject God’s calling to repentance: “I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer” (Jer 7:13). They are spiritually blinded and dead. Because of this wretched reality, they are essentially incapable of responding to the gospel in faith and repentance: “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor 4:4). They belong to the multitudes that are invited to salvation, but they are not the chosen people of God who predestined them in eternity past to appropriate the external calling of the proclaimed

⁵ See Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Covenant*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 41.

gospel within time. Indeed, “many are invited, but few are chosen” (Matt 22:14).

This unfortunate reality that the general call to salvation via the preached Word of God does not guarantee the receiving of the gospel on the part of the hearers is not to diminish the necessity of the verbally proclaimed gospel as the divine means of God’s universal summons of sinners to salvation.⁶ Obviously, the proclaimed gospel of God’s spokesmen entailed a variety of responses on the part of the hearers. Notwithstanding their varied responses, the proclaimed gospel from without is indissolubly tied to saving faith in Jesus. Only through the hearing of the verbally proclaimed gospel of God’s spokesmen, the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is available. The logic grounding the necessity of the external calling of the proclaimed gospel is straightforwardly exclusivistic; namely, the epistemological appropriation of the person and work of Jesus for salvation necessarily depends upon the hearing of the proclaimed gospel from without. In order to confess faith in the identity of Jesus Christ as the unique Redeemer appointed by God (Matt 1:21; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5–6), God’s summons to salvation via the verbally proclaimed gospel of his spokesmen is to occur.

The Effectual Call to Salvation

The effectual calling is another aspect of God’s calling that infallibly summons his people to salvation by making the external calling of the proclaimed gospel effective for faith and repentance.⁷ While Scripture describes God the Father as the author of the effectual calling (cf. Rom 8:30; 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Tim 1:9; et al.),⁸ Scripture also emphasizes

⁶ See Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020), 844.

⁷ For the definition and concept of the effectual calling, see Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), s.v. “effective/internal call”; J. I. Packer, “Call, Calling,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 151–52; Kuypers, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, 340–42, 345; Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 943; Calvin, *Institutes*, 2.5.5.

⁸ See John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (1955; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 92–93; John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*

that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent who is most intimately involved in the work of the effectual calling because he makes God's external summons to salvation via the proclaimed gospel inwardly appropriated on the part of the hearers of the gospel.⁹

Specifically, the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit that makes the external calling of the proclaimed gospel internally appropriated involves his work of illumination. While the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit generally refers to his role in enabling believers' understanding of Scripture,¹⁰ it can also refer to his operation in enabling the hearers of the gospel to appreciate it by enlightening their hearts and minds and softening their wills.¹¹ The illuminating work of the Holy Spirit is necessary because of the total inability of thoroughly depraved human beings to respond positively to the general call of the gospel: "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Cor 4:4).¹² The illumination of the Holy Spirit is at work when Paul expresses God's enlightening of darkened minds with "the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ (v. 6).¹³ Through the supernatural intervention of

(Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 940; Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 842–43; Augustine, *A Treatise on the Predestination of the Saints* 15 (NPNF¹ 5:506).

⁹ See Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.2.34; 3.24.8; Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 213–14; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 945.

¹⁰ See Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. "illumination"; Gregg R. Allison and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2020), 317–21.

¹¹ See Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 221; Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, 347; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 943; Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.9.1; Jonathan Hogg, *Called by Triune Grace: Divine Rhetoric and the Effectual Call*, Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 80–82; Bruce A. Ware, "Effectual Calling and Grace," in *Still Sovereign*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 211.

¹² Obviously, a part of the cause of their spiritual blindness pertains to the deceitful scheme of "the god of this age." In the language of Paul, "the god of this age" is Satan or the devil. David E. Garland comments that Paul calls Satan the god of this age in the sense of his dominion over the minds of unbelievers. See David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, The New American Commentary 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 211.

¹³ See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 318n28.

the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:9), the people of God grasp the gospel,¹⁴ “a mystery that has been hidden” (v. 7). In the outworking of the divine plan of redemption, the illumination of the Holy Spirit is the efficient cause of God’s revelation of “his wisdom” (v. 7) and “the things” (v. 10) which the unconverted people are essentially incapable of appreciating (v. 9).¹⁵ The new covenant people of God alone—whom God elected in the preexistent Son—are to appropriate the gospel within time because they were chosen as the recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit in keeping with his work of illumination (vv. 13–15).

Lydia’s conversion draws this relation of the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit to the proclaimed gospel from without in the achievement of God’s infallible summoning of his new covenant people to salvation:¹⁶

On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. (Acts 16:13–14)

In this passage, God invited a group of women to salvation via Paul’s preached gospel. Among those women, Lydia responded positively to the general calling of the gospel. Luke affirms that her responsiveness to Paul’s spoken Word of God is attributable to the illuminating work of the Lord in her heart. The identity of the Lord who worked out

¹⁴ See Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 100, 851–52. Fee also comments that the Holy Spirit is “the key to the proper understanding of the gospel . . . [which is] the message of salvation through the crucified one.” See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 110, 114.

¹⁵ Within his broad exposition of the regenerative operation of the Holy Spirit, John Owen speaks of the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit as being essential for the removal of spiritual darkness of holistically depraved human beings. The unregenerate cannot receive “the things that come from the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:14), that is, “Jesus Christ and him crucified” (v. 2), Paul’s message and preaching (v. 4), “God’s wisdom” (v. 7), “what God has freely given us” (v. 12), and “the mind of Christ” (v. 16), without the effectual work of the Holy Spirit that involves enlightening and renewing their minds. John Owen, *John Owen on the Holy Spirit: Pneumatologia* (Cedar Lake, MI: Waymark Books, 2012), 165–92.

¹⁶ See Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 211, 223; Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 843; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 943; Michael S. Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit: God’s Perfecting Presence in Creation, Redemption, and Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 203, 206.

divine enlightenment is arguably the Holy Spirit within the context of the passage. Indeed, the Holy Spirit was the divine agent most intimately involved with governing the whole course of Paul's missionary journey. He did not allow him to preach in Asia and Bithynia (vv. 6–7). Instead, he led him to Philippi (vv. 9–12) with an aim to save Lydia by drawing her infallible response to Paul's preached gospel that is realized through his effectual calling that involved opening her heart. In Lydia's conversion experience, the Holy Spirit was the Lord in illuminating her heart and rendering the general call of the gospel inwardly appreciated on her part.¹⁷ Paul's identification of the Holy Spirit with the Lord in reverse order has a bearing on this discussion: "Now the Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:17).¹⁸ Thus, God's universal call via the preached gospel of his agents becomes salvifically realized by the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit, that is, the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in making the general call of the gospel inwardly appropriated on the part of the new covenant people of God (cf. 2 Thess 2:13–14).

¹⁷ F. F. Bruce maintains reticence concerning who the Lord was in opening her heart. See F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, rev. ed. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 311. Darrell L. Bock rather holds a neutral position in the sense that he identifies the Lord with God who "creates the initiative to faith from within." Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 534. John B. Polhill observes functional equivalence between the Lord and the Holy Spirit as "God's Spirit moving in her heart that led to faith." John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary 26 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 349. Eckhard J. Schnabel has in view Jesus as the identity of the Lord on the ground of Paul's words that Jesus is the Lord as the object of faith and as the subject "who opens the hearts of those who believe (Rom 10:14-17)." Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Acts*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 681. I. Howard Marshall centers on Lydia's conversion as the effect of the realization of the gospel "with the power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction" (1 Thess 1:5). He likely attributes the opening of her heart to the Holy Spirit who is the Lord. I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (1980; repr., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 284.

¹⁸ Garland affirms Paul's identification of the Lord with the Spirit who unveils or renews the hearts of the new covenant members to such an extent that they are freed to contemplate the Lord's glory. See Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 196–98. Similarly, Scott J. Hafemann holds to Paul's affirmation of equivalence between the Lord and the Spirit in the text. He argues that "Moses's experience of Yahweh in the tent of meeting is equivalent to the current experience of the Spirit in Paul's ministry." Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 160. On the contrary, Paul Barnett contends that Paul has in mind Jesus as the identity of the Lord, given that Paul assumes here his encounter with Jesus on the way to Damascus where he turned to him. See Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 195.

Likewise, God's calling has in view the church catholic of the new covenant as the object of his summons to salvation. The salvation of the new covenant people of God utterly draws on God's calling that involves the general call of the proclaimed gospel from without and the special call of the Holy Spirit from within. This pattern of God's salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant is a fixed reality according to Peter's affirmation:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:37–39)

And so, the members of the church catholic of the new covenant consist of those being called. They are "called . . . out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Pet 2:9). "Those who are called" (Heb 9:15) enter into the structured relationship of the new covenant with God. No racial discrimination exists among the members of the church of the new covenant because the called are "both Jews and Greeks" (1 Cor 1:24; cf. Rom 9:24; 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28). They are as a whole "called to be his holy people" (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2; cf. 1 Thess 4:7; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 1:15).

In terms of the church catholic of the new covenant as the corporate members of the one body of Jesus, God's calling achieves union with Jesus Christ that marks the new status of his people. Indeed, God's summons of his new covenant members to salvation via the general call of the proclaimed gospel and the special call of the Holy Spirit entails their union with Jesus Christ.¹⁹ God's calling incorporates them "into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 1:9). His calling brings about their belonging to Jesus Christ (Rom 1:6) and their abiding "in the grace of Christ" (Gal 1:6). He called them to salvation through the gospel, resulting in their sharing in "the glory of

¹⁹ See Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 97; Høglund, *Called by Triune Grace*, 74.

[their] Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess 2:14). He arranged this efficacious calling to salvation that is tied to union with Jesus to be appropriated by the Holy Spirit within time in keeping with his election of them in Christ in eternity past: “He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time” (2 Tim 1:9). Indeed, God’s calling of his new covenant people is coextensive with his election and foreknowledge:²⁰

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. (Rom 8:28–30)

Because they were “appointed for eternal life” (Acts 13:48; cf. Eph 1:4; 1 Tim 6:12) in eternity past, they appropriate the proclaimed gospel from without in a temporal time by the inner working of the Holy Spirit. God’s calling of them by the effective work of the Holy Spirit establishes vital unity of Jesus with the church which is his body (Eph 5:23; Col 1:18, 24; cf. Rom 12:4–5; Eph 1:22–23; 3:6).

In this section, this project demonstrated the necessity of God’s calling to salvation that involves the general call of the gospel from without and the special call of the Holy Spirit from within. This project argued that God’s decree of salvation of his new covenant people is exclusivistic. That is, the epistemological appropriation of the atoning work of Jesus Christ by the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit is to ensue from the hearing of the verbally proclaimed gospel of God’s spokesmen. While God’s universal summons of sinners to salvation through the external calling of the proclaimed gospel does not ensure the salvific response to it, the verbally proclaimed gospel or Word of God constitutes his initial step of salvation of his new covenant people that are infallibly drawn to salvation by the irrevocable calling of the Holy Spirit. And so, God’s calling of

²⁰ See Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 98.

the members of the church catholic of the new covenant necessarily involves the general call of the proclaimed gospel to salvation that is to be appropriated by the efficacious call of the Holy Spirit who enlightens their hearts and minds and softens their wills.

Faith and Repentance

In the previous section, this project set forth the necessity of the external calling of the proclaimed gospel and the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit as the two inseparable aspects of God's summons of his new covenant people to salvation. Now it discusses the work of the Holy Spirit in engendering faith and repentance as the proper response to the gospel on the part of the hearers of the proclaimed gospel, resulting in the salvation of the new covenant people of God. First, it will show that the renewing work of the Holy Spirit in human heart has a direct bearing on the divine enablement of human response to the proclaimed gospel in faith and repentance. Second, it will demonstrate that divinely enabled human response to the gospel in faith and repentance entails the salvation of the recipients of the preached gospel as the new covenant people of God.

The Renewal of Human Hearts

Due to the reality of thoroughly depraved human nature (Gen 6:5; 8:21; Job 15:14–16; Ps 51:5; 58:3), the renewing work of God in human heart—the center or core of human beings in which cognitive, volitional, and emotional capacities are seated²¹—is requisite for putting into effect positive response of human beings to the proclaimed gospel. This work of God in renewing the human hearts was to involve the circumcision of the heart. God demanded the circumcision of the heart on the part of his old covenant partners (Deut 10:16; cf. Jer 4:4). Yet, Moses affirmed that God was the agent that would personally engage in circumcising the hearts of his old covenant people on behalf of

²¹ See Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 405–7.

them.²² “The Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live” (Deut 30:6). Paul identified the Holy Spirit as the personal agent: “circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code” (Rom 2:29). His reference to circumcision of the heart echoes the new covenant language of the new heart. In Ezekiel’s utterance, the giving of the new heart was God’s sovereign work in keeping with his forgiveness of sins and his bestowal of the indwelling Spirit:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. (Ezek 36:25–27; cf. 11:19; Jer 24:7)

In the New Testament language, the renewal of heart is part of “being born again of water and the Spirit” (John 3:3, 5), that is, regeneration.²³ The renewing work of the Holy Spirit in human heart is inseparable from the washing of sins. “Washing” is the means of the Holy Spirit when he effects regeneration and renewal in keeping with Trinitarian redemption:²⁴ “He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior” (Titus 3:5–6). Those “being born of water and the Spirit” by the sovereign grace of God alone enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5).

The renewing work of the Holy Spirit in human heart occurs through the verbally proclaimed gospel:

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the

²² See Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 252; Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 946.

²³ See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 369–74; Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms*, s.v. “regeneration”; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 205.

²⁴ Concerning the regenerating/renewing work of the Holy Spirit that is linked with washing of sin, refer to Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 777–84.

word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you. (1 Pet 1:23–25)

“The word that was preached to you” (v. 25) refers to “the word of truth” (Jas 1:18) through which the Holy Spirit effects regeneration that involves the renewal of heart.²⁵ The preached gospel of God’s spokesmen has a logical priority over the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit in human heart. This pattern is explicit in the biblical evangelism as a coherent whole. Peter’s evangelism at Pentecost is noticeable:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Acts 2:37–41)

Peter’s proclaimed gospel was the divine means through which the Holy Spirit engendered unsettlement and agitation in the hearts of Jews and converts to Judaism hearing the gospel: “they were cut to the heart.” Namely, they were convicted of their sin. They sensed guilt of putting their Messiah and Lord to death “by nailing him to the cross” (v. 23).²⁶ Their realization of sin has in view the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting the world of sin, “because people do not believe in [Jesus]” (John 16:9).²⁷ The renewing work of the Holy Spirit appears to have a bearing on the conviction of sin in terms of its impact on the human hearts, yet it goes beyond the conviction of sin because it recreates the human hearts such that it becomes capable of responding to the gospel call in faith and repentance. Not all convicted of sin of crucifixion of Jesus embraced the gospel, yet

²⁵ Concerning the interrelatedness of the Word and Spirit in terms of salvation, see Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.9.1; 2.5.5; 3.2.6.

²⁶ See F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, rev. ed. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 69.

²⁷ Concerning the convicting work of the Holy Spirit as the precondition for repentance, see Karl Barth, *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life*, trans. R. Birch Hoyle (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 27–29.

all whose hearts were renewed by the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit alongside his work of conviction of sin were enabled to appropriate the gospel in faith and repentance: “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day” (Acts 2:41).

As discussed earlier, Lydia’s conversion conforms to the aforementioned pattern. The verbally proclaimed gospel to Lydia logically preceded the work of the Holy Spirit in opening her heart that is tied to his regenerative work.²⁸ As a logical consequence of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit in her heart, she was enabled to appropriate the gospel in faith and repentance.

Given the reality of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit in the human hearts as the logical prerequisite to the embracing of the verbally proclaimed gospel, the Holy Spirit is the divine agent most intimately working out human response to the gospel in faith and repentance.²⁹ First, the Holy Spirit enables the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus through the preached gospel that is sown into the heart: “no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). Elsewhere Paul affirms: “But what does it say? ‘The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,’ that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:8-9). Second, the Holy Spirit is at work in prompting the repentance of sins through the proclaimed gospel: “repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47; cf. Matt 12:41); “Repent and be

²⁸ The Lord in the text likely refers to the Lord Jesus. See Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Theology of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 215, 265. However, the Lord refers to divine title which is common to the three persons of the triune God. Indeed, “the Lord is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:17). Since the renewal of human hearts is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit, the Lord in the text likely refers to the Holy Spirit who opened Lydia’s heart.

²⁹ See Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 215–16; Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 379–83; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 205–6.

baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).³⁰

The Community of Penitent Believers

The triune God envisaged the salvation of his new covenant people that was to involve the twofold elements of faith and repentance on their part in response to the preached gospel. In keeping with the redemptive counsel of God in himself, Jesus proclaimed faith and repentance as the inseparable elements that would characterize God’s new covenant people hearing the gospel and responding to it: “‘The time has come,’ he said. ‘The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!’” (Mark 1:15).³¹ As aforementioned above, faith and repentance are divinely enabled responses to the gospel by the renewing work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the new covenant people of God hearing the gospel.

Faith refers to the personal trusting in and commitment to Jesus as the entailment of the epistemological appropriation of his person and work tied to the hearing and embracing of the gospel. Specifically, faith is to believe in Jesus as taught and revealed in Scripture.³² Moreover, Jesus’s atoning sacrifice and resurrection constitute the core of saving faith: “For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him” (1 Thess 4:14; cf. 1

³⁰ As this text logically prioritizes repentance over the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit, this project earlier argued that faith in Christ and repentance of sins through the hearing of and believing in the gospel entails baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the causal principle of the making of the church catholic of the new covenant. And so, a distinction exists between the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the former enables repentance and the latter ensues from it.

³¹ For a detailed explanation and analysis of faith and repentance as the twofold aspects of conversion, refer to Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 235–75; Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit, Contours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 126–29, 133–38; Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, 349–53.

³² Indeed, faith is to believe in Jesus as “the one he [God] sent” (John 6:29); “the Holy One of God” (v. 69); “the Messiah” (7:31; 11:27; 20:31; cf. Col 2:5); “the Son of Man” (John 9:35); “the Son of God” (11:27; 20:31; 1 John 3:23; 5:10, 13); and “the Lord” (Acts 5:14; 9:42; 11:17; Rom 10:9; Eph 1:15).

Cor 15:1–4). Again, “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9).

Significantly, saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ indissolubly ensues from the personal hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel. Jesus averred that faith in him would be inseparable from the proclaimed message of his apostles: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message” (John 17:20). In keeping with faith in Jesus irreducibly tied to the preached gospel of his spokesmen, the thrust of John’s Gospel as a whole was that “you [the recipients and readers of the Gospel] may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (20:31). This soteriological principle—namely, faith in Jesus through the personal hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel—was effective in apostolic evangelism. Indeed, “many who heard the message believed” (Acts 4:4). Through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel of Peter, Cornelius and his household came to saving faith in Jesus: “Peter got up and addressed them: ‘Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe’” (15:7).

Paul generalized exclusivistic soteriology of saving faith in Jesus as the essential outcome of the preached gospel that is heard and appropriated. He affirmed: “faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” (Rom 10:17). Elsewhere he states: “Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed” (1 Cor 15:11). Indeed, salvation is by faith in Jesus that is indissolubly tied to the personal hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel. Paul declares: “By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you” (1 Cor 15:2). Again, he underscores the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel as the causal means of faith in Jesus entailing salvation: “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit” (Eph

1:13). The preached gospel that is heard and appropriated is “at work in you who believe” (1 Thess 2:13). Thus, saving faith in Jesus essentially arises from the receiving of the preached gospel that involves the hearing and appropriation of it.

Repentance refers to the renunciation of sins as the entailment of the realization of and godly sorrow for them. Repentance echoes God’s desire for all human beings to be saved: “he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Pet 3:9; cf. Rom 2:4; 1 Tim 2:4). God expressed his desire of universal repentance for his fallen image bearers with a straightforward command: “Repent.” Specifically, he demanded his old covenant people an immediate obedience to his call to repentance: “Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall” (Ezek 18:30). Further, repentance became a universal imperative for all human beings in view of the administration of God’s cosmic judgment that will be meted out to them by the ascended Lord Jesus Christ who is to come again: “In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:30–31).

Corresponding to the reality of saving faith, genuine repentance occurs by the same means of the preached gospel that is heard and appropriated in keeping with the divine enablement of the Holy Spirit. The Ninevites’ repentance demonstrated that repentance draws on the preached Word because “they repented at the preaching of Jonah (Matt 12:41; cf. Luke 11:32). The preached gospel of Jesus’s apostolic spokesmen was to contain repentance as an indispensable requirement on the part of the hearers of the gospel: “[Jesus] told them, ‘This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem’” (Luke 24:46–47). Peter’s incipient

evangelism embodied the Lord's commission. He incorporated repentance as a proper entailment of his spoken gospel: "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38; cf. 3:19). Repentance as a proper response to the preached gospel is a concrete manifestation of those being saved. It entails the path to life (11:18) and salvation (2 Cor 7:10).

Though discussed separately above, faith and repentance are two interwoven components of one single event of conversion as proper responses to the preached gospel at the beginning of salvation in a logical understanding.³³ Saving faith refers to penitent faith that involves the radical renunciation of sins in conjunction with commitment to the lordship of Jesus the Savior. Genuine repentance refers to believing repentance that involves the full-orbed trusting in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins through his atoning sacrifice. Because of the interconnected reality of faith and repentance as the twofold inseparable elements of conversion, God's spokesmen demanded both faith and repentance for salvation on the part of the hearers of their preached gospel.

Indeed, both faith and repentance through the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel are prerequisite for salvation. In order to be saved, the audience of Peter's proclaimed gospel at Pentecost was to respond to it in faith and repentance, namely, putting their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22–36) and repenting of their sins. Forgiveness of sins was the result, given the reality of their faith and repentance through the personal appropriation of the preached gospel (v. 38). Paul's evangelism consistently centered on both elements as the requirements of salvation on the part of the hearers of his preached gospel. He plainly acknowledged this fact before the Ephesian elders: "I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance

³³ Concerning the interdependence of faith and repentance, see Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 119–20; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 134; Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 865–70; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 954.

and have faith in our Lord Jesus” (20:21). The writer of Hebrews makes an explicit statement that faith and repentance constitute the foundational marks of salvation. Because of their fundamental nature that is tied to the initial steps of salvation, faith and repentance characterize the inception of Christian life: “Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God” (Heb 6:1).

While faith and repentance through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel entail an irreducibly individual salvation, the scriptural accounts of evangelism give a parallel emphasis on the community of the saved individuals who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and repented of their sins as their proper responses to the proclaimed gospel by virtue of the divine enablement of the Holy Spirit. Peter’s prototypical evangelism at Pentecost is remarkable because it embodies the salvation of the corporate members of the new covenant community, namely, the salvation of the new covenant people of God who have responded to his preached gospel in faith and repentance. Indeed, Luke focuses on the collective nature of the saved people of God in his narrative: “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day” (Acts 2:41).

The rest of accounts of evangelism in Acts mostly draw the salvation of the corporate people of God who have infallibly responded to the preached gospel in faith and repentance prompted by the divine enablement of the Holy Spirit. These accounts were coterminous with the risen Jesus’s utterance concerning the geographical expansion of the apostolic witnesses to him: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). First, in Jerusalem, “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (2:47). Again, “many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand” (4:4). Further, “more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number

(5:14). Second, the gospel spread to the regions of Judea and Samaria. God's salvation in those areas had in view his collective people now including Samaritans whom he incorporated into the new covenant community of Jews and converts to Judaism. The preached gospel was the divine means of salvation that involved faith and repentance in their corporate conversion: "But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (8:12). Third, evangelism culminated in the salvation of the Gentile believers properly responding to the proclaimed gospel in faith and repentance.³⁴ Beginning with the conversion of the collective members of Cornelius' household, there was a continuous influx of Gentile believers into the new covenant people of God who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and repented of their sins through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel. The Gentiles heard the same message of God's spokesmen that would entail their salvation (Acts 11:14; 13:5; 14:1; 15:7; et al.). They exhibited the genuineness of salvation that involved both faith and repentance as proper responses to the preached gospel (11:21; 14:15; 17:30; 26:20).

Thus, Scripture draws the church of the new covenant as the corporately saved members marked by the intertwined elements of faith and repentance essentially arising from the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel that is made effective by the divine enablement of the Holy Spirit renewing human hearts. The church of the new covenant refers to the corporate people of God consisting of the saved Jews and Gentiles who have properly responded to the proclaimed gospel of God's spokesmen in faith and

³⁴ Obviously, Luke accounts for the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch between the narrative of the Samaritan conversion and the narrative of the Gentile one. The eunuch was probably "an adherent of Judaism," given the context of his returning from Jerusalem where he worshiped the God of Israel presumably in observance of a mandated festival. While he was a Gentile, it seems that his religious identity was close to a Jewish convert who was yet denied access to the inner court of the temple because of his physical defect. His reading of Isaiah lends a further support to the argument that he was likely an observant Jewish convert. And so, I argue that the account of the conversion of the eunuch who was both a Gentile and a Jewish convert was a natural transition to that of the conversion of the Gentile. See Bock, *Acts*, 341–42; Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 174–75.

repentance. Their responses were coherent with the infallible outcome of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit.

In this section, this project demonstrated that the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit in human hearts is prerequisite for the divinely enabled human response to the preached gospel in faith and repentance. Building upon that argument, this project engaged in rehearsing that the corporate members of the new covenant community are essentially characterized by the twofold elements of faith and repentance as the proper responses to their hearing and appropriation of the proclaimed gospel in keeping with the renewing work of the Holy Spirit.

Union with Christ

In the two earlier sections, this project discussed (1) God's call to salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant through the general call of the preached gospel and the effectual call of the Holy Spirit and (2) the work of the Holy Spirit in rendering effective response to the proclaimed gospel in faith and repentance. In this section, this project will set forth the work of the Holy Spirit in uniting the church catholic of the new covenant to the Lord Jesus Christ, namely, his work in mediating Jesus's salvific presence that entails the application of all the benefits of his accomplished salvation to the members of the new covenant community who have infallibly responded to the preached gospel in faith and repentance. This discussion will involve two steps. First, I will argue that union with Christ is made efficacious by the indwelling Holy Spirit in keeping with baptism with the Holy Spirit. Second, I will demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is effectively at work in all the blessings of salvation—election, redemption, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification—that are included in Christ and that are applied to the new covenant people of God in whom Jesus salvifically abides.

Identification with Christ

Union with Christ refers to the mutual indwelling of the members of the new

covenant community and Jesus as their head, that is, the relationship of their identification with him brought about by the indwelling Holy Spirit who mediates Jesus's salvific presence to them in keeping with baptism with the Holy Spirit.³⁵ In his Upper Room Discourse, Jesus unveiled that the coinherence of him and the disciples that was to be realized would involve the coming of the Holy Spirit who would indwell them. Indeed, the Holy Spirit who was to be co-sent from the Father through the ascended Son (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7) would not only live with them but also dwell in them: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you" (14:16–17). Union with Jesus, or the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the disciples, was to logically ensue from the Holy Spirit who was to come and indwell them: "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you" (v. 20).

As rehearsed in previous chapter, the Holy Spirit came in fulfillment of baptism with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The ascended Jesus sent the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Father (Luke 24:49; John 15:26; 16:7), baptizing the gathering of the disciples with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4, 8, 2:1–4; 11:16).³⁶ In a logical order, the Holy Spirit indwelt them as the most intimate divine person in their relationship with the triune God.³⁷ The work of the indwelling Holy Spirit in them was to bring into realization

³⁵ Concerning union with Christ viewed as the oneness of Christ and believers, see Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 961–62. Concerning union with Christ defined as identification with Christ or incorporation into Christ, see Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 313. Concerning union with Christ effected by the work of the Holy Spirit, see Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.1.1; Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 374–75; Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 216–17; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 198.

³⁶ Horton argues that "baptism with the Spirit is union with Christ." In the background of this argument lies his understanding of "the Spirit's baptism," namely, that "we are baptized *into Christ by the Spirit*." His understanding derives from confusion of the Holy Spirit as the agent of baptism. As was shown in chapter 2, the ascended Jesus is the baptizer; the Holy Spirit is the medium. And so, identification of baptism with the Holy Spirit with union with Christ needs a thoughtful elaboration. See Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 189–92.

³⁷ Horton states that the Holy Spirit is the divine person as "our first contact with the Holy Trinity" because "it is always the Father, in the Son, who meets us through the Spirit." Horton,

Jesus's promise of mutual indwelling of them. In other words, the Holy Spirit indwelling them effected their union with Jesus, namely, the coinherence of Jesus and the disciples analogous to the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son (John 10:30, 38; 14:23; 17:21).³⁸ By virtue of this work of the Holy Spirit in union with Christ, the ascended Jesus became present in them in the relationship of mutual indwelling. The indwelling Holy Spirit made effective the abiding presence of the ascended Jesus in them.

The indwelling presence of the ascended Jesus, inaugurated at Pentecost, was not exclusive for Jesus's immediate disciples alone but is true for all believers—the members of the new covenant community as a whole—who would put their faith in Jesus through the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message” (17:20). They were to appropriate the atoning sacrifice of Jesus as the content of their faith in him that would put into effect union with him in the coinherent relationship:³⁹ “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them” (6:56).⁴⁰ The Holy Spirit is operative here in making realized their union with Jesus in keeping with their appropriation of atonement of Jesus through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel. He brings to them the salvific presence of Jesus which is tied to his accomplished work of salvation through his suffering, death, burial, and resurrection. By virtue of the

Rediscovering the Holy Spirit, 204–5. Elsewhere he puts: “we first *experience* the Holy Spirit within us, individually, as he unites us to Christ and, in Christ, grants us free access to the Father.” Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 170.

³⁸ The union between the Father and the Son is the oneness of divine substance (John 10:38) whereas the union between Jesus and the people of God is the relationship of mutual indwelling. The former qualitatively differs from the latter. See Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 328.

³⁹ Demarest affirms that the finished atoning work of Jesus through his death and resurrection is “the basis or ground of union with Christ.” For a detailed articulation, see Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 329–30.

⁴⁰ Though the text has references—“my flesh” and “my blood”—to the Lord's Supper, it more likely indicate the appropriation of Jesus's sacrificial death that involved his broken body and bloodshed. Indeed, taking into account the whole of the passage John 6:49–58, Carson argues that flesh and blood refer directly to Jesus himself as the Lamb of God delivered up for the hostile world to bring about the forgiveness of sins. See D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1991), 294–99.

work of the Holy Spirit in making union with Jesus efficacious to them, the new covenant people of God “share in his sufferings (Rom 8:17); “have been crucified with Christ” (Gal 2:20); “died with Christ” (Col 2:20); “were buried with him” (Rom 6:4); and “have been raised with Christ” (Col 3:1).

Paul states a formula of redemptive economy of the triune God lying behind the logical priority of the indwelling Holy Spirit over the indwelling Jesus in the members of the new covenant community of God.

You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you (Rom 8:9–11).⁴¹

Paul affirms that the Holy Spirit sustains an ontological relation to the other two members of the Trinity expressed as “the Spirit of God” (v. 9, 11; cf. 1 Cor 12:3; God’s Spirit [1 Cor 3:16]) and “the Spirit of Christ” (v. 9; cf. 1 Pet 1:11; the Spirit of Jesus Christ [Phil 1:19]; the Spirit of his Son [Gal 4:6]). Specifically, the Holy Spirit is “the Spirit of God (the Father)” indwelling them. Simultaneously, he is “the Spirit of Christ” as the seal of Jesus’s ownership of his people. Paul draws the interconnectedness of the Holy Spirit and Christ in redemptive economy as both persons indwell the people of God. Yet, the abiding of Jesus in his people logically depends upon the Holy Spirit because he is the Spirit of Jesus in the outworking of the redemptive plan of the triune God. The Holy Spirit indwells the people of God as the Spirit of Jesus. The indwelling Holy Spirit puts into effect the indwelling presence of Jesus in them.⁴²

⁴¹ For a discussion and articulation concerning the passage as referring to union with Christ, see Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 542–54. In 548n214, he provides the resources supporting union with Christ as the ground of this passage. See also Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 374–75.

⁴² Allison puts the formula this way: “the indwelling of the Son is effected by the Holy Spirit’s dwelling in believers; the Spirit renders the presence of Christ in this union.” Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 374. Horton also states: “Jesus Christ indwells believers and the church, but by his Spirit.” Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 184.

Scripture describes the new covenant people of God in whom Jesus abides by the indwelling Holy Spirit as the church, which is his body. Paul labels the Thessalonian believers that are united to Jesus and indwelt by him as “the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess 1:1; cf. 2 Thess 1:1). Elsewhere, he identifies the Judean local congregations that are marked by the same relationship in union with Jesus as “the churches of Judea that are in Christ” (Gal 1:22). The members of the new covenant community as a whole in whom Jesus is salvifically present by the Holy Spirit are identical with “God’s holy people in Christ Jesus” (Phil 1:1). The union between them and Jesus is analogous to the organic unity that is formed between the human body and head. By virtue of being baptized with the Holy Spirit, believers become incorporated into the one body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13). They comprise each part or member of the body that is united to one another (Rom 12:4–5; 1 Cor 12:12–27). Still, the ground of their corporate oneness is the indissoluble union with Jesus. In Christ alone, they “though many, form one body” (Rom 12:4). In the relationship of mutual indwelling, Jesus is the head of the church which is his body (Eph 1:22–23; Col 1:18, 24). Jesus as their head establishes offices in keeping with spiritual gifts for their growth and maturity. In response, the collective members as the body of Christ engage in the works of service for the purpose of the building up of the body (Eph 4:4–16).

A closely related imagery to the church as the body of Christ is “God’s household, which is the church of the living God” (1 Tim 3:15). Paul teaches the nature of God’s household elsewhere:

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Eph 2:19–22)

God’s whole household comprises three parts: Jesus occupies the chief cornerstone; the apostles and prophets establish the foundation; and believing Jews and Gentiles function

as the members.⁴³ Paul affirms that union with Jesus is the prior ground for the whole establishment of God’s household. The mutual connection of each component of God’s whole household for complete growth draws on union with Jesus. Again, Paul identifies the imagery of God’s household with “a holy temple in the Lord” or “a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.” Union with Jesus is a key element for both buildings. Yet, the indwelling presence of Jesus is inseparable from the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that characterizes the new covenant people as God’s temple or dwelling place: “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst?” (1 Cor 3:16). Jesus indwells his people by the Holy Spirit. The indwelling presence of Jesus in them draws on the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit in bringing his salvific presence to them.

Thus, union with Jesus—or believers’ identification with him in the relationship of mutual indwelling—involves Jesus baptizing the new covenant people of God (who have personally appropriated the proclaimed gospel in faith and repentance) with the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the body of Jesus (1 Cor 12:13). The Holy Spirit indwells them as the Spirit of Christ in keeping with the redemptive outworking of the triune God. The indwelling Holy Spirit in them as the Spirit of Christ mediates the abiding presence of Jesus to them; namely, he is at work in uniting them to Jesus in the relationship of mutual indwelling. The indwelling presence of Jesus in them ensues from the work of the Holy Spirit in rendering effective union with Jesus. Jesus salvifically abides in them by his Spirit. In indissoluble union, the relationship between Jesus and his new covenant people is analogous to the organic unity of human head with body. Jesus indwells them as the head of the new covenant church, which is his body.

⁴³ Peter also picks up the imagery of a spiritual house which comprises Jesus as the living Stone and believers as living stones (1 Pet 2:4–8). For an articulation on the passage, see Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 328.

All the Blessings of Salvation

While union with Jesus is subjectively put into effect to the new covenant people of God in keeping with baptism with the Holy Spirit in a temporal time, that union encompasses the whole of salvation.⁴⁴ Indeed, Paul affirms that the application of all the merits of salvation to the new covenant church is indissolubly tied to union with Christ: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ” (Eph 1:3).

In his letters, Paul unfolds the comprehensive aspects of salvation that are included in union with Christ.⁴⁵ First, union with Christ holds the inextricable relation to God’s sovereign election. Paul declares that God’s election of his new covenant people involved their union with Christ before the coming into existence of the entire universe: “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight” (v. 4). Again, he utters that God’s election of them was tied to union with Christ in the divine economy: “In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will” (v. 11). Elsewhere, he underscores the interwovenness of God’s unmerited election with union with Christ in eternity past: “He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time” (2 Tim 1:9).

Second, union with Christ accomplishes adoption as God’s intended purpose. God’s election of his new covenant people in Christ before the creation had in view

⁴⁴ Concerning union with Jesus as the central concept in soteriology for its all-embracing nature, see Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 171–84; Robert Letham, *Union With Christ: In Scripture, History, and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2011), 88–91; Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 319–21; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 191; Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 375.

⁴⁵ For a detailed analysis and discussion about the relation of union with Christ to the other aspects of salvation, see Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 915–17; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 191; Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 336–38. Among the resources, I am heavily indebted to Demarest’s argumentations for my construction of this part.

adoption as the immediate goal of their union with Christ. Paul affirms: “he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will” (Eph 1:5). Elsewhere, he puts the indissoluble relation between adoption and union with Christ this way: “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith” (Gal 3:26). Third, union with Christ effects the realization of redemption of God’s new covenant people through the forgiveness of sins. Paul attributes the source of redemption to union with Christ which was made available through his atoning death: “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace” (Eph 1:7; cf. 4:32; Col 1:14). Indeed, Jesus became the provision of redemption for God’s new covenant people being incorporated into him: “It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption” (1 Cor 1:30).

Fourth, union with Christ becomes the essential ground of God’s justification of his new covenant people. In a forensic setting, God declares righteous his new covenant people being identified with Jesus. The members of the new covenant community in Christ are in no way guilty before his sight. Paul expressed this new reality of their legal standing in Christ before God with the opposite of righteousness: “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). Again, God’s action of double imputation—namely, that he imputed their sins to Jesus and he imputed Jesus’s righteousness to them—brought about their being identified as God’s righteousness in Christ: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21).

Fifth, union with Christ defines God’s new covenant people as those being sanctified in Christ. Paul called the church of Corinth the new covenant people of God who were positionally sanctified in Christ: “To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people” (1 Cor 1:2). Further, union with Christ is not only the beginning of sanctification but it also determines the whole

progress of sanctification for God's new covenant people who have been united to him and who are to mature in sanctification. Paul put the necessity of advance in sanctification as the true mark of the people of God who have been identified with Jesus in his crucifixion and death: "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal 5:24; cf. 1 Cor 6:17–20; 1 John 2:5–6; 3:6). The ultimate goal of their sanctification in Christ is to reach glorious transformation in conformity to his image: "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18; cf. Rom 8:29–30).

Sixth, union with Christ culminates in the glorification of the new covenant people of God. Paul viewed the glorification of the members of the new covenant community as the final stage of salvation in Christ: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim 2:10; cf. Rom 8:17–18; Eph 1:6, 12, 14). Election of them in Christ was the beginning of salvation that was decreed in the eternal counsel of the triune God in himself. The glorification of them in Christ meets God's intended purpose of salvation that will be consummated in eternity future: "And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified" (Rom 8:30).

As shown above, union with Christ is the source of all redemptive blessings (Eph 1:3), yet it becomes effective for the new covenant people of God to obtain the whole merits of salvation through the hearing and appropriation of the proclaimed gospel of God's spokesmen on their part. Paul stated the inviolable reality of the preached gospel as divine instrumentality of bringing about salvation in Christ that necessarily involves hearing it and responding to it in faith: "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph 1:13). And as rehearsed above, the Holy Spirit is the divine agent most intimately at work in effectual

calling and regeneration both of which operate as the essential grounds of divine enablement of human response to the preached gospel in faith and repentance. Again, the Holy Spirit is the divine person indwelling the new covenant people of God and rendering effective union with Christ by his work in mediating his salvific presence to them.

Because this project has shown the comprehensive nature of union with Christ that runs through all the aspects of salvation, it now engages in discussing the efficacious work of the Holy Spirit with regard to all the benefits of salvation that are included in Christ, namely, the work of the Holy Spirit in election, redemption, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification.

First, in relation to election in Christ, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit is in view. Obviously, Scripture attributes the operation of election in Christ in eternity past to the agency of the Father (Rom 8:30, 33; 9:11; Eph 1:4, 11). Nonetheless, God designed his activity of election of his new covenant people in Christ to be compatible with the purpose of their being “holy and blameless in his sight” (Eph 1:4). Their status as chosen by God is inseparable from their moral character that is to conform to his holiness (Col 3:12). The ground of their indissolubility comes to the fore in Peter’s writing. He affirms that God involved the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit with the process of his election:⁴⁶ “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to God’s elect . . . who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit” (1 Pet 1:1–2). Paul also makes an explicit statement that the outworking of

⁴⁶ Thomas R. Schreiner comments that the Holy Spirit is “the source of [the sanctification of the elect].” Further, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit becomes realized within time on the part of the elect of God through the hearing and embracing of the gospel entailing their conversion. Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, The New American Commentary 37 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 54. Peter H. Davids also observes an indissoluble link between God’s election and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit functioning as the means of God’s election. He states: “When the Father chose to relate to them he effected this relationship in their lives by means of the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying power.” Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 48.

sanctification attributed to the Holy Spirit was a part of God’s redemptive counsel for the salvation of his elect:⁴⁷ “God chose you as firstfruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth” (2 Thess 2:13). Thus, the Holy Spirit was actively at work in God’s operation of election through his sanctifying agency that was designed to be effective within time in keeping with the administration of the redemptive plan of the triune God.

Second, in relation to redemption that involves the forgiveness of sins in Christ (Eph 1:7; Col 1:14), the convicting work of the Holy Spirit is essentially prerequisite for putting into effect the application of redemption. In his Upper Room Discourse, Jesus disclosed that a key work of the Holy Spirit would be to “prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned” (John 16:8–11).⁴⁸ Jesus’s utterance came to fulfillment in the arrival of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Indeed, the Holy Spirit was efficiently at work in convicting the assembly of Jews and converts to Judaism hearing Peter’s spoken Word of God. Namely, the Holy Spirit exposed their sin and guilt of crucifying Jesus their Lord and Messiah. Luke expressed the reality of the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts this way: “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you

⁴⁷ Gordon D. Fee interprets that God involved his electing work in the salvation of his people with the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit as its means. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 302–3. Similarly, Jeffrey A. D. Weima speaks of inseparable connection between God’s election and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Thess 1:4–5; 4:7–8). See Jeffrey A. D. Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 552. Interestingly, Gary S. Shogren does not discuss the relation of God’s election and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Rather, he centers on the effect of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the realization of the salvation of God’s people. See Gary S. Shogren, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 306.

⁴⁸ Concerning the articulation of what sin, righteousness, and judgment indicate in the context of the Gospel of John, see Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 534–39. See also Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 340–41.

crucified, both Lord and Messiah.’ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’” (Acts 2:36–37). Peter’s reply to them has a bearing on this discussion regarding the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in relation to sin as being logically preconditional for rendering effective the application of redemption accompanying the forgiveness of sins: “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (v. 38). Seen in Peter’s proclamation, the convicting work of the Holy Spirit—alongside his renewing work—is a part of drawing confession and repentance of sins on the part of the new covenant people of God who have been shown guilty of and unsettled by their sins.⁴⁹ Repentance then warrants the application of redemption in Christ involving the forgiveness of sins that was wrought by his finished work on the cross (1 Cor 1:30; 1 Tim 2:6; 1 Pet 1:18–19; Rev 5:9).

Third, in relation to justification by faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit is the divine agent most closely at work in rendering justification appropriated to the new covenant people of God. An explicit mention of the work of the Holy Spirit in justification appears in Paul’s exhortation of the Corinthian members of the new covenant community:

Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor 6:9–11).

Paul attributes the application of regeneration, sanctification, and justification to the efficient work of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁰ Specifically, with reference to justification, the Holy Spirit is effectively at work in enabling human response to the preached gospel in faith

⁴⁹ Carson views the Greek verb ἐλέγχο which occurs eighteen times in the New Testament generally refers to the idea of “showing someone his sin, usually as a summons to repentance.” Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 534.

⁵⁰ Fee states that Paul understands the work of the Holy Spirit in terms of efficient instrumentality whereby “God effects the work of Christ in the believer’s life.” Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 129.

through which God justifies his new covenant people in Christ:⁵¹ “For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith” (Rom 3:28–30). Elsewhere, Paul provides further affirmation of the agency of the Holy Spirit with regard to justification; namely, the new covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit entails God’s legal declaration of his people to be righteous before him:⁵² “If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry [of the Holy Spirit] that brings righteousness!” (2 Cor 3:9).

Fourth, in relation to adoption in Christ, two elements demand elaboration: the reception of the Holy Spirit and the operation of the Spirit of God’s Son in redemptive history. First, the reception of the Holy Spirit prompts the adoption of the new covenant people of God. Obviously, the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit has in view the realization of baptism with the Holy Spirit, the redemptive work appropriated to the ascended Jesus who baptizes penitent believers with the Holy Spirit since the day of Pentecost.⁵³ In Paul’s written statement, the Holy Spirit who is poured out on the new covenant people of God is identical with “the Spirit of adoption” (Rom 8:15). The indwelling presence of the Spirit of adoption puts into effect their adoption.⁵⁴ Again, the indwelling presence of the Spirit of adoption is a key ground of their experiential reality

⁵¹ Allison puts a parallel emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in prompting human response to the gospel in faith as the instrumentality of justification. See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 375–76. See also Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 44.

⁵² Fee parallels the ministry of the Spirit to the ministry of justification, “that is, the ministry that has brought the experience of justification to them through the Spirit.” Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 308. See also Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 130.

⁵³ Fee argues that Paul points to conversion experience when he speaks of believers’ reception of the Holy Spirit. See Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 566–67. See also Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 2nd ed. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 417–18.

⁵⁴ Concerning the interpretation of the Spirit of adoption, see Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 564–67.

of adoption in their relationship with the Father. Paul affirms: “by [the Spirit] we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (vv. 15–16).

Second, the Holy Spirit is “the Spirit of [God’s] Son” (Gal 4:6) resulting in adoption.⁵⁵ Paul has in view the triune God working indivisibly in the operation of adoption: “But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father’” (vv. 4–6). God’s activity in the sending of the Son established adoption that was secured through the redemptive mission of the incarnate Son. God’s subsequent activity in the sending of the Holy Spirit of the Son confirmed adoption by the efficient agency of the indwelling Holy Spirit to render it appropriated. The new covenant people of God who have been adopted into his family as his children share in a privilege of calling God their Father analogous to the archetypal way Jesus called God ‘Abba, Father’” (Mark 14:36) in his unique filial relation to him (cf. John 1:12–13; 20:17; 2 Cor 6:18; Gal 3:26; 1 John 3:2).

Fifth, in relation to sanctification in Jesus, the Holy Spirit is effectually at work in making the new covenant people of God progressively sanctified in conformity to the image of Jesus. Obviously, they are positionally sanctified in Jesus (1 Cor 1:2; 6:11). They are already “God’s holy people” (2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1) in Jesus who “has become . . . [their] holiness” (1 Cor 1:30; cf. Heb 10:10). The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in them defines their new identity as the holy temple of the living God (1 Cor 3:16; cf. 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16). Yet, they are “called to be [God’s] holy people” (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2;

⁵⁵ Schreiner comments that God’s activity in the sending of the Holy Spirit is to “confirm, authenticate, and ratify” the sonship of the people of God through the Holy Spirit whom they have received. Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 272. See also Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 404–12.

cf. 1 Thess 4:7; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 1:15–16). They are to “live a holy life” (1 Thess 4:7). They are to “be holy, because [God is] holy” (1 Pet 1:16; cf. Lev 11:44–45; 19:2). God’s will is their sanctification (1 Thess 4:3). They are to mature in sanctification. Without holiness they will not see the Lord (Heb 12:14).

Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit is the divine person to whom the agency of progressive sanctification is attributed (Rom 15:16; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2) for the new covenant people of God who have been already sanctified by faith in Jesus (Acts 26:18; Heb 10:10). The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in their lives involves two areas: the mortification of the old self and the fructification of the new self.⁵⁶ First, the Holy Spirit prompts them to put to death in conformity to their identification with Jesus’s crucifixion and death the remaining sins and desires of the old nature: “For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live” (Rom 8:13; cf. 6:6; Gal 5:24; Col 3:3–5). Second, the Holy Spirit leads them to embody his fructifying work in conformity to their identification with Jesus’s resurrection: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Gal 5:22–25; cf. Rom 6:11–13). The thrust of progressive sanctification is Christlikeness or gradual transformation into the image of Christ:⁵⁷ “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:18; cf. Rom 8:29; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3).

⁵⁶ See Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 408–11.

⁵⁷ Ferguson constructed his whole chapter on “The Spirit of Holiness” with an emphasis on Christlikeness as the goal of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. See Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 139–73.

Sixth, in relation to glorification in Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit in the resurrection of the new covenant people of God is in view. Paul affirms that the Holy Spirit was the divine agent of God in the work of raising Jesus from the dead. In the same fashion, the indwelling Holy Spirit will perform his life-giving operation in the resurrection of God's new covenant people at Jesus's return.⁵⁸ "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you" (Rom 8:11; cf. 1:4; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 3:18). The agency of the Holy Spirit in their resurrection will culminate in their glorification that will fully conform to the glory of Jesus: "When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Col 3:4; cf. 2 Thess 1:10–12; 2:14; 1 John 3:2). Peter expressed the reality of their glorification as deification:⁵⁹ "Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Pet 1:4).

Until the new covenant people of God finally and fully experience all the benefits of salvation in Christ at his return, the Holy Spirit serves as a seal of God's ownership of them and "as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come" (2 Cor 1:22). The preached gospel and its appropriation occupies an indispensable phase of God's activity in marking them as his possession with the seal of the Holy Spirit: "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph 1:13). Not only so, but the Holy Spirit indwelling penitent believers serves as a deposit⁶⁰

⁵⁸ See Allison and Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 413; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, 250–55; Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 167–69; Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 103, 183, 259.

⁵⁹ See Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit*, 285–86.

⁶⁰ Deposit refers to the first installment, a pledge, an earnest, or a down payment all of which convey the idea of guarantee that the full payment will be made in a legal context. See Allison and

warranting the full-orbed redemption in Christ and full enjoyment of his redemptive blessings in the age to come at his return. Specifically, he is the pledge of their justification (1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 3:9), redemption (Eph 4:30), adoption (Rom 8:23), sanctification (Rom 15:16; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Thess 2:13), resurrection (2 Cor 5:4–5), and glorification (Rom 8:30). He is God’s down payment warranting their final and full inheritance of all redemptive blessings as co-heirs with Jesus the archetypal heir of God: “[The Holy Spirit] is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory” (Eph 1:14; cf. Rom 8:17; 1 Pet 1:3–5; Heb 1:14; Rev 21:7). This inheritance will “never perish, spoil or fade” (1 Pet 1:4) but endure everlastingly (Heb 9:15). The Holy Spirit serves as a guarantee of the full realization of it on the part of the new covenant people of God at Jesus’s return.

In this section, this project engaged in two discussions. First, it demonstrated the work of the Holy Spirit in rendering effective union with Christ, namely, that the indwelling Holy Spirit is the divine agent at work in mediating Jesus’s salvific presence to God’s new covenant people who have responded to the preached gospel in faith and repentance. Second, it elaborated the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to all redemptive blessings that are applied to God’s new covenant people being incorporated into Christ as the entailment of their hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel.

Conclusion

In this chapter, this project engaged in setting forth my theological position of pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, the position alongside the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant that this project will draw on over against the polemic of pneumatological inclusivists that will constitute the second part of this project. I argued that the salvation of the church catholic

Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit*, 395–96; Demarest, *The Cross and Salvation*, 447–48; David E. Garland, 2 *Corinthians*, *The New American Commentary* 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 106–7.

of the new covenant is inextricably tied to the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling, conversion, and union with Christ in keeping with the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel on the part of the new covenant people of God.

CHAPTER 4

INSTITUTIONAL INCLUSIVISM OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The first part of this project has provided theological arguments upholding pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant in the hope that such arguments will function over against pneumatological inclusivism which suggests the possibility of salvation in Christ that is made available through the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit apart from the epistemological appropriation of the person and work of Christ tied to the hearing of the gospel. Specifically, this project rehearsed two areas that are crucial for deepening in understanding what this project means by pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant. First, it argued that the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant draws on the themes of the Holy Spirit, that is, the outpouring of, baptism with, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the hearing and appropriation of the gospel entailing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins. Second, it demonstrated that the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant is tied to the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling, namely, he renders the external calling of the preached gospel internally appropriated; in conversion, namely, he enables the human response to the gospel in faith and repentance; and in union with Christ, namely, he mediates to the new covenant people of God the salvific presence of Jesus which entails the appropriation of all redemptive blessings in him.

The second part of this project will engage in discussing three polemics of pneumatological inclusivism and offering rejoinders to them in the hope that pneumatological exclusivism is an ecclesiastically and soteriologically warranted

principle for the church catholic of the new covenant in submission to divinely revealed truth in Scripture as a coherent whole. In this chapter this project will defend pneumatological exclusivism against pneumatological inclusivism for the possibility of salvation of the adherents of the world religions in particular and the unevangelized in general as articulated by the pneumatological inclusivism of Roman Catholicism. This project labels it as institutional inclusivism in view of the Roman Catholic Church being the visible medium of salvation.

This chapter consists of two sections. In the first section, this project will delineate the nature of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church that is drawn from the documents of Vatican II and developed by Pope John Paul II's encyclicals and messages.¹ According to their affirmation, the Roman Catholic Church is the universal sacrament of salvation for the members of other world religions and for the unevangelized who are in varying measures related to it; their wide spectrum of relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church is by virtue of the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit who calls them through the seeds of the Word and who provides them with the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery. In the second section, it will provide a rejoinder to institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church with the assessment of its three loci that are vital in grasping its soteriological system, that is, the seeds of the Word, the Paschal mystery, and relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church.

¹ Pope John Paul II is probably the most comprehensive interpreter and representative among the theologians of the post-Vatican II discussing the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized who are related to the Roman Catholic Church by the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the relevant teaching of Vatican II. See Stephen Downs, "Catholics and Other Faiths Since Vatican II," *Australasian Catholic Record* 91, no. 1 (2014): 55; Francis A. Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992), 190–98. Though Karl Rahner is probably the most thorough expositor of Vatican II, he seems to argue that other non-Christian religions are ordained by God functioning as the distinct mediums for the salvation of their members apart from their varying relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church. In this sense, he did not do justice to inclusivism of Vatican II which in no way acknowledged the world religions as the separate forms for the salvation of their adherents.

The Nature of Institutional Inclusivism

In this section, this project rehearses the polemic of pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church represented as institutional inclusivism. This discussion will involve surveying the documents of Vatican II that have a bearing on (1) the essence of the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized and (2) the universal activity and presence of the Holy Spirit who engenders their varying relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church as the visible medium for their salvation. Then, this discussion will survey Pope John Paul II's encyclicals and messages that pertain to (3) his theological argumentation of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church in keeping with soteriological position of Vatican II of pneumatological inclusivism irrevocably tied to the Roman Catholic Church as the visible instrument of salvation.

Universal Sacrament of Salvation

The affirmation of the Roman Catholic Church as the visible medium of salvation derives from Vatican II's identification of the Roman Catholic Church with the universal sacrament of salvation for the whole human race. Following Augustine's concept of sacrament²—"a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible grace"³—sacrament "emphasizes the visible sign of the hidden reality of salvation."⁴ Constituted by Christ as his body through the life-giving Spirit whom he sent to his disciples, the Roman Catholic

² Augustine states: "On the subject of the sacrament, indeed, which he receives, it is first to be well impressed upon his notice that the signs of divine things are, it is true, things visible, but that the invisible things themselves are also honored in them." Augustine, *On the Catechising of the Uninstructed* 50 (NPNF¹ 3:312).

³ See Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), s.v. "sacrament"; Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 157; Avery Robert Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 111–12.

⁴ CCC 774. For a clarification, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is not Vatican II but synthesizes and systemizes the theology articulated and defended in Vatican II.

Church is “the universal sacrament of salvation.”⁵ *Lumen Gentium* further explains it this way: “sitting at the right hand of the Father [Christ] is consciously at work in the world to lead people to the Church and through it to join them more closely to himself; and he nourishes them with his own body and blood to make them sharers in his glorious life.”⁶ The document connects Christ’s ongoing activity (from now until Christ’s return and the restoration of all things) in uniting his people to the Roman Catholic Church to the mission of the Holy Spirit working in and through it. *LG* states: “The promised restoration, therefore, which we await, has already begun in Christ, is advanced through the mission of the Holy Spirit and by means of the Spirit continues in the Church.”⁷ In keeping with the fulfillment of the divine plan of salvation, God sends the Roman Catholic Church “to the nations to be the universal sacrament of salvation” with the mandate of worldwide evangelism (cf. Mark 16:15).⁸ Indeed, “Whatever good God’s people can contribute to the human family, in the period of its earthly pilgrimage, derives from the Church’s being the universal sacrament of salvation, which shows forth and at the same time brings into effect the mystery of God’s love for humanity.”⁹ This statement articulates the nature of the Roman Catholic Church, which is “in Christ as a sacrament or instrumental sign of intimate union with God and of the unity of all humanity.”¹⁰ The whole purpose of God’s constitution of the Roman Catholic Church is that “it may be for one and all the visible sacrament of this saving unity.”¹¹

⁵ *LG* 48. The text of English translation of documents of Vatican II is available in Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1990). See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:887.

⁶ *LG* 48. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:887.

⁷ *LG* 48. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:887–88.

⁸ *AG* 1. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1011.

⁹ *GS* 45. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1099.

¹⁰ *LG* 1. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:849.

¹¹ *LG* 9. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:856.

The conciliar documents above affirm that the Roman Catholic Church is the visible sign and instrument that communicates the invisible grace of God's salvation for the whole human race in communion with him which is at work through the inseparable activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit in and through the Roman Catholic Church. It features two senses. First, the Roman Catholic Church is the visible sign and instrument that signifies the communion of the entire human race with God and with one another. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* comments on this idea: "Because men's communion with one another is rooted in that union with God, the Church is also the sacrament of the *unity of the human race*."¹² The Roman Catholic Church already takes on the role in bringing to light this communion because of its sacramental nature. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church "gathers men 'from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues [Rev 7:9]'; at the same time, the Church is the 'sign and instrument' of the full realization of the unity yet to come."¹³ Second, in the course of the fulfillment of this union, the Roman Catholic Church is the instrument of Christ for the salvation of the entire human race. Vatican II puts it this way: "[The Roman Catholic Church] has been set up by Christ as a communion of life, love and truth; by him too it is taken up as the instrument of salvation for all, and sent as a mission to the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth (see Matt 5:13–16)."¹⁴ Vatican II also spells out the sacramental essence of the Roman Catholic Church as Christ's instrument of salvation for all human beings: "The Catholic Church has been founded by Christ our Lord to bring salvation to all and is under an obligation to proclaim the gospel."¹⁵

¹² CCC 775 [Italics original].

¹³ CCC 775.

¹⁴ LG 9. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:856.

¹⁵ *Inter mirifica* 3. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:844.

A crucial question emerges concerning the salvation of the unevangelized, that is, the followers of other religious traditions and individuals in general who have been beyond the missional reach of the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican II offers a pivotal statement concerning how the salvific instrumentality of the Roman Catholic Church universally operates: “To this catholic unity of the people of God, which prefigures and promotes universal peace, all are called, and they belong to it or are ordered to it in various ways, whether they be Catholic faithful or others who believe in Christ or finally all people everywhere who by the grace of God are called to salvation.”¹⁶

The Council expresses that God’s universal call to salvation in keeping with his universal salvific will involves (1) belonging to the Roman Catholic Church or (2) being ordered to it in various ways, offering further precision to the nature of these two groups of people: (1) Those belonging to the Roman Catholic Church consist of the Catholic faithful or all other Christians explicitly believing in Jesus. (2) Those being ordered to the Roman Catholic Church comprise all human beings universally called to salvation by the grace of God.¹⁷

Acknowledging that the Catholic faithful fully belong to the Roman Catholic Church and benefit entirely from the fullness of the means of salvation that is found in it, Vatican II addresses the relation of the Roman Catholic Church to the other Christian churches and communities concerning the salvation of other believers incorporated into those churches and communities through faith in Jesus and baptism. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church affirms: “This Church [of Christ], set up and organized in this world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him, although outside its structure many elements of

¹⁶ LG 13. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:860.

¹⁷ See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 152–53; Gerald O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 73.

sanctification and of truth are to be found which, as proper gifts to the Church of Christ, impel towards catholic unity.”¹⁸ Unlike previous affirmation of the church of Christ being exclusively identified with the Roman Catholic Church, Vatican II states that the church of Christ subsists in the Roman Catholic Church. Though the phraseology “subsists in” engendered controversies among theological circles,¹⁹ this conciliar statement minimally conveys that the church of Christ is present in some extent in the other Christian churches and communities.²⁰ Still, the fullness of the means of salvation is accessible in the Roman Catholic Church alone. The Decree on Ecumenism affirms: “For it is only through Christ’s Catholic Church, which is the all-embracing means of salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be attained.”²¹ Hence, “many elements of sanctification and of truth”²² which are present and active in some degree in the other Christian churches and communities, essentially derive from the one church of Christ subsisting in the Roman Catholic Church where the fullness of the means of salvation resides. Notwithstanding their deficiencies in varying degrees due to the lack of the full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, Vatican II recognizes them as having “significance and importance in the mystery of salvation” and being used by the Spirit of Christ “as means of salvation whose efficacy comes from that fullness of grace and truth which has been entrusted to the Catholic Church.”²³ The other Christian communities are

¹⁸ LG 8. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:854.

¹⁹ See O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 71–72.

²⁰ See Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church*, 21; Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 146, 149. On the contrary, Gregg R. Allison understands the subsistence of the Church of Christ in the Roman Catholic Church as the exclusive identification of Christ with the Roman Catholic Church in the sense that the fullness of the means of salvation lies in the Roman Catholic Church alone. See Gregg R. Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 161–62, 171, 175.

²¹ UR 3. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:910.

²² LG 8. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:854.

²³ UR 3. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:910.

the instrument of salvation for believers belonging to them by virtue of their connection to the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, their efficacy as the instrument of salvation still draws from the fullness of the means of salvation that is found in the Roman Catholic Church. This conciliar affirmation sets forth a necessary role of the Roman Catholic Church in the salvation of those believers belonging to the other Christian churches and communities.

Concerning the salvation of the rest of all human beings who are oriented to the Roman Catholic Church in a variety of ways, that is, the salvation of “those who have not yet received the gospel,”²⁴ Vatican II sustains an optimistic outlook.²⁵ The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church affirms that “they are related to the people of God in various ways.”²⁶ The varying degree of this relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church draws on the relative sources of the knowledge of God in some sense analogous to the full revelation of God in Scripture. The document categorizes four groups of people in a descending order in proportion to the knowledge of God that is accessible in their religions or individual pursuit. First, Jews are most closely related to the Roman Catholic Church in the administration of the redemptive plan of the triune God. Vatican II accords them a prominent regard for their receiving of divine revelation from God in the Old Testament. Indeed, their knowledge of God has its basis on divine revelation that involved the giving of the covenants and promises culminating in the birth of the

²⁴ *LG 16*. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

²⁵ On the contrary, Ralph Martin suggests that Vatican II is much less optimistic about the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized than theologians acknowledge on average. He supports this argument by drawing attention to the expression of the conciliar document that they are “more often . . . deceived by the evil one.” See Ralph Martin, *Will Many Be Saved? What Vatican II Actually Teaches and Its Implications for the New Evangelization* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 58.

²⁶ *LG 16*. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861. Sullivan holds that the phrase “the people of God” in the documents of Vatican II is a particular term synonymous with the Roman Catholic Church. In this sense, the people of God in the text of *LG 16* are identical with the Roman Catholic Church. See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 152. See also Richard A. Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II: An Introduction and Commentary* (Lanhan, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 64. Allison interacts with the relevant Articles in *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and presents a similar discussion. See Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*, 163–66.

Messiah. They are “a people according to their election most dear because of their ancestors.”²⁷ Paul’s conviction of their mass conversion draws on the irrevocable nature of God’s gifts and his call (Rom 11:28–29).

Second, Muslims are related to the Roman Catholic Church in the divine economy.²⁸ The conciliar document puts them in the first rank among the adherents of the non-Christian religions “who acknowledge the Creator.”²⁹ Further, their knowledge of God in some areas shares in that of the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, “they profess to hold the faith of Abraham and along with us [Roman Catholics] they worship the one merciful God who will judge humanity on the last day.”³⁰ This knowledge of God as the Creator and the Judge—knowledge that Muslims appropriate through the teachings of Islam—demonstrates their relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church that is closer than any other non-Christian religion except Judaism.

Third, “others who search for the unknown God in shadows and images”³¹ are related to the Roman Catholic Church in the outworking of the divine plan of salvation. Presumably, Vatican II has in view the followers of other non-Christian religions in general such as Hinduism and Buddhism other than Judaism and Islam.³² *Lumen Gentium* grounds the knowability of God on their part upon his life-giving work and universal salvific will: first, “God is not far from people of this kind since he gives to all life and breath and everything (see Acts 17:25–28);” second, “the Savior wishes all to be saved

²⁷ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

²⁸ O’Collins states that Vatican II was the first ecumenical council that “offered some explicit teaching on Muslims” since the establishment of Islam. See O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 73.

²⁹ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

³⁰ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

³¹ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

³² See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 154.

(see 1 Tim 2:4).”³³

Fourth, those who do not belong to any religion are minimally related to the Roman Catholic Church in the administration of the divine plan of salvation. The conciliar document divides this group into two kinds of people. First, there are individual seekers of God in general “who without any fault do not know anything about Christ or his Church, yet who search for God with a sincere heart and, under the influence of grace, try to put into effect the will of God as known to them through the dictate of conscience.” Vatican II affirms that “these too can obtain eternal salvation.” Second, there are atheists “who, through no fault of their own, have not yet attained to the express recognition of God yet who strive, not without divine grace, to lead an upright life.” *Lumen Gentium* affirms the possibility of salvation for these atheists on this ground: “whatever goodness and truth is found in them is considered by the Church as a preparation for the gospel and bestowed by him who enlightens everyone that they may in the end have life.”³⁴

While Vatican II shows the optimism concerning the possibility of salvation for those four groups of people who “are ordered to the Roman Catholic Church in various ways,”³⁵ it does acknowledge the deceitful influence of the devil on people “who have gone astray in their thinking and exchanged the truth about God for a lie and served the creature rather than the Creator (see Rom 1:21 and 25).”³⁶ Again, Vatican II acknowledges the wretched condition of the unsaved that will be finally realized in hell: “living and dying in this world without God they are exposed to the extreme of despair.”³⁷ Hence, the Roman Catholic Church arduously fosters evangelism “to promote

³³ *LG* 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

³⁴ *LG* 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

³⁵ *LG* 13. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:860.

³⁶ *LG* 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

³⁷ *LG* 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

the glory of God and the salvation of all these people” as it is “mindful of the Lord’s command when he said: ‘Preach the gospel to the whole creation’ (Mark 16:15).”³⁸ At the same time it does not essentially revoke the optimism which Vatican II sustains toward the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized who are in varying degrees oriented to the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. Indeed, notwithstanding its substantial emphasis on the role of the Roman Catholic Church in evangelism for the accomplishment of the redemptive plan of the triune God for the entire human race, Vatican II holds that God’s grace does extend to non-Christians and the unevangelized, entailing their relatedness in varying measures to the Roman Catholic Church as the necessary instrument of their salvation.³⁹

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Relation to the Roman Catholic Church

The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church offers a crucial statement which has a direct bearing on the optimism of Vatican II. The document affirms: “So, although God, through ways known to himself, can lead people who through no fault of their own are ignorant of the gospel, to that faith without which it is impossible to please him, nevertheless the Church has both the obligation and the sacred right to evangelize.”⁴⁰ Though this statement underscores the necessity of evangelism as the duty and right of the Roman Catholic Church, it holds a parallel emphasis on the work of God “through ways known to himself” in saving people who have not heard the gospel.⁴¹

³⁸ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861–62.

³⁹ Sullivan understands that this grace of God reaching non-Christians and the unevangelized is salvific. He opines: “It seems reasonable to conclude that it is because they are all recipients of God’s offer of saving grace that they are also said to be “related to the church.”” He acknowledges that LG 16 does not explicitly express this idea. Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 155.

⁴⁰ AG 7. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1017.

⁴¹ The text “faith without which it is impossible to please him” refers to Hebrews 11:6, just as the document provides a footnote to it. O’Collins states that Hebrews 11:6 appears nowhere else but in AG 7 among all the documents of Vatican II. He further explains that when Vatican II quoted this verse, it had in view humanity in general. See O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 118.

Elsewhere *Gaudium et Spes* attributes this sovereign work of God in the salvation of non-Christians and the unevangelized to the Holy Spirit who “offers everyone the possibility of sharing in this Paschal mystery in a manner known to God.”⁴² The Paschal mystery in the context of the document has in view what Jesus Christ achieved through his death and resurrection⁴³ entailing the appropriation of justification and eternal salvation⁴⁴ on the part of those “sharing in this Paschal mystery.” Vatican II embraces both Christians and “all people of good will in whose hearts grace is secretly at work” as the recipients of the efficacy of this Paschal mystery.⁴⁵

The positive elements sown by the Holy Spirit⁴⁶ are among the ways God possibly saves non-Christians and the unevangelized in keeping with the work of the Holy Spirit in making available to them the appropriation of the merits of the Paschal mystery. Such positive elements sown by the Holy Spirit in them include: “whatever goodness and truth is found in [atheists]”,⁴⁷ “the good seed that is found in people’s hearts and minds, or in their particular rites and cultures”,⁴⁸ “whatever truth and grace are

⁴² *GS 22*. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1082. Joseph Ratzinger underscores the sovereignty of God in the universal possibility of salvation for them. Thus, he avoids “all useless investigation” into how God possibly saves them. Herbert Vorgrimler, ed., *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, 5 vols. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967–1969), 5:161. See also Jacques Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions: From Confrontation to Dialogue*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 61.

⁴³ Ratzinger identifies the paschal mystery with “the very center of Christology.” Further, he affirms the sovereign work of God in the salvation of human beings. He states: “Salvation is not a “work of man. Wherever it occurs, it must ultimately be a sharing in the Easter mystery of cross and resurrection.” Vorgrimler, *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, 5:162. Thus, he views that *GS 22* provides a better theology of the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized than *LG 16* offers which yields too much emphasis on human goodness geared toward their autonomous endeavors.

⁴⁴ See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 215n17.

⁴⁵ O’Collins understands this conciliar statement as meaning that “through the Spirit all people, no matter whether they follow some faith or no faith, can be joined, albeit mysteriously, to the crucified and risen Jesus.” I understand that his expression “joined to the crucified and risen Jesus” is equivalent to union with Jesus. See O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 140–41, 159.

⁴⁶ See O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 114.

⁴⁷ *LG 16*. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

⁴⁸ *LG 17*. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:862.

already to be found among people—a secret presence of God”;⁴⁹ “whatever good is found to be sown in the minds and hearts of human beings or in the particular rites and cultures of peoples”;⁵⁰ “their national and religious traditions”;⁵¹ “the ascetic and contemplative traditions”;⁵² and “things which are true and holy in these religions.”⁵³ These positive elements sown by the Holy Spirit—respectively represented as divine seeds of goodness, truth, grace, and holiness—have to do with the hidden presence of God salvifically at work in them “as a preparation for the gospel”⁵⁴ or “paving the way for the gospel message.”⁵⁵ Vatican II urges the striving of the Roman Catholic Church for missionary activities involving interreligious dialogues and cooperation which aim at preaching the gospel entailing the purification, strengthening, elevation, healing, and perfection of these positive elements.⁵⁶

Presumably, Vatican II has in view “the seeds of the Word” as the all-embracing concept of these positive elements.⁵⁷ The conciliar phraseology “the seeds of the Word” is an adaptation from Justin Martyr’s *Second Apology* where he described the

⁴⁹ AG 9. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1019.

⁵⁰ AG 9. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1019.

⁵¹ AG 11. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1020.

⁵² AG 18. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1027.

⁵³ NA 2. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:969.

⁵⁴ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861. See also GS 40. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1094.

⁵⁵ AG 3. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1012.

⁵⁶ See LG 13; LG 17; AG 9. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:859, 862, 1019.

⁵⁷ Pope John Paul II holds a similar understanding. He states that the seeds of the Word are the comprehensive means of the Holy Spirit “at work in the heart of every person.” Indeed, they are “to be found in human initiatives—including religious ones—and in mankind’s efforts to attain truth, goodness and God himself.” John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio* [The Mission of the Redeemer], encyclical letter, December 7, 1990, 28, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html. In contrast, Dupuis underscores the ambiguity of what the seeds of the Word exactly refer to in the conciliar documents. See Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions*, 64–65.

presence of the seed of the Logos “implanted in every race of men.”⁵⁸ Vatican II acknowledges both the preached gospel and the seeds of the Word as the means of the Holy Spirit in calling the entire human race to Christ. The *Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church* states: “The Holy Spirit, who calls all to Christ by means of the seeds of the Word and the preaching of the gospel, stirs up in their hearts the submission of faith.”⁵⁹ A possible interpretation is that the seeds of the Word sown by the Holy Spirit as preliminary to the preached gospel are operative in the course of arriving at faith in Jesus on the part of non-Christians and the unevangelized.⁶⁰ An alternative interpretation is that Vatican II seems to hold two ways of salvation that the Holy Spirit utilizes in his calling human beings to either explicit or implicit faith in Christ, namely, either the means of the preached gospel for Christians explicitly confessing their faith in Christ or the means of the seeds of the Word as a preparation for the gospel for non-Christians and the unevangelized implicitly associated with faith in Christ. Obviously, these conciliar statements suggest the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized by the work of the Holy Spirit in calling them to Christ through the seeds of the Word, engendering in them implicit faith in him and having them appropriate the benefits of the Paschal mystery. Further, as discussed above, at the center of Vatican II’s understanding of God’s plan of salvation for the whole human race is the Roman Catholic Church constituted by Christ through the life-giving Holy Spirit as the universal sacrament of salvation for Christians on the one hand, and non-Christians and the unevangelized on the other hand, in keeping with the universal salvific will of God. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent at work in saving both groups of people: (1) Christians and (2) non-

⁵⁸ Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 8 (ANF 1:191). See also Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 10 (ANF 1:191); Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 13 (ANF 1:193).

⁵⁹ AG 15. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1023.

⁶⁰ See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 165–66; O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 114.

Christians and the unevangelized. The former belong to the Roman Catholic Church through the appropriation of the preached gospel entailing explicit faith in Jesus. The latter in varying degrees relate to the Roman Catholic Church through the seeds of the Word—which presumably encompasses divine elements of whatever goodness, truth, grace, and holiness sown in their hearts, minds, religions, cultures, rituals, traditions, and more—as a preparation for the gospel entailing implicit faith in Jesus. Salvation in Christ forms an irreducible relationship with the Roman Catholic Church in keeping with the varying measures of faith in Christ through the preached gospel and the seeds of the Word as the means of the salvific call of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit calls non-Christians and the unevangelized to be oriented to the Roman Catholic Church, which is the necessary instrument and visible medium of salvation for them.

Pope John Paul II’s Argumentation

In his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II substantiates Vatican II’s institutional inclusivism, declaring the finality and exclusiveness of salvation that is found in Jesus Christ alone, “the one mediator between God and mankind”⁶¹ (1 Tim 2:5–7; cf. Heb 4:14–16): “No one can enter into communion with God except through Christ, by the working of the Holy Spirit.”⁶² This reality does not deny the existence of “participated forms of mediation of different kinds and degrees,” but it elevates the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the one and only mediator from whom alone “they acquire meaning and value.”⁶³ Obviously, John Paul II’s affirmation of Jesus being the absolute Savior and unique mediator does not lead him to hold exclusivism, that is, the finality of salvation in Christ alone through the epistemological appropriation of his person and

⁶¹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 5.

⁶² John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 5.

⁶³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 5. See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 193, 197–98; O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 179–89; Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, 189.

work essentially arising from the hearing and embracing of the gospel. Rather, he argues that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent universally and timelessly present in the heart of every individual human being while he is simultaneously at work through the seeds of the Word implanted in it to bring about being “closely linked with the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption”⁶⁴ in keeping with the outworking of the divine plan of salvation.⁶⁵

Specifically, concrete proof of the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit through the seeds of the Word in every human heart is “to be found in human initiatives—including religious ones—and in mankind’s efforts to attain truth, goodness and God himself.”⁶⁶ In an effort to support his argument, John Paul II offers a few citations from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today. (1) The Holy Spirit gives the entire human race “the light and strength to respond to its highest calling.”⁶⁷ (2) Through the Holy Spirit, “mankind attains in faith to the contemplation and savoring of the mystery of God’s design.”⁶⁸ (3) The Holy Spirit “offers everyone the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery in a manner known to God.”⁶⁹ (4) The Holy Spirit continually moves the whole human race who “can therefore never be completely indifferent to the problems of religion” and who “will always . . . want to know what

⁶⁴ John Paul II, *Dominum et vivificantem* [Lord and Giver of Life], encyclical letter, May 18, 1986, 53, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_18051986_dominum-et-vivificantem.html.

⁶⁵ See Gerald O’Collins, *Salvation for All: God’s Other Peoples* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 227–28.

⁶⁶ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 159, 175–76.

⁶⁷ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See GS 10. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1074.

⁶⁸ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See GS 15. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1077.

⁶⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See GS 22. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1082.

meaning to give their life, their activity and their death.”⁷⁰ Thus, John Paul II holds that the Holy Spirit operates as the fundamental source of “man’s existential and religious questioning, a questioning which is occasioned not only by contingent situations but by the very structure of his being.”⁷¹ Further, the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit exert influence on “not only the individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions.” For example, as regards human history, the Holy Spirit “with marvelous foresight directs the course of the ages and renews the face of the earth.”⁷² Eventually, the Holy Spirit is the source of the presence of the risen Christ who “is now at work in human hearts . . . not only instilling a desire for the world to come but also thereby animating, purifying and reinforcing the noble aspirations.”⁷³ Further, John Paul II underscores the activity of the Holy Spirit in sowing the seeds of the Word which are “present in various customs and cultures, preparing them for full maturity in Christ.”⁷⁴

He draws on John 3:8 as a key biblical reference that undergirds his view of the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus taught clearly, the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit uncircumscribed by time and space is analogous to the blowing of the wind “wherever it wills.” In view of this reality, John Paul II echoes Vatican II’s teaching of the agency of the Holy Spirit which transcends the boundaries of “the visible body of the Church.”⁷⁵ He draws on *Gaudium et Spes* (Article 22) as the key

⁷⁰ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See GS 41. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1094.

⁷¹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See also John Paul II, *Dominum et vivificantem*, 54.

⁷² John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See GS 26. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1085

⁷³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See GS 38. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1092.

⁷⁴ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 28. See also LG 17; AG 3, 15. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:862, 1012, 1023.

⁷⁵ John Paul II, *Dominum et vivificantem*, 53. See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 191–92; O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 173–74. See also John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis* [The Redemption of Man], encyclical letter, March 4, 1979, 6,

conciliar document affirming the universally active presence of the Holy Spirit beyond the visible Roman Catholic Church:⁷⁶

The [Second Vatican Council] speaks precisely of “all people of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this Paschal Mystery.”⁷⁷

On the same ground of Vatican II’s emphasis on the universal salvific will of God for the entire human race, John Paul II argues that salvation “is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church;”⁷⁸ rather, salvation “must be made concretely available to all.”⁷⁹ At this point, John Paul II acknowledges the unfortunate reality of the existence of a large number of non-Christians and the unevangelized because of their inherently restricted access to the gospel tethered to their social, religious, and cultural conditions in which they have been stuck. Therefore, he affirms that salvation in Christ for such non-Christians and the unevangelized “is accessible by virtue of a grace.” He explains the efficacy of grace this way: Grace, “while having a mysterious relationship to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation.”⁸⁰ Further, he attributes the source of this saving grace to Christ by virtue of his accomplished atonement:⁸¹ “This grace comes from Christ; it is the result of

https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html. Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 190.

⁷⁶ See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 196.

⁷⁷ John Paul II, *Dominum et vivificantem*, 53. See GS 22. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1082.

⁷⁸ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

⁷⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

⁸⁰ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

⁸¹ Allison argues that the Roman Catholic Church understands the extent of Christ’s atonement as being universal, that is, the position of unlimited atonement that “Christ died to pay the penalty for the sins of all human beings.” See Allison, *Roman Catholic Theology and Practice*, 144–46. In the paragraph

his Sacrifice.”⁸² And he affirms that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent at work in mediating this saving grace: “[this grace] . . . is communicated by the Holy Spirit.”⁸³ Ultimately, this grace “enables each person to attain salvation through his or her free cooperation.”⁸⁴ The Paschal mystery is central in his argument for the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized. He refers to *Gaudium et Spes* once again warranting his inclusivistic soteriology tied to the operation of the Holy Spirit who “offers everyone the possibility of sharing in this Paschal mystery in a manner known to God.”⁸⁵

Presumably, John Paul II recalled the Articles 13 and 16 of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church when he stated that the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized rests upon God’s sovereign grace which “does not make them formally part of the Church” but calls them to have “a mysterious relationship to the Church.”⁸⁶ Indeed, his language echoes the conciliar statement that they “are ordered to [the Roman Catholic Church] in various ways,” those “everywhere who by the grace of God are called to salvation”⁸⁷ and those “who have not yet accepted the gospel are related to [the Roman Catholic Church] in various ways.”⁸⁸ And the communication of this

605 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, “The Church, following the apostles, teaches that Christ died for all men without exception.” However, the Roman Catholic Church does not seem to endorse universalism.

⁸² John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

⁸³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

⁸⁴ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

⁸⁵ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10. See *GS 22*. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1082.

⁸⁶ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10. See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 197.

⁸⁷ *LG 13*. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:860. By referring to *LG 13*, John Paul II acknowledges Vatican II’s affirmation of the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation in keeping with God’s universal salvific will. He underscores that “the real possibility of salvation in Christ for all mankind” is inseparable from “the necessity of the Church for salvation.” See John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 9.

⁸⁸ *LG 16*. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

grace, as he argued above, is attributable to the universal activity and presence of the Holy Spirit surpassing the confines of the visible Roman Catholic Church. This statement seems to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in terms of his salvific work universally and obscure the role of the Roman Catholic Church in God's plan of salvation that is universally available. However, the thrust of his statement is to underscore the conciliar affirmation of the work of the Holy Spirit in calling them through the seeds of the Word, rendering effective their possible appropriation of the Paschal mystery in a manner known to God alone, and bringing about their relatedness in varying measures to the Roman Catholic Church identified with the universal sacrament of salvation.

Elsewhere, John Paul II makes clear this flow of argument. He affirms that the universal operation of the Holy Spirit beyond the Roman Catholic Church is indissolubly connected to his activity that is ongoing inside the Roman Catholic Church.⁸⁹ “the universal activity of the Spirit is not to be separated from his particular activity within the body of Christ, which is the Church.”⁹⁰ First, the Holy Spirit is vitally at work in the Roman Catholic Church by giving life to the Roman Catholic Church and prompting it to proclaim the gospel. Second, the Holy Spirit is universally operative in the entire human race by sowing his gifts in them and developing these gifts. And so, the Holy Spirit actively leads the Roman Catholic Church “to discover these gifts, to foster them and to receive them through dialogues.”⁹¹ Indeed, through interfaith dialogues, the Roman Catholic Church “seeks to uncover the seeds of the Word . . . [which] are found in individuals and in the religious traditions of mankind.”⁹² Interreligious dialogue is the means of the Roman Catholic Church in the course of discovering the signs “of the

⁸⁹ See Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, 192.

⁹⁰ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 29.

⁹¹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 29.

⁹² John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 56.

working of the Spirit” in them.⁹³

In his addresses and messages, John Paul II shows his conviction of the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized through the universal presence and work of the Holy Spirit in employing the seeds of the Word and entailing their relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church as the visible medium of salvation. The seeds of the Word that he discerned include: “the local heritage and the ancient cultures that contain praiseworthy elements of spiritual growth”;⁹⁴ “the truth and goodness found in these religions”;⁹⁵ “all that is good in their religions and cultures”;⁹⁶ “the truths that are contained in the religious traditions”;⁹⁷ “the great heritage of the religious spirit that is manifested in cultural tradition”;⁹⁸ and “a culture that endures to this day.”⁹⁹ These seeds of the Word indicate that they are “the paths of life and conduct that are often so near to those found in the Gospel of Christ”;¹⁰⁰ “reflections of the truth of Christ”;¹⁰¹ and “way[s] of touching the mystery of God’s Spirit.”¹⁰² Again, the existential reality of the seeds of the Word as the salvific means of the Holy Spirit for non-Christians and the

⁹³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 56. See Spinello, *The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, 194.

⁹⁴ John Paul II, “Message to the People of Asia,” 3 (message, The Auditorium of Radio Veritas, Manila, February 21, 1981), https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1981/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19810221_manila-auditorium.html.

⁹⁵ John Paul II, “Message to the People of Asia,” 3.

⁹⁶ John Paul II, “Message to the People of Asia,” 3.

⁹⁷ John Paul II, “Address to the Leaders of Other Religions,” 2 (address, The Occasion of the Meeting with the Exponents of Non-Christian Religions, Madras, February 5, 1986), https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1986/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19860205_religioni-non-cristiane.html.

⁹⁸ John Paul II, “Address to the Leaders of Other Religions,” 2.

⁹⁹ John Paul II, “Address to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia,” 2 (address, Alice Springs, November 29, 1986), https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1986/november/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19861129_aborigeni-alice-springs-australia.html.

¹⁰⁰ John Paul II, “Message to the People of Asia,” 3.

¹⁰¹ John Paul II, “Message to the People of Asia,” 3.

¹⁰² John Paul II, “Address to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia,” 2.

unevangelized demonstrates his permanent presence with every single one of them, a presence that has endured since the beginning of human history to this day. Another crucial evidence that every human being is under the influence of the presence of the Holy Spirit is the expression of the authentic prayer to the one and only God on the part of Christians and to the Absolute, the Great Unknown, or the Unknown God on the part of non-Christians and the unevangelized in seeking him. John Paul II holds that the offering of such authentic prayer to God derives from the Holy Spirit, “who is mysteriously present in the heart of every person”¹⁰³ in keeping with his praying in them and on behalf of them.

In this section, this project engaged in setting forth the pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church specified as institutional inclusivism. While surveying the documents of Vatican II and the encyclicals and messages of John Paul II that have a bearing on the subject, this project demonstrated the essence of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized who are in varying degrees oriented to it by the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit calling them through the seeds of the Word and rendering effective their possible association with the Paschal mystery.

Assessment

In the previous section, this project demonstrated the nature of pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church defined as institutional inclusivism. This project interacted with the documents of Vatican II and Pope John II’s encyclicals and messages with an aim to articulate institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation for the non-Christians and the

¹⁰³ John Paul II, “Address to Roman Curia,” 11 (address, Roman Curia, The Vatican City State, December 22, 1986), <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/popes-christmas-address-to-roman-curia-8651>. See O’Collins, *Salvation for All*, 227.

evangelized who are in varying degrees ordered to it by the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit calling them through the seeds of the Word and offering them the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery. In this section, this project will provide a rejoinder to institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church with an aim to refute its erroneous soteriology and champion pneumatological exclusivism. Specifically, on the ground of theological arguments of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, this project will give an assessment of three loci that are central in the system of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church, that is, the seeds of the Word, the Paschal mystery, and relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church.

The Seeds of the Word

A polemic of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church since Vatican II is the concept of the seeds of the Word as the means of the Holy Spirit in his calling non-Christians and the unevangelized to the possibility of salvation in Christ. The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church states: “The Holy Spirit, who calls all to Christ by means of the seeds of the Word and the preaching of the gospel, stirs up in their hearts the submission of faith.”¹⁰⁴ Obviously, this conciliar text seems to teach that there are two distinct ways leading to Christ that involves the activity of the Holy Spirit in calling Christians through the gospel on the one hand, and non-Christians and the unevangelized through the seeds of the Word on the other hand. Yet, such argumentation derives from an impetuosity that fails to take into account Vatican II’s affirmation of the seeds of the Word as a preparation for the gospel. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church puts it this way in its affirmation of the possibility of salvation of the atheists: “For whatever goodness and truth is found in them is considered by the Church as a

¹⁰⁴ AG 15. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1023.

preparation for the gospel and bestowed by him who enlightens everyone that they may in the end have life.”¹⁰⁵ Given the presumption noted above that Vatican II reckoned the seeds of the Word sown by the Holy Spirit as the all-embracing concept of the positive elements of whatever goodness, truth, grace, and holiness in every human heart and non-Christian religious traditions, Vatican II seems to convey that the seeds of the Word alone cannot be the efficient means of salvation apart from the gospel; rather, the seeds of the Word operate as the aiding or antecedent source to the embracing of the gospel that is realized in evangelism. In this sense, the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized ultimately draws on the experiential appropriation of the gospel but not on the religious and individual pursuit of God through the seeds of the Word alone.¹⁰⁶

Paul’s evangelism in the Areopagus (Acts 17:22–31) is a crucial case illustrating the way of Vatican II’s recognizing the seeds of the Word as a preparation for the gospel. Primarily focusing on the members of the non-Christian religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, Vatican II teaches that their initiatives in searching for the unknown God through their religions have a bearing on the presence of God as the source of those human endeavors. And so, the presence of God—“who is not far from people of this kind since he gives to all life and breath and everything (see Acts 17:25–28)”¹⁰⁷—parallels the seeds of the Word in its role for motivating non-Christians to seek him through their religious traditions and making them prepared for the gospel to respond to it in the course of evangelism of the Roman Catholic Church. Elsewhere, now having in view non-Christians and the unevangelized together, Vatican II speaks of their religious or individual endeavors to search for God in various ways as the entailment of his work

¹⁰⁵ LG 16. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

¹⁰⁶ As shown above, such approach is a general interpretation of the conciliar text. See Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 165–66; O’Collins, *The Second Vatican Council on Other Religions*, 114.

¹⁰⁷ See LG 16. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:861.

“in the hope that they might feel after him and find him, although he is not far from each one of us (Acts 17:27).”¹⁰⁸ The work of God as the motivating source of their efforts to seek him corresponds to the seeds of the Word in guiding and correcting those human endeavors to conform to God’s salvific intent and making non-Christians and the unevangelized ready for the gospel to respond to it. In view of the positive aspect of the seeds of the Word as the antecedent provision of God to the gospel for non-Christians and the unevangelized, John Paul II encourages the Catholic faithful to “approach them with the esteem, respect and discernment that since the time of the Apostles has marked the *missionary* attitude, the attitude *of the missionary*”¹⁰⁹ that is exemplified in the apostle Paul’s evangelism in the Areopagus (Acts 17:22–31). These teachings of Vatican II and John Paul II seem to underscore that the seeds of the Word are not equal with the gospel in efficaciousness as the means of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized. Rather, they seem to endorse that the gospel is ultimately the sole means of God’s design of salvation for them. The seeds of the Word as a preparation for the gospel, however much they reflect God’s attributes, are not salvific for them.

Notwithstanding the plausibility of such an understanding of Vatican II’s view concerning the seeds of the Word as a preparation for the gospel, this project argues that Vatican II seems to hold, and Pope John Paul II affirms, that the seeds of the Word, which are distinct from the gospel in terms of accessibility, are the effectual means of the Holy Spirit in his work of calling non-Christians and the unevangelized to the possibility of salvation in Christ. Both Vatican II and John Paul II had in view God’s universal salvific will for the entire human race as the key ground of his saving grace that is universally available and efficacious to those that are saved in Christ. And so, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church affirms that “all people everywhere who by the

¹⁰⁸ AG 3. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1012.

¹⁰⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis*, 12 [Italics original].

grace of God are called to salvation.”¹¹⁰ John Paul II identified the Holy Spirit with the divine agent in working out the mediation of this saving grace: “For such people salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace . . . This grace . . . is communicated by the Holy Spirit.”¹¹¹ Indeed, “such people” in his encyclical refer to non-Christians and the unevangelized who are situated within the social, cultural, and religious conditions that in no way allow access to the preached gospel. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church collectively labels them as “those who not yet accepted the gospel.” Further, the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church portrays them “as people who through no fault of their own are ignorant of the gospel,” affirming that God “through ways known to himself can lead [them] . . . to that faith without which it is impossible to please him.”¹¹² And these ways of God known to himself alone in the salvation of non-Christians and the unevangelized minimally include the seeds of the Word as the efficacious means of the Holy Spirit who is universally present in their individual hearts and non-Christian religious traditions and who is universally at work through the seeds of the Word in calling them to the possibility of salvation in Christ.

This project denies this inclusivistic attitude of the Roman Catholic Church. Specifically, the scriptural testimony of the gospel as the single means of God’s universal calling to salvation is contradictory to the affirmation of the Roman Catholic Church of the seeds of the Word as the efficacious means of the Holy Spirit in his calling of the non-Christians and the unevangelized to the possibility of salvation in Christ. This objection calls attention to two aspects of pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: (1) God’s universal call to salvation via the

¹¹⁰ LG 13. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:860.

¹¹¹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

¹¹² AG 7. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1017.

preached gospel of his spokesmen; and (2) the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit in rendering the external calling of the proclaimed gospel inwardly appropriated.

First, the scriptural teaching of the preached gospel of God's spokesmen as the sole means of his universal summoning of sinful human beings to salvation subverts the acknowledgement of the Roman Catholic Church of the seeds of the Word as the effective means of the Holy Spirit in calling non-Christians and the unevangelized to the possibility of salvation in Christ. In the unfolding of progressive revelation of redemptive history, Jesus's accomplished salvation through his sinless life, death, resurrection, and ascension rendered the proclaimed gospel of his agents the unique means of God's universal calling of sinners to salvation in Christ. As rehearsed earlier, the whole of Luke's testimonies of missionary activities consistently shows the distinctiveness of the gospel as the unique means of God's universal calling via the proclamation of his agents.

Among these accounts of evangelism, this project draws a particular attention to the case of Paul's evangelism of the Areopagus that Vatican II and John Paul II relied on as a supporting biblical example for the seeds of the Word as the possible means of the Holy Spirit's calling of non-Christians and the unevangelized. A common ground of their positive outlook on the seeds of the Word as the efficient instrument of the Holy Spirit's calling for the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized is their conviction of the role of the seeds of the Word—that are sown in their individual hearts and non-Christian religious traditions—in prompting human efforts to search for God. However, unlike their optimistic evaluation of the function of the seeds of the Word in the domain of human striving, the apostle Paul reacted with distress to the outcome of their misguided endeavors that “the city [of Athens] was full of idols” (Acts 17:16).¹¹³ In

¹¹³ For comments on and references to Paul's Areopagus speech in Acts 17:16–34, see John Calvin, *Acts*, ed. Alister McGrath and J. I. Packer, *The Crossway Classic Commentaries* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1995), 295–306; F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 328–44; Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, *Foundations of Evangelical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 90, 144, 172, 461–62, 462n122; Stephen J. Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of Christ*,

this sense, when he described the Athenians as being “very religious” (v. 22) marked by their servitude to idols, his intent had nothing to do with commending the Athenians’ labors to seek God through the means and channels of their indigenous religions.¹¹⁴ Rather, he centered on the proclamation of the gospel that would entail reorientation of their religious efforts and repentance on their part. First, Paul intended to remove their erroneous knowledge of God that was embedded in their religion; instead, he set forth the accurate knowledge of him that is revealed in Scripture:¹¹⁵ God is the Creator of all that is (v. 24); he is ontologically transcendent over all that he created (v. 24); he is fully sufficient in himself (v. 25); he is the supreme provider for all that is (v. 25); he is the sovereign Lord over the entire course of human history (v. 26); and he is the primary cause of the whole aspects of their living (v. 28).¹¹⁶ Second, the apostle urged repentance on their part to renunciate their idols and turn to God as the concrete entailment of their coming to the correct knowledge of God before the realization of eschatological

Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 84, 113–14; J. Daryl Charles, “Engaging the (Neo)Pagan Mind: Paul’s Encounter with Athenian Culture as a Model for Cultural Apologetics (Acts 17:16–34),” *Trinity Journal* 16, no. 1 (1995): 47–62; Joshua W. Jipp, “Paul’s Areopagus Speech of Acts 17:16–34 as *Both* Critique and Propaganda,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131, no. 3 (2012): 567–88; Lucien Legrand, “The Unknown God of Athens: Acts 17 and the Religion of the Gentiles,” *The Indian Journal of Theology* 30, no. 3 (1981): 158–67; M. J. Edwards, “Quoting Aratus: Acts 17,28,” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 83 (1992): 266–69.

¹¹⁴ Similarly, Bruce expresses that Paul’s appraisal of the Athenians as being religious was intended not to laud them but to unveil their superstitious piety. See Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 335. On the contrary, Bock interprets that Paul’s assessment is rather optimistic about their spirituality. See Bock, *Acts*, 564. Schnabel also holds a similar view to Bock’s. Paul could not have denigrated them in the opening line of his address. See Schnabel, *Acts*, 729. Again, Marshall evaluates that Paul’s remark had in view the positive aspect of the Athenians’ spirituality. See Marshall, *Acts*, 302. Polhill sustains a neutral position in arguing that Paul employed “the ambiguous word” which had both positive and negative connotations. See Polhill, *Acts*, 371.

¹¹⁵ Bruce draws attention to the nature of Paul’s argument as being biblically founded as a whole from the beginning. Paul’s Areopagus speech serves “as a sample of his preaching to pagans.” Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 335.

¹¹⁶ In the doctrine of providence discussing the relation of divine sovereignty and human freedom, each individual human being is the secondary cause of their choices that involve their free will and impact every aspect and faculty of their living. Simultaneously, God not only as their Creator but also their Sovereign ruler works out all the outcomes of their choices to conform to his eternal purpose and counsel in keeping with his exhaustive knowledge and appropriation of that knowledge which can be known. In this sense, God who equipped them with every aspect and faculty of living and being is the primary cause of their choices. See Paul Helm, *The Providence of God*, *Contours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 177–82.

judgment that would be meted out to them by the returning Jesus:¹¹⁷ “In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead” (vv. 30–31). Admittedly, Paul acknowledges that God’s intent of revealing himself in creation and making himself knowable to human beings was that “they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him” (v. 27). However, as demonstrated in Paul’s evangelism of the Areopagus, human endeavors to seek God through the appropriation of God’s general revelation are prone to idolatry.

Elsewhere, Paul sets forth the reality of this awful state of God’s fallen image bearers inexorably reacting against his divine attributes that are revealed in all that he brought into existence. Their knowledge of him through the appropriation of his revealed attributes in all that is created did not result in glorification of and thanksgiving to him. On the contrary, “their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened” (Rom 1:21), “they became fools” (v. 22), and they were subject to the punitive outcome of their idolatry (vv. 24–31). Paul’s written statement of the series of “all the godlessness and wickedness” (v. 18) onwards demonstrates the opposite of the optimistic position of the Roman Catholic Church on the nature of the seeds of the Word in motivating the endeavors of non-Christians and the unevangelized to search for God in keeping with the work of the Holy Spirit in calling them through the seeds of the Word to the possibility of salvation in Christ.

Second, the theological position of this project on the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit in rendering interiorly appropriated on the part of the new covenant people of God his external summons via the preached gospel of his agents rejects the view of the

¹¹⁷ For a similar discussion, refer to Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 340; Polhill, *Acts*, 377; Schnabel, *Acts*, 740; Bock, *Acts*, 569–70.

Roman Catholic Church of the efficient calling of the Holy Spirit of non-Christians and the unevangelized through the seeds of the Word to the possibility of salvation in Christ. As rehearsed above, Scripture holds that God's universal calling of sinners to salvation by means of the preached gospel alone in no way entail their infallible response to it in faith and repentance. The constellation of scriptural references to intrinsic incapability of spiritually darkened human hearts and thoroughly depraved human beings to respond positively to the general call of the gospel demonstrates that an additional reality that God sovereignly provides to the external calling of the preached gospel is essentially prerequisite for infallible response of his new covenant people to his calling within time, namely, the aspect of the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit that renders inwardly realized the external calling of the preached gospel.

Lydia's conversion is probably relevant to this pattern of God's infallible drawing his new covenant people to salvation through the general calling of the gospel and the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit that renders the external calling of the gospel inwardly realized on their part (Acts 16:13–14). Given this reality of dual aspects of God's calling to salvation, the scriptural references to his realized calling within time tied to his election in eternity past have in view the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit simultaneously at work in drawing infallible response to the general call of the gospel.¹¹⁸

Thus, unlike the position of the Roman Catholic Church on the efficient calling of the Holy Spirit of non-Christians and the unevangelized through the seeds of the Word to the possibility of salvation in Christ, the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit sustains an indissoluble tie to the general call of the gospel in terms of God's summoning of his new covenant people to salvation. Technically, the effective calling of the Holy Spirit is at work only if the external calling of the preached gospel occurs. In other words, the

¹¹⁸ Acts 2:38–39; Rom 1:7; 8:29–30; 1 Cor 1:2, 9, 24; 7:18, 21; Gal 1:6; 5:13; Eph 4:4; Col 3:15; 2 Thess 2:13–14; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 1:9; Heb 9:15; 1 Pet 2:9; 5:10; cf. Matt 22:14; Luke 14:24; John 6:44, 65; Acts 13:48; Heb 3:1.

effectual calling of the Holy Spirit logically follows the general call of the gospel. Conversely, the Holy Spirit in no way brings forth his effectual calling separated from the preached Word of God. On the ground of this theological understanding of the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit inexorably entailed by the general call of the gospel, this project opposes that the Holy Spirit efficiently calls non-Christians and the unevangelized through the seeds of the Word to the possibility of salvation.

The Paschal Mystery

Another key area of pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church in conflict with the understanding of pneumatological exclusivism of this project consists in its view of the work of the Holy Spirit in offering non-Christians and the unevangelized the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery in a way known to God alone. The Article 22 of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Word of Today is a key text in terms of understanding this discussion:

[Christians] share in the Paschal mystery and are configured to the death of Christ, and so are strengthened in the hope of attaining to the resurrection. This applies not only to Christians but to all people of good will in whose hearts grace is secretly at work. Since Christ died for everyone, and since the ultimate calling of each of us comes from God and is therefore a universal one, we are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in this Paschal mystery in a manner known to God.¹¹⁹

According to the document, God's intended purpose in the Paschal mystery tied to the achievement of the death and resurrection of Christ is inclusivistic.

Elsewhere, the Article 7 of the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church provides a relevant statement in the understanding of an implication that is involved with their possible sharing in the Paschal mystery: "So, although God, through ways known to himself, can lead people who through no fault of their own are ignorant of

¹¹⁹ GS 22. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1082.

the gospel, to that faith without which it is impossible to please him.”¹²⁰ Noticeably, the agency of the Holy Spirit in bringing about their possible association with the Paschal mystery has in view the logically antecedent realization of their implicit faith in God wrought by him.

John Paul II affirms Vatican II’s positive attitude on the possibility of salvation for non-Christians and the unevangelized tied to their implicit faith in God and being associated with the Paschal mystery by the work of the Holy Spirit. He expressed that salvation “is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church.”¹²¹ Rather, salvation “must be made concretely available to all.”¹²² The Holy Spirit is operative in offering them “the possibility of sharing in this Paschal mystery in a manner known to God.”¹²³

This project rebuts this inclusivistic position of the Roman Catholic Church on the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing about the possible association of non-Christians and the unevangelized with the Paschal mystery on the ground of their implicit faith in God. Specifically, the scriptural affirmation of the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel as the logical prerequisite for the work of the Holy Spirit in uniting believers to Christ in keeping with baptism with the Holy Spirit is antithetical to the pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church. This repudiation consists in the two aspects of pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: (1) the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel as the essential precondition for the realization of union with Christ; and (2) the realization of union with Christ wrought by the efficient work of the Holy Spirit in keeping with

¹²⁰ AG 7. See Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1017.

¹²¹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

¹²² John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10.

¹²³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris missio*, 10. See GS 22. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:1082.

baptism with the Holy Spirit.

First, the scriptural teaching of the hearing and embracing of the proclaimed gospel as the logical prerequisite for the realization of union with Christ objects to the inclusivistic view of the Roman Catholic Church on the possible association of non-Christians and the unevangelized with the Paschal mystery. As discussed earlier, union with Christ logically ensues from the receiving of the preached gospel in a temporal time (Eph 1:13; 3:17). The personal confession of faith in him derives from the hearing and appropriation of the proclaimed gospel of his apostolic agents (John 17:20). And believing in the preached gospel involves the personal embracing of his atoning death for the forgiveness of sins, entailing the realization of the coinherence of him and them (6:56; cf. 15:5). The key ground of the indwelling presence of Jesus consists in his Word remaining in them (v. 7).

Thus, the understanding of this project of the scriptural affirmation of the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel as the logical precondition for the realization of union with Christ rejects the polemic of inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church that is explicit in its endorsement of non-Christians' and the unevangelized's being possibly associated with the Paschal mystery in conformity to God's unknowable dealings with them. According to Scripture, there is no possibility of people's being associated with, or even united to and identified with, the crucified and risen Jesus for the appropriation of the redemptive blessings apart from saving faith in Jesus engendered by the epistemological appropriation of who Jesus Christ is and what he achieved to merit salvation for sinners, realized through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel. The Roman Catholic Church errs in its optimistic view that non-Christians and the unevangelized possibly share in the Paschal mystery.

Second, the position of pneumatological exclusivism of this project that is evident in the scriptural teaching of the work of the Holy Spirit in uniting the new covenant people of God to Christ in keeping with baptism with the Holy Spirit stands

against the inclusivistic view of the Roman Catholic Church of the operation of the Holy Spirit in giving non-Christians and the unevangelized the possibility of being associated with the Paschal mystery. As demonstrated above, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was equivalent to the ascended Jesus's messianic work in baptizing with the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5; 2:33; 11:16). From that day onwards, the new covenant people of God received the gift of the Holy Spirit in consonance with baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44–45; 11:16; 15:8). The Holy Spirit then indwelt them (John 14:17, 20; cf. 17:20). The indwelling Holy Spirit engendered the mutual indwelling of Jesus and them. The indwelling Holy Spirit united them to him.

Thus, the scriptural teaching of the work of the Holy Spirit in uniting the whole of God's new covenant members to Jesus in harmony with baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit subverts the inclusivistic view of the Roman Catholic Church of the work of the Holy Spirit in providing the unevangelized and non-Christians with the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery in conformity to God's incomprehensible operations for them. The mutual indwelling of Jesus and his whole members of the new covenant church draws on the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit inseparable from the realization of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit indissolubly arising from the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel. The Holy Spirit in no way unites non-Christians and the unevangelized to the crucified and risen Jesus except Christ's logically prior work of baptism with the Holy Spirit, realized through the receiving of the preached gospel that entails the epistemological appropriation of the finality of salvation in the person and work of Christ.

Relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church

Another controversial area of soteriology of the Roman Catholic Church pertains to the work of the Holy Spirit in engendering various types of relatedness of non-Christians and the unevangelized to it as the necessary and visible medium of their

salvation. The root cause of their orientation to the Roman Catholic Church for the possibility of their salvation is the grace of God who calls them to salvation in conformity to his universal salvific will. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent universally at work in bringing about their relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church as the necessary and visible instrument of their salvation in consonance with his work in calling them through the seeds of the Word and giving them the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery.

This project repudiates this understanding of the pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church. Specifically, the scriptural affirmation of incorporation of believers into the new covenant church through baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit alone rebuts the inclusivistic position of the Roman Catholic Church on the agency of the Holy Spirit in bringing about the relatedness of non-Christians and the unevangelized to it as the necessary and visible medium of their salvation. This objection draws attention to two aspects of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant: (1) baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the one and only redemptive event for the realization of incorporation into the body of Christ analogous to the new covenant church where he is universally and salvificly abiding by the indwelling Holy Spirit; and (2) the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel entailing saving faith in Jesus and repentance of sins as the logical precondition for the realization of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the new covenant church.

First, the scriptural teaching of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the one and only redemptive event for incorporation of believers into the church catholic of the new covenant contradicts the inclusivistic position of the Roman Catholic Church. Scripture consistently establishes that the ongoing work of the glorified Jesus from the day of Pentecost onwards in baptizing believers with the Holy Spirit or pouring out the Holy Spirit on them is the only single way he incorporates believers into the church catholic of the new covenant. The apostle Paul recapitulates: “For we were all

baptized [with] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Cor 12:13).

This theological understanding of the scriptural teaching of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the sole redemptive event for incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant is contrary to the inclusivistic view of the Roman Catholic Church of the work of the Holy Spirit in engendering the relatedness of non-Christians and the unevangelized to it as the universal sacrament of salvation. The exalted Jesus incorporates believers alone into his body through baptizing them with the Holy Spirit. Again, he incorporates the recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit alone—whom he bestows to them when he baptizes them with the Holy Spirit—into the church catholic of the new covenant. The Holy Spirit by no means brings about the varying orientation of non-Christians and the unevangelized to the Roman Catholic Church.

Second, the exclusivistic position of this project on the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel entailing faith and repentance as the logical prerequisite for the putting into effect of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the body of Christ repudiates the inclusivistic understanding of the Roman Catholic Church of the operation of the Holy Spirit in mediating to non-Christians and the unevangelized saving grace as the efficient cause of the varying relatedness of non-Christians and the unevangelized to the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. Scripture underscores that a logical pattern exists in the course of the actualization of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the body of Christ: the hearing and appropriation of the proclaimed gospel of God’s spokesmen, faith and repentance as the concrete entailment of the receiving of the gospel, the reception of the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit in keeping with baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant, and baptism with water as the visible and outward seal and sign. Indeed, the scriptural accounts of missionary activities fall into this patterned

category with a little variation (Acts 2:16–41; 10:34–48; 11:14–17; cf. 15:7–8). The preached gospel was central for the realization of all the other aspects culminating in water baptism (2:41; 11:14).¹²⁴ Because of this reality of pneumatological exclusivism, the apostles and believers fervently engaged in proclaiming the Word of God.

Thus, the scriptural teaching of the requirement of the hearing and embracing of the spoken gospel leading to faith and repentance for rendering effective baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the new covenant church opposes the inclusivistic understanding of the Roman Catholic Church of the agency of the Holy Spirit in communicating saving grace to non-Christians and the unevangelized and bringing about their varying orientation to the Roman Catholic Church as the visible and necessary medium of their salvation. Indeed, given the understanding of pneumatological exclusivism of this project, the communication of God’s salvific grace is inseparable from the preached gospel as the logical beginning of the order of salvation within time. Again, incorporation into the body of Christ is indissoluble from the hearing and appropriation of the spoken Word of God as the efficient cause of conversion for the realization of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in no way mediates saving grace severed from the proclaimed gospel. The Holy Spirit by no means relates those who have not heard the gospel to the visible Roman Catholic Church.

In this section, this project engaged in repudiating the polemic of pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church represented as institutional inclusivism. Specifically, through the theological lens of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, this project offered a rejoinder to institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church with the

¹²⁴ Admittedly, two accounts in Acts minimally—that is, the conversion experience of the Samaritans (8:12, 13–17) and the twelve Ephesian disciples (19:1–6)—draw a different picture of baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that occurs not logically but chronologically after conversion experience. Both groups shared in baptism with the Holy Spirit not logically at the time of, but chronologically subsequent to, their conversion. However, this project argues that their cases are idiosyncratic. Apostles saw that their delayed baptism with the Holy Spirit was not normative.

assessment of three loci that are pivotal in understanding its system, that is, the seeds of the Word, the Paschal mystery, and relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church.

Conclusion

This project championing pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant rejects the pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church defined as institutional inclusivism. The Roman Catholic Church errs in affirming the possibility of salvation of the members of other living faiths in particular and the unevangelized in general through the work of the Holy Spirit in calling them through the seeds of the Word, having them possibly sharing in the Paschal mystery, and bringing about their varying orientation to the Roman Catholic Church as the visible and necessary instrument of salvation.

CHAPTER 5
UNIVERSAL INCLUSIVISM
OF JÜRGEN MOLTMANN

This project upholding pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant over against pneumatological inclusivism for the possibility of salvation for the members of the non-Christian religions in particular and the unevangelized in general engages in surveying the pneumatological inclusivism of Jürgen Moltmann. This project conceives of his position of pneumatological inclusivism as universal inclusivism, that is, the salvation of all created beings in God through the Holy Spirit.¹ This chapter follows the same method in substantiating its flow of argument as in previous chapter. First, this project will set forth the nature of Moltmann's universal inclusivism in its argumentation of his understanding of the cross and resurrection of Christ, perichoretic panentheism, and the church and the kingdom of God. Second, this project will offer a rejoinder to the polemic of Moltmann's universal inclusivism on the ground of its appraisal of his understanding of Christian universalism, the mutual indwelling of God and the world, and the salvific works of the Holy Spirit outside the church catholic.

¹ Indeed, Moltmann's universal inclusivism surpasses the boundary of the possibility of salvation of the members of other living faiths and the unevangelized by the universal presence and operations of the Holy Spirit apart from their hearing and embracing of the gospel. Though his view appears more comprehensive than this project aims to achieve its goal, his position is still relevant to this project due to the fact that it works within the framework of pneumatological inclusivism. And so, the following discussion already has in view the inclusion of the followers of the non-Christian religions and the unevangelized into the category of universal inclusivism.

The Nature of Moltmann's Universal Inclusivism

In this section, this project engages in demonstrating the polemic of Moltmann's pneumatological inclusivism understood as universal inclusivism. This discussion will involve rehearsing Moltmann's understanding of universal inclusivism in the unfolding of his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ, his framework of perichoretic pantheism, and his concept of the church in relation to the kingdom of God, all of which speak of the eschatological salvation of all created beings in God—including the whole of human beings regardless of their hearing and appropriation of the gospel—through the Holy Spirit who (1) ultimately resolves the dialectical contradiction between the righteous God and the godless and godforsaken world with respect to the cross and resurrection of Christ, (2) consummates the mutual indwelling of God and the world with respect to perichoretic pantheism, and (3) works salvifically outside the church catholic in its mission to the world toward the universality of the kingdom of glory with respect to the church and the kingdom of God.

Cross and Resurrection

The cross and resurrection of Christ is an essential theme for understanding Moltmann's universal inclusivism. Indeed, Moltmann establishes his soteriological position of universal inclusivism on the ground of his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ.² The cross of the risen Christ and the resurrection of the crucified Christ stand in contradiction to the godless and godforsaken world. Concerning the cross as a constitutive aspect of his view of universal inclusivism, Moltmann understands it as the Trinitarian event between the Father and the Son to achieve

² See Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, trans. James W. Leitch (London: SCM, 1967), 200–2; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*, trans. R. A. Wilson and John Bowden (New York: SCM, 1974), 26–27; Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 2, 4. Hegel's dialectical structure shaped Moltmann's dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ. See Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 211, 224; Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 246, 254; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 2, 154,

solidarity with the godless and godforsaken world and reconciliation of it; thus, God overcomes the contradiction over against it. The Holy Spirit proceeding from the event of the cross reaches it with God's reconciling love; thus, God ultimately resolves the contradiction.³ Moltmann's theology of the cross underpinning his universal inclusivism finds expression in the cross of the crucified Christ as "a trinitarian event between the Son and the Father."⁴ In his articulation of what occurred between Jesus and his Father on the cross, Moltmann draws attention to Mark's account of the crucified Jesus's cry of dereliction: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34).⁵ He assumes that these last utterances of Jesus "could have been 'You have abandoned me.'"⁶ In other words, Jesus suffered abandonment by God his Father. He died godforsaken. Moltmann states: "He died as one rejected by his God and his Father."⁷

The godforsakenness of the crucified Jesus by the Father represents God's activity in solidarity with all human beings and reconciliation of them who abandon God and are thus abandoned by God.⁸ A controlling Greek verb for Moltmann to articulate

³ Indeed, Moltmann identifies "Christ's death on the cross" with "the foundation for universal salvation and 'the restoration of all things.'" It was the truest expression of "the all-reconciling love." Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1995), 254. Moltmann confesses the influence of Christoph Blumhardt's theology over the formation of his envisioning of universal inclusivism tied to his interpretation of the cross of Christ. See Jürgen Moltmann, "The Hope for the Kingdom of God and Signs of Hope in the World: The Relevance of Blumhardt's Theology Today," *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 4–16.

⁴ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 245. Indeed, his soteriological position of "Christian universalism" is indissoluble from "the theology of the cross." He draws on Paul's text that seems to lend support to his universalistic conviction: "All are sinners without distinction, and all will be made righteous without any merit on their part by [God's] grace which has come to pass in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3.24)." Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 194–95. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 5, 12.

⁵ For Moltmann's articulation of Jesus's cry of desolation (Mark 15:34) with reference to Psalm 22, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1981), 78–80.

⁶ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1989), 166.

⁷ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 152.

⁸ Moltmann defines godless human beings as those who abandon God. Conversely, he defines godforsaken human beings as those being abandoned by God. And so, "Godlessness and godforsakenness are two sides of the same event." Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 242. See also Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 172.

this idea is παραδίδομι (*paradidōmi*).⁹ Among the semantics of the word, he centers on the meaning, “to deliver up.” First, God delivered up the whole of godless human beings “in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity” (Rom 1:24).¹⁰ Second, God delivered up the Son to an accursed death on the cross for godless and godforsaken human beings in their stead: “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” (Rom 8:32). Indeed, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us” (2 Cor 5:21). Christ became “a curse for us” (Gal 3:13). And so, the godforsaken Christ on the cross is the universal source of the deliverance and liberation of godless human beings as a whole: “Because God ‘does not spare’ his Son, all the godless are spared. Though they are godless, they are not godforsaken, precisely because God has abandoned his own Son and has delivered him up for them.”¹¹ Moltmann here takes notice of the correspondence of the Father’s activity with that of the Son in delivering himself up. According to Paul, “the Son of God . . . loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20). At the heart of this joint activity of the Father and the Son in giving up for godless human beings lies God’s love characterizing his triune existence that manifested itself in the event of the cross (cf. John 3:16; 1 John 4:16). Moltmann states: “[God] *is* love, that is, he exists in love. He constitutes his existence in the event of his love. He exists as love in the event of the cross.”¹²

Thus, the cross of the crucified Christ reveals the Trinitarian event between the Father and the Son respectively in forsakenness and love. Though the Son on the cross is

⁹ Moltmann’s theology of the cross appears several places in his monographs. For references, see Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 147–49, 192–95; Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 80–83; Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 173, 178–81.

¹⁰ In Paul’s language, παραδίδομι (*paradidōmi*) expresses “the wrath and judgment of God” meted out to the whole of godless human beings. See Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 242.

¹¹ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 242.

¹² Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244 (Emphasis original).

forsaken and delivered up to death by the Father, he suffers the process of dying in his love for the Father.¹³ Though the Father in the event of the cross abandons the Son and delivers him up to death, he suffers in grief the death of the Son in his love for the Son.¹⁴ In other words, the event of the cross contains two simultaneous aspects in conflict with each other. Negatively, it reveals the abandoning Father and the abandoned Son; that is to say, “Father and Son are most deeply separated in forsakenness.”¹⁵ Positively, it reveals the mutual surrender of the Father and the Son in love for the other; namely, the “Father and Son . . . at the same time are most inwardly one in their surrender.”¹⁶

Moltmann here identifies the divine person who held together the Father and the Son in their deepest separation with the Holy Spirit. In the words of Hebrews, the Holy Spirit was the personal medium through whom the Son “offered himself . . . to God” (Heb 9:14) in his surrendering love for the Father.¹⁷ Hence, Moltmann conceives of the Holy Spirit as “the link in the separation . . . joining the bond between the Father and the Son.”¹⁸ Further, the Holy Spirit is not only the personal bond of the Father and the Son in the mutual surrendering love but he also proceeds from the Trinitarian event between the Father and the Son in their mutual surrendering love: “What proceeds from this event between Father and Son is the Spirit.”¹⁹ And he explains that the

¹³ For Moltmann, Christ did not suffer death itself because death means the termination of one’s suffering. And so, he argues that Christ suffered the whole process of dying right before the moment of his death. See Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 243.

¹⁴ Moltmann denies patripassianism, a view that the Father suffered in the sufferings of Christ. Rather, he argues that the suffering of the Father was that of the death of the Son or the lostness of the Son. And so, the suffering of the Father was “a different kind of suffering.” Again, he rejects the view of theopaschite that the death of Christ was the death of God. Rather, it was the death in God. See Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 207, 243–44.

¹⁵ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244.

¹⁶ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244.

¹⁷ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 82.

¹⁸ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 82.

¹⁹ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244.

distinctiveness of the role of the Holy Spirit lies in the coming into effect of what the Father and the Son achieved in the event of the cross; namely, he renders effective the justification of the godless, the filling of the godforsaken with love, and the vivification of the dead.²⁰ Moltmann summarizes: The Spirit “is the unconditioned and therefore boundless love which proceeds from the grief of the Father and the dying of the Son and reaches forsaken men in order to create in them the possibility and the force of new life.”²¹ He is “the [Spirit] of life, love and election to salvation.”²²

Accordingly, Moltmann views the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Trinitarian event of the Father and the Son in the event of the cross as the synthetic resolution of contradiction between the righteous God and godless and godforsaken human beings as a whole on the horizon of bipolar opposites. God overcomes the contradiction in the event of the cross as the Trinitarian event between the Father and the Son in abandonment and love for the other. The cross achieves two entailments: (1) God’s identification with them through the godforsaken Son and (2) God’s reconciliation of them through the Father’s delivering up of the Son—who also delivered himself up—to godforsaken death in love for them (2 Cor 5:19).²³ God ultimately resolves the contradiction through the Holy Spirit reaching them—who are no longer godforsaken by virtue of the godforsaken Son on their behalf—with God’s reconciling love wrought by the vicariously godforsaken death of the Son.²⁴

²⁰ See Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244.

²¹ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 245.

²² Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 246.

²³ For the reconciliation of the world through the substitutionary death of the Son, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977), 153; Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 186; Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 21.

²⁴ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 82. See also Moltmann, *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1985), 15; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 154–55.

Concerning the resurrection as a constitutive aspect of his view of universal inclusivism, Moltmann understands the raising of Jesus from the dead by God as the eschatological event accomplishing the fulfillment of God's promise of the new creation of all things in the future of Jesus; thus, God overcomes the contradiction over against the present reality of the godless and godforsaken world. The Holy Spirit arising from the event of the resurrection of the crucified Christ is the earnest of the new creation of all things and universal resurrection that will be realized in the universal future of Christ; thus, God ultimately resolves the contradiction. For Moltmann, the resurrection of the crucified Christ is "an eschatological act of God performed on Jesus."²⁵ He draws attention to God's promise of universal resurrection of the dead as a theological context within which the aspect of the raising of Jesus by God as the eschatological event is understood.²⁶ Indeed, the Lord promised to the Israelites a new life anticipating the resurrection of the dead: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life" (Ezek 37:5). The distinctiveness of this new promise of life consists in "a creative act of Yahweh upon his people," namely, "a promise that has no conditions and no presuppositions, a promise of life from the dead on a creative act of Yahweh *ex nihilo*."²⁷ The fulfillment of the Lord's promise of the raising of the dead is God's achievement alone.

Against this backdrop of the Israelite hope of life that will be realized in the resurrection of the dead by God at the eschaton, Moltmann conceives of Jesus's resurrection "as a conquest of the deadliness of death—as a conquest of god-forsakenness, as a conquest of judgment and of the curse, as a beginning of the

²⁵ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 170.

²⁶ See Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 209. See also Richard Bauckham, "Moltmann's Theology of Hope Revisited," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 42, no. 2 (1989): 203.

²⁷ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 209.

fulfillment of the promised life, and thus as a conquest of all that is dead in death.”²⁸ Hence, God’s raising of Jesus from the dead is something unprecedented. Indeed, it is “the beginning of the new creation of all things.”²⁹ In other words, God unfolded in Jesus’s resurrection “the future of the crucified Christ for the world” equivalent to “the future of God for the world and the future which man finds in this God.”³⁰ This future is akin to the future resurrection of the dead because “the raising of the dead has already taken place in [the resurrection of Jesus] for all.”³¹ Moltmann has in view believers confessing the lordship of the risen Christ by God (Rom 10:9) as the immediate beneficiaries of the future resurrection of the dead; indeed, the crucified Christ rose from the dead for the justification of sinners believing in him (Rom 4:24). Yet, Moltmann sustains “the inclusive hope” that will be realized “in the universal future of Christ” in keeping with his resurrection which opened the future resurrection of the whole of the dead.³² He expresses the inclusivistic implication of the resurrection of Jesus this way: “The resurrection of Christ was . . . understood . . . as the source of the risen life of all believers and as a confirmation of the promise which will be fulfilled in all and will show itself in the very deadliness of death to be irresistible.”³³

Moltmann then takes notice of the Holy Spirit in his discussion of inclusivistic implication of the resurrection of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the life-giving Spirit who “raised Jesus from the dead” (Rom 8:11). Moltmann understands that the Holy Spirit “arises from the event of the resurrection of Christ and is an earnest and pledge of his

²⁸ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 211.

²⁹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 171. See also Jürgen Moltmann, “Resurrection as Hope,” *Harvard Theological Review* 61, no. 2 (April 1968): 13; Bauckham, “Moltmann’s Theology of Hope Revisited,” 203.

³⁰ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 193, 194.

³¹ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 193.

³² Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 166.

³³ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 211.

future, of the future of universal resurrection and of life.”³⁴ Again, the Holy Spirit “arises from a historic event and discloses eschatological possibilities and dangers.”³⁵ In this sense, the Holy Spirit is the mediator between the resurrection of Jesus and the universal future of Jesus.³⁶ As “the promise of [Christ’s] future,” he is carrying out his mediatory role respectively for believers, other human beings, and the world.³⁷ For believers in whom he dwells and to whose bodies he will give life, the Holy Spirit is at work in prompting them to share in the sufferings of Christ, be conformed to his death, and persevere in the suffering love to the point of death.³⁸ For other human beings and the world as a whole, the Holy Spirit is active in the movement toward the future for their glorification drawing on the glorification of Jesus which will be realized in the new creation of all things.³⁹

Accordingly, Moltmann conceives of the Holy Spirit arising from the event of the resurrection of Jesus as the synthetic resolution of contradiction between the present reality of the godless world and the future reality of the new creation of all things. God overcomes the contradiction through his raising of Jesus from the dead as the eschatological event demonstrating the fulfillment of God’s promise of the future resurrection of all human beings in the new creation of all things. God ultimately resolves the contradiction through the Holy Spirit who arises from the event of the resurrection of

³⁴ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 211. Again, Moltmann argues that the Holy Spirit proceeds “from the transfigured humanity of the risen Christ” while centering on the physical transfiguration of the resurrected Christ. And so, believers’ resurrection will be that of physical transfiguration in conformity to the resurrection of Christ the firstfruits of resurrection. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 124.

³⁵ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 212.

³⁶ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 152.

³⁷ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 212.

³⁸ See Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 212, 223.

³⁹ See Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 191.

Jesus and is the pledge of the new creation of all things and universal resurrection that will be realized in the coming kingdom of God.

Perichoretic Panentheism

Now the discussion about rehearsing the substance of Moltmann's universal inclusivism involves examining another key concept termed as perichoretic panentheism.⁴⁰ Indeed, Moltmann sets forth his soteriology of universal inclusivism within the framework of perichoretic panentheism. His distinctive concept of perichoretic panentheism as a framework of universal inclusivism is indissoluble from his theological formulation of the social Trinity as the substantial basis of his view of the coinherent relation of God and the world.⁴¹

Specifically, Moltmann understands that the mutual indwelling of the three different persons by virtue of their eternal love is an essential paradigm for the mutual indwelling of God and the world through the perfecting work of the Holy Spirit in the realization of the salvation of all created beings. The source of such an understanding lies in the interwovenness of the two biblical affirmations that "God is love" (1 John 4:16) and "God loves the world" (John 3:16). Concerning the former biblical teaching, Moltmann conceives of it as a Trinitarian love of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit; namely, "If God is love he is at once the lover, the beloved and the love itself."⁴² With respect to the Father's love for the Son in the Holy Spirit, Moltmann puts this way:

⁴⁰ I took the phraseology "perichoretic panentheism" from John Cooper's labeling of Moltmann's concept of the relation of God and the world. His definition of the term is as follows: "For Moltmann, all things consist in a vast perichoretic network. Perichoresis is the structural dynamic of all reality. It functions as Moltmann's implicit ontology: to be is to be perichoretically involved. Since the God-world relation is perichoretic, Moltmann's mature theology can be labeled *perichoretic panentheism*" (Emphasis original). John W. Cooper, *Panentheism—The Other God of the Philosophers: From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 252. See also Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 277; Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 105–6; Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 61; Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 221.

⁴¹ See Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 6.

⁴² Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 57.

“In eternity and out of the very necessity of his being the Father loves the only begotten Son. He loves him with the love that both engenders and brings forth.”⁴³ With respect to the Son’s love for the Father in the Holy Spirit, he states this way: “In eternity and out of the very necessity of his being the Son responds to the Father’s love through his obedience and his surrender to the Father.”⁴⁴ In other words, the Son loves the Father with the love that surrenders and obeys.

Elsewhere, he expresses the Trinitarian love of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit—which characterizes “God is love”—as the eternal source of the mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration of one another; “The Father exists in the Son, the Son in the Father, and both of them in the Spirit, just as the Spirit exists in both the Father and the Son. By virtue of their eternal love they live in one another to such an extent, and dwell in one another to such an extent, that they are one.”⁴⁵ His statement needs a further clarification. On the one hand, divine unity does not so much consist in one and the same undivided divine essence but in the mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration of the three different persons by virtue of their eternal love to the degree that they are one.⁴⁶ On the other hand, the concept of the divine persons extends subsisting relations to the existence and realization of themselves totally in one another

⁴³ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 58. He does not incorporate the Holy Spirit in this statement. Yet, as seen above, he views the Holy Spirit as the bond of love linking the Father with the Son in their deepest separation incurred by the death of the crucified Christ. Thus, he seems to have in mind the Holy Spirit as the love within the context of the Father’s love for the Son.

⁴⁴ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 58. Similarly, he does not mention the Holy Spirit in this expression, either. Yet, his reticence does not indicate the absence of the Holy Spirit in the Son’s love for the Father. Indeed, the Holy Spirit is the personal medium in whom the Son loves the Father.

⁴⁵ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 174–75. See also Jürgen Moltmann, *History and the Triune God: Contributions to Trinitarian Theology*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 86.

⁴⁶ Though he is skeptical of the Western Trinitarian understanding of the unity of the three persons consisting in the one identical divine essence, Moltmann does not totally reject the concept. Rather, he sees that such a Trinitarian formulation on divine unity jeopardizes the integrity of the individual existence of each person. And so, he draws on perichoresis as a better theological concept to do justice to the unity of God. Concerning this discussion, see Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 19, 177; see also Moltmann, *History and the Triune God*, 59–60, 63–64.

by virtue of the love for one another.⁴⁷ Thus, the concept of perichoresis offers a synthetic resolution of the perennial enigma of threeness-in-oneness of the Trinity. The mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration of the three different persons by virtue of their eternal love sustains both the threeness and the unity of the Trinity without diminishing the integrity of each other. They are not “three different individuals” or “three modes of being or three repetitions of the One God” because of their perichoresis.⁴⁸ Still, they are one in their perichoresis “which binds them together” in their personal differences expressed as the fatherhood, the generation, and the spiration for all eternity.⁴⁹ And so, a right understanding of the biblical testimony that “God is love” in a Trinitarian hermeneutic draws on the concept of perichoresis. In this sense, perichoresis is a foundational concept on which Moltmann formulates his theological understanding of the Trinity as the social Trinity. The triune God is the eternal community and fellowship of the three different persons indwelling and interpenetrating one another by virtue of their eternal love to the degree of their oneness.⁵⁰

Concerning the latter biblical statement that “God loves the world,” Moltmann speaks of it as God’s creative and free love which is indissolubly linked with his necessary and essential love expressed as the inner-Trinitarian love of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit.⁵¹ He explains the nature of God’s creative and free love inherently

⁴⁷ Moltmann expands Augustine’s relational understanding of person to Hegel’s historical understanding of person. In this sense, he sees that the concept of the divine persons as subsisting relations, existing-in-relations, or relations of origin is insufficient to do justice to a fuller understanding of person as the existence of themselves in one another by virtue of the love for the other. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 171–74.

⁴⁸ And so, Moltmann denies tritheism and Sabellian modalism or Modalistic Monarchianism respectively. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 175; see also Moltmann, *History and the Triune God*, 86.

⁴⁹ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 175.

⁵⁰ See Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 16. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 17, 161.

⁵¹ Moltmann does not explicitly mention the person of the Holy Spirit in his discussion of the inner-Trinitarian love. Yet, it is unlikely that he does not have in mind the Holy Spirit in this discussion because he does identify him with the bond of love uniting the Father and the Son, partly acknowledging

originating from his necessary and essential love in a Trinitarian sense this way: “The inner-Trinitarian love [of the Father and the Son] is . . . the *love of like for like*, not the love for one who is essentially different. It is necessary love, not free love. If this love goes out of itself, then it is no longer merely engendering and bringing forth, it is creative too.”⁵² Indeed, he understands that the Trinitarian love presupposes God’s creative and free love which is “no different from the love he himself is in eternity” because “Like is not enough for like.”⁵³ And so, the biblical affirmation that “God is love” in a Trinitarian sense necessitates that “God loves the world,” which is wholly the other as the object of his creative and free love. That is to say, “Creation is a part of the eternal love affair between the Father and the Son.”⁵⁴ And Moltmann posits the salvation of all created beings as the outcome of the Trinitarian love of the Father and the Son: Creation “springs from the Father’s love for the Son and is redeemed by the answering love of the Son for the Father.”⁵⁵

The salvation of the whole of God’s creation as the entailment of the mutual love of the Father and the Son finds expression in Moltmann’s understanding of God’s creative activity within the framework of the Jewish kabbalistic doctrine of God’s self-limitation (*zimsum*).⁵⁶ For Moltmann, a realm outside the omnipresent God is oxymoron, given the logical understanding that God must be present in all things. If there were such a space outside him, it would be co-eternal with him; it would pose a contradiction to

Augustine’s understanding of the person of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, he speaks of God’s love which is to be understood in Trinitarian terms. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 111.

⁵² Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 58–59 (Emphasis original), 106.

⁵³ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 59.

⁵⁴ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 59.

⁵⁵ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 59. See also Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 100–3, 168.

⁵⁶ *Zimsum* “means ‘concentration’ or ‘contraction’, a withdrawal into the self.” See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 109.

God's divinity. However, Scripture does acknowledge creation out of nothing, thus its existence outside God.⁵⁷ Moltmann here argues that this impasse—God's creation of the world outside himself—is resolvable through “the assumption of a self-limitation by God himself preceding his creation,” so that God's divinity would be intact.⁵⁸ This activity of God's self-limitation is equivalent to that of his self-withdrawal from himself into himself; God withdraws himself from himself to himself, “a shrinkage process in God” or “an inversion of God.”⁵⁹ In the place he withdraws himself from himself to himself, God calls into being nothingness (*nihil*). Moltmann identifies the *nihil* with primordial space which God released and made in himself as the precondition for the existence of creation. God is then creatively active in the *nihil*; he brings forth creation out of the *nihil*. The existence of this created world is outside God, not in the spatial or metaphysical sense, but in the extraordinary sense of his self-limitation. Because of God's self-limitation in the course of the existence of creation, the *nihil* is subject to awful state. The *nihil* is “a literally God-forsaken space . . . God-forsakenness, hell, absolute death.”⁶⁰ Moltmann attributes the source of its godforsakenness to the sin and godlessness of creation: “Admittedly the *nihil* only acquires this menacing character through the self-isolation of created beings to which we give the name of sin and godlessness.”⁶¹

His language seems to indicate that the whole of the negative characteristics attributed to the *nihil* and creation fundamentally derived from God's self-limitation

⁵⁷ And so, Moltmann holds to the doctrine of creation out of nothing. Concerning this discussion, see Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 74.

⁵⁸ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 86. See also Arthur Peacocke, “Articulating God's Presence in and to the World Unveiled by the Sciences,” in *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being: Pantheistic Reflections on God's Presence in a Scientific World*, ed. Philip Clayton and Arthur Peacocke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 145–46.

⁵⁹ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 109. See also Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 87.

⁶⁰ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 87.

⁶¹ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 88.

inseparable from his expression of his free and creative love toward creation overflowing from his essential and necessary love. If such inference is possible, then the ultimate resolution of the reality of the *nihil* and creation standing opposed to him is intrinsic to God's determination to create; indeed, "God's adherence to his resolve *to create* also means a resolve *to save*."⁶² As discussed above, the cross and resurrection of Christ is the historical and eschatological realization of God's determination to save, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the cross of Christ and arising from the resurrection of Christ is the synthetic resolution of the realized salvation of all created beings in keeping with God's determination to save.

Here Moltmann's understanding of the Holy Spirit as the synthesis of dialectic of God and the world through the cross and resurrection of Christ harmonizes well with another understanding of the Holy Spirit who effects the mutual indwelling of God and the world in the realization of their salvation as a whole in the eschatological kingdom of glory. The ground of his argument for the future coinherence of God and the world through the Holy Spirit tied to the salvation of all created beings lies in his aforementioned concept of the social Trinity as the ontological and existential pattern for the existence of his whole creation. The following statement partly lends support to this idea:

Our starting point here is that all relationships which are analogous to God reflect the primal, reciprocal indwelling and mutual interpenetration of the trinitarian perichoresis: God *in* the world and the world *in* God; heaven and earth *in* the kingdom of God, pervaded by his glory; soul and body united *in* the life-giving Spirit to a human whole; woman and man *in* the kingdom of unconditional and unconditioned love, freed to be true and complete human beings . . . All living things—each in its own specific way—live in one another and with one another, from one another and for one another.⁶³

⁶² Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 90. See also Cooper, *Panentheism—The Other God of the Philosophers*, 255 (Emphasis original).

⁶³ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 17 (Emphasis original).

Though this statement predominantly describes the consummated state of the mutual indwelling of God and the world that will be realized in the coming kingdom of God, Moltmann holds that the current relation of God and the world is marked by their interrelationship analogous to future perichoresis, yet with this difference: the present relation of God and the world anticipates its consummated form that will entail the salvation of all created beings. The Holy Spirit mediates both forms of relation respectively in creation and in glorification.

Concerning the present reality of the interrelation of God and the world in creation, God the Creator is present in all created beings through the divine Holy Spirit; simultaneously, the whole of created beings exist in the cosmic Holy Spirit who is presumably poured out on them effecting the birth of the community of the whole creation in fellowship with God and with one another. Specifically, God creates every single being with his breath (*ruah*). It means that “Everything that is, exists and lives in the unceasing inflow of the energies and potentialities of the cosmic Spirit . . . Through the energies and potentialities of the Spirit, the Creator is himself present in his creation.”⁶⁴ The Psalmist attests to God’s immanence in his creation through his creative Holy Spirit: “When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground” (Ps 104:29–30).

Here Moltmann suggests the possibility of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all created beings in an effort to substantiate his view that God’s creation is the community of intricate relationship with God and with one another in conformity to the primal community of the Trinity. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the whole creation, he “creates the community of all created beings with God and with each other, making it that fellowship of creation in which all created things communicate with one

⁶⁴ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 9.

another and with God, each in its own way.”⁶⁵ In other words, “The existence, the life, and the warp and weft of interrelationships subsist in the Spirit: ‘*In him* we live and move and have our being’ (Acts 17.28).”⁶⁶ Again, “Everything exists, lives and moves *in others*, in one another, with one another, for one another, in the cosmic interrelations of the divine Spirit.”⁶⁷ Thus, the current reciprocal relation of God and the world draws on the Holy Spirit.⁶⁸

Concerning the future reality of the mutual indwelling of God and the world in the realization of the salvation of all created beings in the coming kingdom of glory, God will indwell his whole creation that will be transfigured through the Holy Spirit; at the same time, the Holy Spirit will unite the new transformed creation with God and in him in keeping with his glorification of the Father through the Son, ultimately effecting God will be all in all (1 Cor 15:28).⁶⁹ The present reality of the indwelling presence of God in believers experiencing the Holy Spirit in keeping with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them is indicative of the eschatological reality of the indwelling of the divine presence in all created beings in consonance with the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them. Indeed, believers experience a new divine presence indwelling them through their experience of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all

⁶⁵ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 11.

⁶⁶ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 11 (Emphasis original).

⁶⁷ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 11 (Emphasis original). See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 17–18.

⁶⁸ God indwells his whole creation through the cosmic Holy Spirit. Simultaneously, all created beings exist in the Holy Spirit. Given the realization of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them, God’s creation becomes the community of interwoven relationship with God and with one another equivalently patterned after the social Trinity.

⁶⁹ In terms of the universal salvation of all created beings in harmony with their total transfiguration, Moltmann affirms: “Nothing that God has created is lost. Everything returns in transfigured form.” Moltmann, *History and the Triune God*, 78. Concerning Paul’s language that “God may be all in all” (1 Cor 15:28), Moltmann conceives of it “in the panentheistic-sounding formula.” Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (1992; repr., Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 212.

flesh (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17).⁷⁰ They experience “God’s love [which] has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5); they are “born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). Their bodies become “temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God” (1 Cor 6:19). Further, there is the hope that all created beings will be transformed through the Holy Spirit in keeping with the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and so God will indwell the whole of his new creation: “In the end . . . the new heaven and the new earth will become the ‘temple’ of God’s indwelling. The whole world will become God’s home.”⁷¹ God’s indwelling presence, “whether it be in the heart, in the community of believers, or in the new creation” draws on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.⁷² Eventually, all created beings will find their realized salvation “in the transfiguration of the world through the Spirit” as “all men turn to God and, moved by the Spirit, come to the Father through Christ the Son.”⁷³

Moltmann’s vision of God’s indwelling presence in all created beings through the Holy Spirit at the eschaton parallels that of their indwelling in him expressed as their union with him and in him through the Holy Spirit glorifying the Father and the Son in the kingdom of God’s glory. This eschatological operation of the Holy Spirit in glorifying Jesus as the risen Lord and glorifying the Father through him (Phil 2:10–11) will derive from his operations in renewing “men and women,” engendering “their new solidarity and fellowship,” and “delivering the body from death.”⁷⁴ Again, the glorification of the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit will inexorably come about “through the people

⁷⁰ On the ground of God’s covenant with Noah, Moltmann understands that all flesh as the object of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit encompasses “all the living” beyond human beings. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 56–57, 212. See also Jürgen Moltmann, “On the Abundance of the Holy Spirit: Friendly Remarks for Baptized in the Spirit by Frank D. Macchia,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16, no. 2 (April 2008): 10.

⁷¹ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 104.

⁷² Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 125.

⁷³ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 127.

⁷⁴ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 126.

and things which [the Holy Spirit] lays hold of, transforms and transfigures.”⁷⁵ All created beings will be “therefore gathered into the trinitarian glorification of the Son and the Father through the Spirit. In this way they are also united with God and in God himself.”⁷⁶ Elsewhere, Moltmann expresses that this Trinitarian glorification is “from its eschatological goal, open for the gathering and uniting of men and the whole creation with God and in God.”⁷⁷ The eschatological goal of their union with God and in him consists in “the salvation of creation.”⁷⁸ The whole creation will “live *from* God.”⁷⁹ This eschatological reality of the consummated union of God and all created beings is analogous to the biblical portrayal that God will be all in all (1 Cor 15:28), the mutual indwelling of God and the world or “God in the world and the world in God.”⁸⁰

Therefore, the salvation of the whole of human beings and creation is an obvious reality within the framework of Moltmann’s perichoretic panentheism: the present community of all created beings that are living and existing with God and in him and with one another by virtue of the Holy Spirit effecting the community of intertwined relationship will be saved in union with God and in him who will simultaneously indwell

⁷⁵ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 126.

⁷⁶ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 126.

⁷⁷ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 60. Moltmann likely conceives of the union of the whole creation with God and in him as “their interpenetration with God’s all-embracing love.” Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 212, 233–34.

⁷⁸ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 61. See also Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 150; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 162.

⁷⁹ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 111 (Emphasis original).

⁸⁰ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 105. Admittedly, Moltmann conceives of the biblical terminology that God will be all in all more within the context of God’s indwelling in the world than within that of the indwelling of the world in God. Further, he views that God’s eschatological indwelling presence in the world will occur through the Trinitarian glorification in the Holy Spirit whereas that of the world in God will come about through their union with God and in him through the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, the phraseology includes both.

them by virtue of the Holy Spirit effecting the glorification of the Father through the Son.⁸¹

The Church and the Kingdom of God

Now the discussion concerning Moltmann's conviction of the salvation of the whole creation in God through the Holy Spirit involves theological investigation into his understanding of the relation between the church and the kingdom of God. Indeed, Moltmann envisions universal inclusivism through his understanding of the church as one element participating in the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world in keeping with the saving activities of the Holy Spirit outside the church catholic in its apostolic mission to the whole world toward the universality of the kingdom of God.

Specifically, Moltmann discusses the salvation of the whole of created beings in the coming kingdom within the context of the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world. He explains this concept with three accumulative steps. First, he conceives of the history of God's dealings with the world as "the living quality of God's relationship to the world."⁸² The understanding of it can come about through the knowledge which is moved and enlivened by that relationship. Second, the Trinitarian history of God refers to "the livingness of God which has moved out of itself."⁸³ The understanding of it can come about through "participating and engaged knowledge."⁸⁴ Third, the movement of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world "includes the movement of knowledge of that history."⁸⁵ The knowledge of that history is bound up

⁸¹ See Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 233–34.

⁸² Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 52.

⁸³ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 52.

⁸⁴ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 52.

⁸⁵ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 52.

with the movement; thus, “knowledge of God in the movement of the history of God, and in its being moved through the history of God” is obscure “like the flight of a bird.”⁸⁶

These movements of the Trinitarian history of God’s dealings with the world broadly consist of three aspects: “the divine sending, gathering together and experience.”⁸⁷ Concerning the movement of the divine sending, “the history of God’s seeking love” began when “the Trinity in the sending from its eternal origin [was] open to the world and to men.”⁸⁸ This movement of the divine sending corresponds to the sending of the Son from the Father and the sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father through the Son. The former sending set in motion the history of Christ for the salvation of the world in fulfillment of the messianic mission of Jesus through his incarnation, ministries, passion, death, and resurrection. The latter sending led to the realization of the history of the Holy Spirit in progress which is tied to the experience of the Holy Spirit for new obedience to Christ, fellowship with him, and his liberating lordship.

Concerning the movement of the divine gathering, “the history of the gathering love of God” will be complete when “the Trinity in the glorification is, from its eschatological point, open for the gathering and uniting of men and the whole creation with God and in God.”⁸⁹ This movement of the divine gathering parallels the Trinitarian glorification. The Holy Spirit will glorify the Father through the Son at the end-time. The glorification of the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit will consummate the realized salvation of all created beings in the mutual indwelling and reciprocal interpenetration of God and the world.

⁸⁶ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 52.

⁸⁷ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 64.

⁸⁸ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 60.

⁸⁹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 60.

Concerning the movement of the divine experience “between the Trinity in its origins before time and the eschatological glorifying and unifying of God,” God experiences the whole history of his dealings with the world.⁹⁰ This movement of the divine experience corresponds to a new experience for God engendered by the achieved history of the Son and the history of the Holy Spirit which is still under way. God experiences suffering, abandonment, and death in the history of the Son who took on sins of the world and vicariously died for its redemption. God experiences in the history of the Holy Spirit the receiving of glory, the enjoyment of rest, the realization of unity, and the receiving of the salvation all of which will be fully realized in consummation.

Moltmann then incorporates the church into his discussion about the movements of the Trinitarian history of God’s dealings with the world in the realization of universal inclusivism. He understands the church “as one element in the movements of the divine sending, gathering together and experience.”⁹¹ In other words, “the church can only understand its own position or abode in participation in the movement of the history of God’s dealings with the world, and therefore as one element in this movement.”⁹² In this sense, the church is a part of the whole mission of the triune God in the salvation of the whole world. Obviously, it is “the community of the justified believers,” “the community and fellowship of Christ,” “the historical community of Christ,” “the church of Christ,” and “the people of the kingdom of God.”⁹³ It is simultaneously “the eschatological creation of the Spirit” and “the church of the Holy Spirit;”⁹⁴ indeed, “the community and fellowship of Christ which is the church comes about ‘in the Holy

⁹⁰ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 62.

⁹¹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 64.

⁹² Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 53.

⁹³ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 33, 35, 196, 348, 349.

⁹⁴ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 33, 35.

Spirit.”⁹⁵ Because of this pneumatological reality in the creation and existence of the church, Moltmann contends that “the church is present wherever ‘the manifestation of the Spirit’ (I Cor. 12.7) takes place.”⁹⁶ Such manifestations include “the glorifying of God in creation’s liberation,” “the uniting of men with one another, the uniting of society with nature, and the uniting of creation with God,” “the history of God’s suffering” expressed as men’s taking up their cross and self-giving, and “the divine joy” realized in every conversion and liberation.⁹⁷ The church can participate in these manifestations of the Holy Spirit; moreover, wherever these manifestations of the Holy Spirit occur, there is the true church.

Moltmann’s concept of the presence of the church in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit accords well with his conviction of “the saving efficacies of the Spirit outside the church.”⁹⁸ Indeed, “the Spirit is greater than the church . . . God’s purpose of salvation reaches beyond the church.”⁹⁹ Moltmann’s understanding of the salvific agencies of the Holy Spirit beyond the church within the broad context of the presence of the coming kingdom in history as God’s liberating rule is as follows:

The Spirit of God makes the impossible possible; he creates faith where there is nothing else to believe in; he creates love where there is nothing lovable; he creates hope where there is nothing to hope for . . . he also wakes sleeping, suppressed or otherwise imprisoned potentialities and activates them for the divine rule. The Spirit of God works in history as the creator of a new future and as the new creator of what is transient for this future. No reality or potentiality that was in creation at the beginning is suppressed by the Spirit. As the perfecting power of God he makes enslaved creation live and fills everything with the powers of the new creation.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 33.

⁹⁶ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 65.

⁹⁷ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 65.

⁹⁸ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 65. See also Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 231. For the intertwined connection between the saving activities of the Holy Spirit and the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh, see Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 230.

⁹⁹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 65. See also Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 231.

¹⁰⁰ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 191.

For example, cultural indigenization and interfaith dialogue on the part of Christianity belong to the ways in the realization of the saving activities of the Holy Spirit extending beyond the church to the inclusion of all nations and their people for the coming kingdom.¹⁰¹ The Holy Spirit is currently at work in “the charismatic activation of cultural and religious forces” of the nations for the kingdom of God.¹⁰² This work of the Holy Spirit in no way entails the Christianization of the nations or the incorporation of their people into the church; yet, he gives them “a messianic direction towards the kingdom. For this, people of other religions, and the other religions themselves, bring a wealth of potentialities and powers with them; and Christianity must not suppress these but must fill them with hope.”¹⁰³ Moltmann further underscores that interfaith dialogue on the part of Christianity can work as “a sign of hope for the people who have no definite religion or religious practice, but whose elemental cry is for liberation, life and redemption.”¹⁰⁴ Moreover, interfaith dialogue is “part of the wider framework of the liberation of the whole creation for the coming kingdom.”¹⁰⁵

In the course of the Holy Spirit’s salvific mission surpassing the church in the realization of universal inclusivism, the church participates in the universality of the coming kingdom through its apostolic mission to the whole world with the vision of

¹⁰¹ “Partners in history who are not the church and will never become the church” refer to Israel, religious and non-religious people of the nations, the secular orders, and the whole creation. In Moltmann’s view, the understanding of the relationship of the church with Israel is crucial for its adequate understanding of the relationship with the other partners. For the nature of the discussion of Moltmann’s universal inclusivism, this project does not deal with his understanding of the relationship of the church with Israel. See Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 133–89; Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 149–50.

¹⁰² Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 163.

¹⁰³ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 163.

¹⁰⁴ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 163.

¹⁰⁵ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 163. Moltmann sustains a conservative opinion in terms of dialogue within Christendom. Unlike his emphasis on interfaith dialogue as the means of pointing non-Christian religious members to the kingdom of God, dialogue among Christians of a wide variety of denominations, cultures, politics, and more functions as an essential instrument for discerning truth in dispute and abolishing tolerance and compromise. See Jürgen Moltmann and Steffen Lösel, “The Unfinished Reformation,” *Theology Today* 74, no. 1 (2017): 10–12.

Christian universalism.¹⁰⁶ The catholicity of the church is central in this discussion. On the ground of Ignatius' concept of the catholicity of the church as the universal presence of Christ, Moltmann argues that the church is catholic "solely in and through Christ."¹⁰⁷ The catholicity of the church in the sense of the church being wholly related to Christ has in view two aspects of its application: (1) the lordship of Christ, "through which the universe is summed up and united," and (2) the kingdom of God, "which the lordship of Christ serves."¹⁰⁸ The historical church is indeed the church of Christ. Nevertheless, it only witnesses to the summing up and unification of all things in Christ yet to come. The historical church is indeed the people of the kingdom of God. Nonetheless, it is the warrant of the new humanity yet to come. Notwithstanding such limited realities of the historical church with respect to the full realization of the lordship of Christ and the kingdom of God at a future time, both the church of Christ and the coming kingdom are "related to the whole" world.¹⁰⁹

This inseparable relation of the church of Christ to the entire world derives from Moltmann's conviction of Christ's unlimited atonement for the reconciliation of the whole world. And so, the catholicity of the church "lies in the universal and, in principle, unlimited breadth of its apostolic mission."¹¹⁰ In this sense, the church recognizes its participation in the universality of the kingdom—which is also related to the whole world—through its mission to it. Again, the catholicity of the church finds expression in

¹⁰⁶ Moltmann labels the kingdom of God as "the eschatological fulfillment of the liberating lordship of God in history." He understands "the liberating rule of God" as "the immanence of the eschatological kingdom." Again, he understands "the coming kingdom" as "the transcendence of the believed and experienced rule of God in the present." The liberating lordship of God includes "faith and obedience, new fellowship and liberating action" all of which are equivalent to the reality of the Spirit." Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 190–91.

¹⁰⁷ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 348.

¹⁰⁸ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 349.

¹⁰⁹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 349.

¹¹⁰ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 349.

its mission to the whole world involving the proclamation of the gospel to all people who are not incorporated into it. Such universal evangelism essentially draws on the conviction of the universal presence of Christ in all the domains of the world. Thus, Moltmann elevates the traditional concept of the catholicity of the church (as an identification mark describing its universal status) to an attribute describing “its movement, its mission and hope” in keeping with its participation in the catholicity of the coming kingdom.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, the word “catholic” is ultimately an eschatological concept in the sense of the non-universality of the historical church in its relation to all people of all nations.¹¹² Indeed, Scripture does not speak of the realization of their full incorporation into the historical church at present. Nor does Scripture press the historical church to bring about it as the entailment of the obligation of worldwide evangelism in a temporal time. Given this reality of the eschatological definition of the word catholic, the historical church cannot be catholic.¹¹³ The eschatological kingdom of glory alone can be called catholic in keeping with the realization of the mutual indwelling of God and the world engendered by the consummation of the lordship of Christ (1 Cor 15:28).

Moltmann’s understanding of the term “catholic” from his eschatological angle lends further support to his argument that the historical church is catholic in its worldwide mission through which its participation in the universality of the kingdom is realized. The goal of the mission of the church is then to “serve the universality of God’s

¹¹¹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 349. Moltmann denies that the term catholic is “an adjective describing the church’s state.” Though his statement seems to reject the early church’s concept of the catholicity of the church in the sense of its whole and universal status in relation to Christ, he definitely holds the intertwined connection between the catholicity of the church and the universal presence of Christ; thus, it is likely that Moltmann develops its traditional concept to include its missional movement.

¹¹² The historical church is non-universal and non-catholic in its relation to Israel. For the nature of the discussion about universal inclusivism narrowed down to the members of the non-Christian religions and the unevangelized, this project does not incorporate Moltmann’s argument of the relation of the church to Israel within the context of the catholicity of the church. See Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 350.

¹¹³ For a similar argument, see Moltmann and Lösel, “The Unfinished Reformation,” 13. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 125–26.

kingdom” through its worldwide mission which “relates the whole, which is fragmented and divided here, to the future total salvation.”¹¹⁴ Indeed, through the apostolic mission of the church to the whole world, the universality of the kingdom of God manifests itself in the reconciliation and fellowship of human beings without self-imposed divisions and barriers. Conversely, this vision of universal reconciliation and fellowship of all human beings, equivalent to “Christian universalism,” which will be fully realized in the universal kingdom of God, finds expression in the mission of the church. Significantly, the church contributes to the realization of Christian universalism of the kingdom of God as far as it participates in the universality of the kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel. At the heart of Moltmann’s argument of such Christian universalism lies the shared destiny of all human beings to see the glory of the Lord. In the utterance of Isaiah, “Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low . . . And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together” (Isa 40:4–5). Moltmann interprets this analogy in an anthropological sense. The elevation of valley precedes the lowering of mountain and hill in the course of the flattening of them for the universal revelation of God’s glory to all human beings. Likewise, God’s lifting up of the humble, his enriching of the poor, and his vindicating of the oppressed through the mission of the church occurs earlier than his humiliating of the proud, his emptying of the rich, and his judging of the oppressors (cf. Luke 1:51-53; 1 Cor 1:26–31). The result is that both opposite groups might commonly see his glory that will be revealed and share in the universal salvation that is grounded upon God’s universal love for all human beings. Moltmann contends: “This form of partisanship does not destroy Christian universalism, nor does it deny God’s love for all men; it is the historical form of universal love in a

¹¹⁴ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 351. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 145–46.

world in which people oppress and hate each other.”¹¹⁵ The church “is the way and the historical movement towards the goal whereby all flesh should see it *together*.”¹¹⁶

In this discussion, this project engaged in demonstrating Moltmann’s soteriology of universal inclusivism that is tied to his understanding of the church as one element partaking of the movements of the Trinitarian history of God’s dealings with the world in harmony with the saving efficacies of the Holy Spirit outside the church catholic in its worldwide mission toward the all-embracing kingdom of God.

Assessment

In the previous section, this project aimed at elaborating Moltmann’s proposal of the salvation of all created beings in God—including the followers of other religions and the unevangelized—through the Holy Spirit in the unfolding of his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ, in the articulation of his concept of perichoretic panentheism, and in the exploration of his understanding of the relation of the church and the kingdom of God. Each discussion accounted for the realization of universal inclusivism through the Holy Spirit as the divine agent (1) ultimately resolving contradiction between God and the world, (2) consummating the coinherence of God and the world, and (3) operating salvifically outside the church catholic toward the universality of the kingdom of God. In this section, this project will engage in offering a rejoinder to Moltmann’s universal inclusivism from the theological position of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant. Specifically, it will make assessment of Moltmann’s concept of the salvation of all human beings in God through the Holy Spirit that is explicit in his

¹¹⁵ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 352.

¹¹⁶ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 352 (Emphasis original).

understanding of Christian universalism, the mutual indwelling of God and the world, and the salvific operations of the Holy Spirit outside the church.

Christian Universalism

Moltmann's "Christian universalism" well expresses his version of universal inclusivism—including non-Christian religious people and the unevangelized—that is tied to his understanding of the activities of the Holy Spirit in effecting it.¹¹⁷ He employs the term in his discussion about "the theology of the cross."¹¹⁸ As rehearsed above, the event of the cross as the Trinitarian event between the Father and the Son is the historical realization of God's solidarity with, and reconciliation of, all the godless and godforsaken human beings in the passion and death of the abandoned Son by the Father. And the Holy Spirit proceeding from this event is operative in rendering efficacious the historical realization of the salvation of the whole human beings as he reaches them with God's reconciling love, "justifies the godless, fills the forsaken with love and even brings the dead alive."¹¹⁹ And so, the event of the cross embraces all human beings in the Trinitarian history of God to save them all including non-Christians and the unevangelized.

Again, Christian universalism as Moltmann's version of universal inclusivism is probably implicit in his theological discussion of the resurrection of the crucified Christ.¹²⁰ As shown earlier, the raising of Jesus from the dead by the Father is the

¹¹⁷ Admittedly, Moltmann does not straightforwardly incorporate his pneumatology into his discussion about Christian universalism to which he minimally refers in two of his monographs. Yet, within the broad context of his conviction of the interconnection of universal inclusivism with the perfecting work of the Holy Spirit, Moltmann likely presupposes that Christian universalism tied to the theology of the cross is inseparable from the activities of the Holy Spirit.

¹¹⁸ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 194.

¹¹⁹ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244.

¹²⁰ This project chose the word "implicit" over "explicit" in expressing Moltmann's view of the resurrection of Christ in relation to Christian universalism because he did not explicitly incorporate the term "Christian universalism" into his discussion of the implication of the resurrection of the crucified Christ. Nonetheless, universal inclusivism is obvious reality as shown in discussion above. In this sense,

eschatological event as the beginning of the new creation of all things in the universal future of Christ; thus, God undoes contradiction over against the godless and godforsaken world. And the Holy Spirit arising from the event of the resurrection of Christ is the synthetic resolution of the contradiction as he is an earnest of the new creation of all things and universal resurrection of the dead in the coming kingdom of God.

This project raises objection to Moltmann's view of Christian universalism including the salvation of the adherents of world religions and the unevangelized that is evident in his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ. Specifically, the scriptural teaching of the appropriation of the efficacies of the death and resurrection of Christ on the part of penitent believers who have heard and received the spoken gospel in keeping with the effectual calling and regenerative work of the Holy Spirit rebuts Moltmann's conviction of the salvation of all human beings in God including the followers of other religions and the unevangelized that is realized through the all-embracing application of the effects of the death and resurrection of Christ by the synthetic resolution of the Holy Spirit. This opposition calls attention to one aspect of pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: conversion through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel as being the prerequisite for the realization of the appropriation of the efficacies of Christ's accomplished redemption through his death and resurrection on the part of the new covenant people of God.

Scripture emphasizes that faith in Christ and repentance of sins in concert with the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel is to occur in the realization of the appropriation of the effects of Christ's achieved redemption through his death and resurrection. Among the realized effects of Christ's death and resurrection to God's new

Moltmann more than likely had in mind Christian universalism in his elaboration of the theology of the resurrection.

covenant people who have been converted through the hearing and receiving of the gospel, this project centers on (1) justification, (2) reconciliation, and (3) the new creation and universal resurrection.

Concerning justification, Moltmann's Christian universalism is a consequence of his theology of the cross tied to his understanding of justification of all human beings that is realized through the synthetic resolution of the Holy Spirit.¹²¹ At the center of his polemic lies Paul's language that seems to favor universal inclusivism. Moltmann cites: "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Rom 3:23–24).¹²² Elsewhere, he contends that "The meaning of the history of Christ . . . to the godless in their justification and acceptance . . . is not totally absorbed by men's arrival at justifying faith," thus leaving room for the application of justification to them without the prerequisite of their personal faith in Christ through the hearing and receiving of the gospel.¹²³ Again, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the event of the cross "justifies the godless."¹²⁴ This project stands opposed to Moltmann's conviction of Christian universalism that is evident in his understanding of the realized justification of all godless human beings by virtue of the synthetic resolution of the Holy Spirit in rendering it applied to them. Justification of sinners necessarily involves faith in Christ as the instrumental cause (Acts 13:39; Rom 3:22; Gal 2:16; Phil 3:9) through the hearing and receiving of the spoken gospel (John 17:20; Acts 15:7; Rom 10:17; 1 Cor 15:11).

¹²¹ It is misleading if one argues that Moltmann dismisses the instrumental role of faith in his discussion of the justification of sinners. He in no way denies that the appropriation of justification involves faith in Christ on the part of the church, that is, the community of believers of Christ. But he is at odds with the biblical teachings when he argues that all godless human beings who have not believed in Christ are virtually reckoned righteous by virtue of the Holy Spirit who "justifies the godless" as he proceeds from the event of the cross in which Christ died for sinners. Concerning this discussion, see Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit*, 28–33.

¹²² See Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 194–95.

¹²³ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 31.

¹²⁴ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 244.

Concerning reconciliation, Moltmann exhibits a conviction of the salvation of all human beings in God that is tied to his understanding of their reconciliation by the substitutionary death of Christ and made effective by the synthetic resolution of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the Father delivered up the Son to the accursed death “for the reconciliation of the world.”¹²⁵ Simultaneously, Christ sacrificed himself “for the reconciliation of the whole world. No one is excluded.”¹²⁶ The efficacy of all-embracing reconciliation draws on the Holy Spirit in whose power “God is . . . present in his reconciliation and his redemption of that creation.”¹²⁷ This project rejects Moltmann’s contention. While Scripture teaches Christ died for the world (John 1:29, 1 Tim 2:6, 1 John 2:2), it affirms that salvific reconciliation as an effect of his substitutionary atonement is limited to believers alone who have appropriated “the message of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:19; cf. Acts 10:36; Eph 6:15; Col 1:19-23).¹²⁸

Concerning the new creation and universal resurrection, Moltmann asserts the salvation of all human beings in God that is linked with his understanding of the Holy Spirit as the pledge of their new creation and resurrection which will be realized in the eschatological kingdom of glory. The resurrection of Christ inaugurated the new creation of all things.¹²⁹ The Holy Spirit arising from the resurrection of Christ is “an earnest . . .

¹²⁵ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 21.

¹²⁶ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 153.

¹²⁷ Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 15. See also Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 154.

¹²⁸ F. F. Bruce objects that Paul’s language of reconciliation of all things achieved through the bloodshed and death of Christ refers to universal reconciliation in the sense of universalism. He comments that universal reconciliation is to be understood as “pacification” in light of Colossians 2:15 which describes the enforced subjugation of principalities and powers to the sovereignty of God. The prior beneficiaries of Christ’s peacemaking work are “those men and women who have heard the message of reconciliation.” F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 74–77. For a similar argument, see David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 98–102.

¹²⁹ See Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 171.

of the future of universal resurrection.”¹³⁰ Eschatologically understood, the Holy Spirit is “the power of the new creation . . . the power of the resurrection . . . [and] the earnest and pledge of glory.”¹³¹ And so, “The presence of the Holy Spirit is to be understood as the earnest and beginning of the new creation of all things in the kingdom of God.”¹³² He is “the maker of the new creation.”¹³³

This project refutes Moltmann’s claim of universal inclusivism which has its ground on his understanding of the realized new creation and resurrection of all godless human beings by virtue of the synthetic resolution of the Holy Spirit as the pledge of their new creation and resurrection. With respect to the Holy Spirit as the earnest of the new creation, regeneration, or “rebirth” in Moltmann’s language,¹³⁴ Moltmann is at odds with the scriptural affirmation of the hearing of the preached gospel in concert with the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit as being the precondition for the realization of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit. The new birth by the Holy Spirit unambiguously occurs “through the word of truth” (Jas 1:18; cf. 1 Pet 1:23, 25; cf. John 3:5–6). Thus, the Holy Spirit cannot give his spiritual new life to godless human beings who have not heard the gospel.

With respect to the Holy Spirit as the pledge of the resurrection of all the godless human beings, this project sets forth a similar argument to the foregoing discussion against Moltmann’s understanding of it. Scripture avers that God gives the Holy Spirit to believers alone “as a deposit of, guaranteeing what is to come” (2 Cor 5:5), namely, the resurrection of body that will be totally realized at Christ’s return (1 Thess

¹³⁰ Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 211.

¹³¹ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 89.

¹³² Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 191.

¹³³ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 127.

¹³⁴ Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 89. See also Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 181.

4:13–17). This reality has its basis on the scriptural teaching of the inextricable connection of the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit with faith in Christ through the hearing and embracing of the gospel (Rom 10:17; Gal 3:2, 5). Thus, the Holy Spirit cannot be the earnest of the resurrection for godless human beings as a whole who have not been evangelized.¹³⁵

Therefore, this project rebuts Moltmann’s assertion of universal inclusivism that is realized through the all-embracing application of the efficacies of the death and resurrection of Christ by the synthetic resolution of the Holy Spirit. This project champions exclusivistic understanding of Scripture of the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel entailing conversion as being the prerequisite for the appropriation of the merits of Christ’s accomplished redemption on the part of the new covenant people of God. At the heart of such an understanding of this project lies the work of the Holy Spirit in making them applied to the converted people of God through the hearing and receiving of the proclaimed gospel in harmony with internal calling and regeneration wrought by the same Holy Spirit.

God Will Be All in All

Another area crucial for Moltmann’s assertion of the salvation of all human beings in God through the Holy Spirit including non-Christians and the unevangelized consists in his concept of the coinherence of God and the world, ontologically and existentially patterned after the structure of the social Trinity. As discussed above,

¹³⁵ It seems that Scripture refuses to describe the status of the resurrected body of the godless in contrast to that of the righteous. It simply portrays it as “the dead” (Rev 20:12). However, this project assumes that the resurrection of the godless will involve them being clothed with a type of bodies whose characteristics are absolutely antithetical to those of the spiritually-transformed-and-governed bodies of the righteous in their resurrection. For an interpretation of Revelation 20:12–15 as describing the resurrection of the godless, see F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, rev. ed. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 444; I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (1980; repr., Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 398.

Moltmann's soteriology—understood in the framework of perichoretic panentheism—is the salvation of all created beings.

The Holy Spirit plays a pivotal role in the realization of this salvation of all human beings. In the present creation, the Holy Spirit effects the community of intricate web of interrelationship of God and the world in keeping with the possibility of the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them. His present work anticipates the salvation of all human beings yet to come in the kingdom of glory. In the eschatological glorification, the Holy Spirit will engender the mutual indwelling of God and the world—God will be all in all—thus bringing into completion the salvation of all human beings in the eschatological kingdom of God.

This project stands against Moltmann's argument. Specifically, the scriptural teaching of the salvation of believers in whom the Holy Spirit indwells in keeping with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them as the entailment of conversion through the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel denies Moltmann's envisioning of the salvation of all human beings in God linked with his understanding of the pantheistic relation of God and the world by virtue of the Holy Spirit. This objection draws attention to one synthetic aspect of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the redeemed new covenant people of God on whom he has been poured out as the logical consequence of conversion through the hearing and embracing of the proclaimed gospel.

As rehearsed above, the hearing of and believing in the gospel of Christ on the part of the new covenant people of God is central in the realization of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (John 14:17; 17:20–21). Scripture tells of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in believers as the inauguration of God's dwelling presence in them expressed as his triune indwelling. Further, it speaks of the converse reality. That is, believers to whom the Holy Spirit is given as the logical outcome of conversion through

the hearing and receiving of the gospel abide in Jesus and God who are one in mutual indwelling. Thus, the mutual indwelling of God and his new covenant people necessarily presupposes the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in them on whom the same Holy Spirit has been poured out in harmony with their conversion experience through the hearing and appropriation of the spoken gospel.

This project draws attention to the implication of Paul's phraseology "God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28) upon which Moltmann heavily depends in his argumentation of the consummation of the salvation of all human beings in God realized through the mutual indwelling of God and the world in the coming kingdom of glory by the effective work of the Holy Spirit.¹³⁶ An overarching context within which the text is located and thus is to be understood is the reality of the resurrection of believers in Christ over against the claim of some members of the Corinthian community outright denying the resurrection of the dead that will involve new embodied existence (v. 12). Obviously, Paul had in mind the general resurrection of the dead elsewhere (cf. Acts 23:6; 24:15, 21; 26:6–8). In his current correspondence to the Corinthians, he focuses on the resurrection of believers at the end-time;¹³⁷ God will raise believers from the dead at Christ's return. At the heart of the certainty of their resurrection lies God's raising of Christ from the dead: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised" (1 Cor

¹³⁶ See Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 201, 224; Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 277; Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 32–33, 63; Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 29, 82, 91–92, 105, 110–1; Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 89; Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 174. Bauckham remarks: "That panentheistic text, 'God will be all in all' (1 Corinthians 15:[28]), has always been Moltmann's favourite eschatological text." There is a typo with reference to the designation of the verse in his monograph. Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, 162.

¹³⁷ Commentators hold a general agreement with this view. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 749–50; Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians*, 2nd ed. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (1985; repr., Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 206; Craig S. Keener, *1–2 Corinthians*, The New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 127; Paul D. Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 670; Mark Taylor, *1 Corinthians: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2014), 386–87.

15:13; cf. vv. 15–17, 20).¹³⁸ Unfortunately, the guaranteed future reality of their resurrection in Christ does not currently render null and void their partaking of physical death on account of their solidarity with the fallen humanity of Adam, a representative of the entire human race. As with the shared destiny of all other human beings in Adam, believers' death in this world is inevitable. But a further reality awaits believers irreversibly identified with Christ in his death and resurrection. Though “in Adam all die,” all believers in Christ “will be made alive” (v. 22).¹³⁹ Indeed, the risen Christ is the firstfruits of their forthcoming resurrection: “But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him” (v. 23).¹⁴⁰

Paul's expression “God will be all in all” comes within the context of the resurrection at Christ's coming:

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Cor 15:24–28)

Paul affirms that God's raising of believers in Christ from the dead is the eschatological event that is to occur in the course of the realization of the final destruction of death

¹³⁸ Gordon D. Fee comments: “The fact that *the* Resurrection had already taken place within history meant that the End had been set inexorably in motion; the resurrection of Christ absolutely guaranteed for Paul the resurrection of all who are “in Christ.” Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 746.

¹³⁹ Commentators well point out that all in Christ (1 Cor 15:22) refer to believers in Christ as opposed to all other human beings in Adam, thus denying universalism. The irreversible antithesis exists between them. See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 750–51; Craig L. Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 297–98; Morris, *1 Corinthians*, 206; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 675. Taylor suggests a possibility that all both refer to believers, but still acknowledge the contrast. See Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, 386–87.

¹⁴⁰ Paul has in mind the implication of down payment, earnest, or pledge when he speaks of Christ as the firstfruits of believers' resurrection. See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 748–49, 751; Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 298; Morris, *1 Corinthians*, 206; Keener, *1–2 Corinthians*, 127; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 674; Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, 384–85.

which will logically entail that God will be all in all.¹⁴¹ His language in rehearsing the eschaton unlikely speaks of the culmination of the metaphysical reality of the mutual indwelling of God and the world. On the contrary, Paul describes the way God will make his sovereign lordship gloriously and supremely acknowledged in every realm and sphere of the whole universe.¹⁴² Indeed, the way will necessarily involve the Son—who is currently as the ascended Lord ruling over the universe—subjugating all dominion, authority and power to him and ultimately annihilating death, the last enemy.¹⁴³ In a logical ordering, the way will then involve the functional submission of the Son—who is fully, eternally, absolutely, and simultaneously equal in seamless deity with the Father—to the Father “who put everything under him” (v. 28; cf. Ps 8:6; 110:1).¹⁴⁴ The series will finally culminate in the realization that “God may be all in all” (v. 28). The phrase has an

¹⁴¹ Obviously, Christ triumphed over death through God’s raising of him from the dead. The resurrection of believers in Christ will accord well with his subduing of death, the last enemy. See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 747, 752, 759; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 680.

¹⁴² See Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 298.

¹⁴³ Fee interprets that every dominion, authority and power is the expression of the last enemy death. See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 754, 759. Gardner argues that, given the context of Christ as king, they might refer to “rulers of this age” (1 Cor 2:6–8), or more broadly “the powers of Satan that lied behind the rulers.” Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 679.

¹⁴⁴ Concerning the theological debate on the extent of the submission of the Son to the Father, this project endorses the position of the eternal functional submission of the Son to the Father. Obviously, this project absolutely commits to the patristic and creedal affirmation of the eternal coequality of the Son with the Father in one and the same undivided divine essence established upon the relevant data of Scripture as a whole. Nonetheless, it argues that Scripture seems to speak of the eternity of the Son’s submission in role, operation, or function to the Father implied in the irreversible order among the Trinity. In eternity past, God elected his people in Christ (Eph 1:4, 9; 3:11; 1 Pet 1:20). The Son submitted to the Father in the accomplishment of redemption. In eternity future, the Son will remain subject to the Father (1 Cor 15:28). See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 760; Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 298; Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, 389–90. For relevant resources, see D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1991), 228, 508; Bruce A. Ware, “Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles: Eternal Functional Authority and Submission Among the Essentially Equal Divine Persons of the Godhead,” in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son*, ed. Dennis W. Jowers and H. Wayne House (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012); Wayne Grudem, “Biblical Evidence for the Eternal Submission of the Son to the Father,” in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son*, ed. Dennis W. Jowers and H. Wayne House (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012); Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020), 292–319; Millard J. Erickson, *Who’s Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009); Stephen D. Kovach and Peter R. Schemm, “A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42, no. 3 (1999): 461–76; Gilbert Bilezikian, “Hermeneutical Bungee-Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40, no. 1 (March 1997): 57–68.

unambiguous bearing on the demonstration of God's absolute sovereignty pervading all spheres of the whole universe in subordination to him.¹⁴⁵ Thus, "God will be all in all" does not support Moltmann's conviction of the salvation of all human beings in God that will be inevitably realized within his panentheistic vision with respect to the relation of God and the world wrought by the Holy Spirit.

In this sense, Moltmann made an error in soteriology when he deviated from the biblical teaching of the theme of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in his argumentation of the current interrelation and eschatological interpenetration of God and the world inextricably connected to the realization of the salvation of all created beings in God. On the contrary, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a soteriological event of the last days until the dawning of the last day applied to believers alone who have responded to the preached gospel in faith and repentance. Further, the Holy Spirit indwells believers alone to whom he has been given in keeping with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them as the entailment of conversion. In other words, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is in no way all-embracing with respect to the universal salvation of all unbelievers in God including the members of other living faiths and the unevangelized. He in no way indwells them because they have not heard the gospel or appropriated it; the saving presence of the triune God in no way abides in them on account of the same reason. No mutual indwelling of God and human beings becomes realized apart from the hearing and receiving of the preached gospel as its indispensable course.

Therefore, this project stands opposed to Moltmann's assertion of the salvation of all human beings in God that is explicit in his understanding of the panentheistic relation of God and the world that is currently drawn as their intricate interrelation and that will eschatologically culminate in their coinherence tied to the efficacious work of

¹⁴⁵ See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 760; Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, 298; Gardner, *1 Corinthians*, 685; Taylor, *1 Corinthians*, 390.

the Holy Spirit in rendering both forms realized. This project avers the position of pneumatological exclusivism on the ground of Scripture that tells of the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel of God's spokesmen as being the precondition in the course of the realization of the mutual indwelling of God and his new covenant people on whom the Holy Spirit is poured out and in whom he indwells.

The Holy Spirit outside the Church Catholic

Another area in Moltmann's universal inclusivism focuses on the foundational concept of the incomprehensibility of the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world in the course of redeeming all his created beings in the coming kingdom of God.¹⁴⁶ On account of the ambiguity of the knowledge of God's dynamic involvements with the world which are necessarily to be understood in Trinitarian terms, the historical church is one part of the outworking of God's salvation toward the catholicity of his kingdom. Indeed, the historical church can partake of those movements through its mission to the whole world. It is catholic through its proclamation of the gospel toward the universality of the kingdom of God where the salvation of all created beings will be realized.¹⁴⁷

While the church catholic does its role in evangelism as an expression of its partaking of those dynamics progressing toward God's universal kingdom, the Holy Spirit works out salvation outside it, thus rendering it efficient to human beings including

¹⁴⁶ This statement might sound oxymoron, given the earlier discussion that Moltmann maintains adamant belief in universal salvation in God that is unambiguous in his argumentation of the theology of the cross and resurrection of Christ and the mutual indwelling of God and the world. Yet, Moltmann does admit that the knowledge of the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world in divine sending, gathering, and experience is ambiguous "like the flight of a bird." See Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 52. His remark seems to lend support to the argument of this project that the unknowability of the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world offers him rationale for the validation of the saving works of the Holy Spirit outside the church.

¹⁴⁷ However, as demonstrated above, the historical church is strictly speaking non-catholic because of its limited realities that cannot incorporate into it all human beings in all places and at all times. The coming kingdom of God is catholic alone in a sense that the mutual indwelling of God and the world will be universally realized in it.

non-Christians and the unevangelized.¹⁴⁸ Moltmann likely had in mind those redemptive outworkings of the Holy Spirit—apart from the missional role of the historical church—as substantially consisting in the triune God’s active involvements with the world toward the consummation of his catholic kingdom.

This project repudiates Moltmann’s contention. Specifically, the scriptural testimony of the Holy Spirit’s work in the application of salvation logically subsequent to the general call of the preached gospel from without is contradictory to Moltmann’s view of the independence of the salvific works of the Holy Spirit from the preached gospel in the consummation of the universality of the kingdom of God where the salvation of all human beings in God including the adherents of world religions and the unevangelized will be realized. This rebuttal calls attention to one aspect of pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: the logical priority of the external calling of the preached gospel over the realization of the salvific work of the Holy Spirit in the application of salvation.

As demonstrated earlier, the gospel call within time is divinely ordained means necessarily antecedent to the realization of the efficient work of the Holy Spirit on the part of the new covenant people of God in effectual calling, regeneration, and union with Christ which encompasses the whole of redemptive blessings in Christ, that is, election, adoption, redemption, justification, sanctification, and glorification. According to this understanding of the external calling of the preached gospel, Moltmann errs in his assertion of the salvation of human beings that is realized through the salvific agencies of the Holy Spirit apart from the general call of the gospel and outside the church.

¹⁴⁸ The operations of the Holy Spirit are manifest “in the glorifying of God in creation’s liberation,” “in the uniting of men with one another, in the uniting of society with nature and in the uniting of creation with God,” “in the history of God’s suffering,” and “in the history of the divine joy.” Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 65.

This project calls attention to Moltmann's concept of the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world as the source of his belief in the salvific works of the Holy Spirit apart from the gospel call, and thus outside the church, in the realization of universal inclusivism in God. According to Moltmann's understanding of the interconnectedness of those movements with the realization of universal salvation in progress to the eschatological kingdom of God, the Holy Spirit obviously works out salvation apart from the gospel call.

And this project further suggests that Moltmann's contention of the salvific works of the Holy Spirit aside from the external calling of the preached gospel, and thus outside the church, finds expression in his reinvention of the concept of the catholicity of the church as "its movement, its mission and its hope."¹⁴⁹ Moltmann went beyond the boundary of Ignatius' affirmation of the catholicity of the church as the universal presence of Christ. Rather, he subsumed it into the all-embracing movements of the Trinitarian history. An inevitable question remains as to the existential significance of the missional role of the historical church in relation to the whole world progressing toward the universality of the kingdom of God.

Therefore, this project stands opposed to Moltmann's conviction of the salvific works of the Holy Spirit outside the church in the movements of the Trinitarian history of God's dealings with the world toward the realized consummation of the universal kingdom of glory where all human beings including non-Christians and the unevangelized will be saved in him. The understanding of this project of the teaching of Scripture on the salvation of sinners is pneumatologically exclusivistic, namely, that the gospel call is to occur as the logical prerequisite for the realization of the salvific operations of the Holy Spirit in the application of salvation on the part of the new covenant people of God. Accordingly, the Holy Spirit in no way administers the

¹⁴⁹ Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 349.

appropriation of salvation aside from the logically prior calling of the preached gospel from without. Again, the Holy Spirit is by no means poured out on the unconverted for their incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant apart from the logically antecedent calling of the preached gospel from without. In this sense, Moltmann errs in setting forth the efficient works of the Holy Spirit in salvation outside the church.

In this section, this project engaged in making assessment of the polemic of Moltmann's pneumatological inclusivism drawn as universal inclusivism. Specifically, on the ground of the principle of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, this project offered a rejoinder to Moltmann's universal inclusivism that manifests itself in his understanding of Christian universalism, the mutual indwelling of God and the world, and the salvific works of the Holy Spirit outside the church.

Conclusion

This project upholding pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant denies Moltmann's pneumatological inclusivism expressed as universal inclusivism. Moltmann errs in asserting the salvation of all human beings in God through the Holy Spirit that is substantiated in his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ, his concept of the mutual indwelling of God and the world, and his understanding of the church in relation to the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER 6
PENTECOSTAL INCLUSIVISM
OF AMOS YONG

This project championing pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant over against the polemic of pneumatological inclusivism for the possibility of salvation for the adherents of other religious traditions in particular and the unevangelized in general proceeds to the inquiry of the pneumatological inclusivism of Amos Yong. This project understands his position of pneumatological inclusivism as Pentecostal inclusivism, that is, the salvation of all flesh upon whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out since the day of Pentecost.¹ This chapter employs the same method in constructing its lines of arguments as in the preceding chapters. First, this project will unfold the nature of Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism tied to (1) his understanding of the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh as the ground of (2) his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions which necessitates as its goal (3) the discernment of the Holy Spirit and other spirits in the non-Christian traditions. Second, this project will offer a rejoinder to the polemic of Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism that is centered around (1) his understanding of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on religious others, which is transitional to his argumentation of (2) their common experience of God's presence and activity through the Holy Spirit as divine

¹ It seems that Yong does not incorporate the unevangelized into his discussion about pneumatological inclusivism whereas he primarily centers on the people of the non-Christian religious traditions in which the Holy Spirit is universally present and active in keeping with the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon their members. Though he intends to avoid referring to the possibility of salvation for religious others in his discussion of a pneumatological theology of religions as the epistemological and hermeneutical framework of his pneumatological inclusivism, he has in mind how the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit by virtue of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them has a bearing on the possibility of their salvation. Given this understanding, Yong's pneumatological inclusivism is germane to the discussion of this project in dispute over it.

presence and activity in other living faiths and, as a corollary, (3) the viability of the task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in them.

The Nature of Yong's Pentecostal Inclusivism

In this section, this project will engage in substantiating the nature of Yong's soteriological position of Pentecostal inclusivism. This section will involve (1) rehearsing his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism that finds expression in his understanding of the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh as the ground of a pneumatological theology of religions; (2) articulating his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions that is established upon his understanding of the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh; and (3) demonstrating his proposal of the Christian and Pentecostal-charismatic task of discerning the Holy Spirit and other spirits in the non-Christian religions as a goal of a pneumatological theology of religions in keeping with his soteriological position of Pentecostal inclusivism.

The Pentecostal Outpouring of the Spirit on All Flesh

Yong centers his soteriological position of Pentecostal inclusivism upon his understanding of the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh as the ground of his concept of a pneumatological theology of the diversity of other living faiths: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams” (Acts 2:17).² He understands the term “all flesh” “to have universal application

² Amos Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” *Missiology* 33, no. 2 (April 2005): 176. Again, this project underscores that Yong in no way labelled his inclusivistic soteriology as Pentecostal inclusivism. Nonetheless, he affirms that the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh is the ground for his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions which centers not so much on whether other religious traditions are salvific or not, but on how the Holy Spirit as the universal presence and activity of God is present and active in them. In this sense, his inclusivistic soteriology is inseparable from the universal application of the

on the one hand and to include the world of the religions on the other.”³

With respect to his understanding of all flesh as indicating the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, all flesh refers to not only sons and daughters, young and old, and slave and free (cf. Acts 2:17–18; Joel 2:28–29) but also the multitudes of the people from around the known world—“from every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5; cf. vv. 9–11). Further, all flesh upon whom the Holy Spirit is poured out speaks of all people in universal scope that include—and also surpass—Jews, Jewish Diaspora, and Gentile converts to Judaism, given the varying degrees of conversion to Judaism on the part of converts to Judaism tied to their variegated traditions and cultures; the reference to the list of regions and languages (vv. 5–11) that are all-embracing in the first century of the known world; and the extension of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to those living in “the ends of the earth” (v. 8). And so, all flesh envisions that the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit is universally applicable and now in progress.⁴

With respect to his understanding of all flesh as including the world of religious others, Yong employs a series of accumulative reasonings. First, the Pentecost narrative draws that “the outpouring of the Spirit redeems the diversity of languages, enabling each tongue to become a vehicle to communicate the wondrous works of God” when it is read against that of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1–9) where human languages were confounded.⁵ Indeed, the crowd of multilinguistic people at Pentecost understood in

Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit as its foundation. And so, this project coined a term “Pentecostal inclusivism” to describe his view of salvation.

³ Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” 176.

⁴ For a similar discussion, see Todd LeRoy Miles, “Severing the Spirit from the Son: Theological Revisionism in Contemporary Theologies of Salvation” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 104–6.

⁵ Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” 177.

their own languages: “When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: ‘Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?’” (Acts 2:6–8).

Second, the Pentecost narrative suggests the correlation between the diversity of languages and that of cultures. Obviously, the gathering of those 120 disciples present at Jerusalem and Jewish Diaspora from the surrounding Mediterranean world (v. 5) were not culturally distinct. Both groups “set themselves apart through various practices—for example, their observances at mealtime, of male circumcision, and of the Sabbath.”⁶ Nonetheless, those Jews dispersed from their homeland for generations likely imbibed the indigenous cultures of native inhabitants with and among whom they lived while learning their languages and cultures “within which these languages flourished.”⁷ On the ground of this reflection, Yong further asserts that the Jewish Diaspora’s “experience of the one God had been similarly shaped by the particularities of their linguistic, socio-historical, and cultural experiences.”⁸ The issue of the interconnectedness between language and culture becomes even more complicated when it involves the Gentile converts’ experience of the God of Israel influenced by their linguistic and cultural experiences. Given the reality of various degrees of their conversion to Judaism, Yong assumes that some converts to Judaism did not get circumcised while pledging to observe the whole law. Even further, others could have maintained the pagan belief in polytheism, and so

⁶ Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 197. The wordings overlap with those in the following references. See Amos Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance: Pentecost, Intra-Christian Ecumenism and the Wider Oikoumene,” *International Review of Mission* 92, no. 366 (July 2003): 302; Amos Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness: Pneumatology, Truth, and the Religions,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 57, no. 1 (2004): 28.

⁷ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 197; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 302; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 28.

⁸ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 198; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 302; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 29.

they were not monotheists in the strictest sense. Yong contends: “This group of persons undoubtedly had fused (or were in the process of fusing) a variety of practices, values, customs and traditions into their Jewish identity.”⁹ Therefore, the Pentecost narrative draws “an intercultural encounter of wide magnitude.”¹⁰

Third, the Pentecost narrative implies a further connection, namely, “the connection between language, culture and religion.”¹¹ Yong raises a set of questions concerning whether the understanding of religion separated from language and culture is possible and, conversely, whether “linguistic, cultural or cultural-linguistic phenomena apart from religion” is possible.¹² While he does not provide reliable sources in support of his view, he answers that “in these various disciplines arguments are made about the interdependence of language and religion and of culture and religion.”¹³ Admittedly, a scholarly discussion about their correlations may engage in reflecting their recognizable differences. Yet, such academic achievement is foreign to the reality of their overlapping interconnectedness. A strict demarcation between them is an impossible task in light of human experience of them. Thus, Yong suggests that “implicit in the Pentecost narrative are significant and heretofore untapped resources for the intercultural and interreligious engagement.”¹⁴ Indeed, “the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit enables us to overcome the objectivistic dualism that appears (at least on the surface) to divide religious others

⁹ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 198; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 302; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 28.

¹⁰ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 198; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 302; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 29.

¹¹ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 198; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 302; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 29.

¹² Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 198; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 303; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 29.

¹³ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 198; Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 303; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 29.

¹⁴ Yong, “As the Spirit Gives Utterance,” 303.

from ourselves.”¹⁵

Yong anticipates an objection to his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism that manifests itself in his understanding of the narrative of the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh. Peter’s utterance seems to rebut Yong’s proposal of Pentecostal inclusivism because it affirms the normativity of the preached gospel from without as the causal means of God’s special calling in the realization of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39). Yong seems to avoid dealing with Peter’s exclusivistic remark. He rather calls attention to the equivalence between the phrase, “all who are far off . . . for all” and Joel’s language, “all flesh” (Joel 2:28), to which Peter referred in demonstrating the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on sons and daughters, young and old, and slave and free (Acts 2:17–18; cf. Joel 2:28–29). On the ground of this comprehensiveness of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit in its application to all flesh, Yong affirms its realized aspect: “the Spirit . . . is already poured out on all flesh.”¹⁶ The implication of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh at Pentecost is the universal invitation to the partaking of it in the last days. In Yong’s words, “all people are invited to be filled with the Spirit who is already poured out on all flesh; followers of Jesus in particular are invited to life in the fulness of his Spirit in the world . . . We, and perhaps our neighbors as well, even those in other faiths, might participate in this last days outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh.”¹⁷ Again, “None were excluded from Jesus’s baptism in the Spirit; all are invited to participate in God’s work of

¹⁵ Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 30.

¹⁶ Amos Yong, “The Wide, Wide World of the Holy Spirit: A Rejoinder to Jack Levison,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 32, no. 1 (2012): 112.

¹⁷ Yong, “The Wide, Wide World of the Holy Spirit,” 112.

salvation and reconciliation.”¹⁸

Yong’s contention of salvation as the human partaking of God’s redemptive work is germane to his discussion about the relation between the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh and its soteriological implication. He makes an explicit statement that “the Day of Pentecost’s outpouring of the Spirit is deeply soteriological In fact, Peter’s “Pentecostal sermon” (drawing from the prophet Joel, as recorded by St. Luke), proclaims the intertwining of the work of the Spirit and the salvation of the world.”¹⁹ As the ascended Christ poured out the Holy Spirit on the world, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ in the unfolding of the divine plan of redemption. The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ is redemptively at work at a cosmic level—“in the heavens above . . . on the earth below” (Acts 2:19)—far beyond the world. The saving work of the Holy Spirit extends to the whole cosmos, to “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord” (v. 21; cf. Joel 2:32). In this sense, an approach to the understanding of the application of the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit within the framework of human response is “a false one.”²⁰

There seems to be a tie between the possibility of the religious others’ participating in the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh, which is redemptively operative, and the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in their religious traditions outside the church. Yong’s conviction of the presence and agency of the Holy

¹⁸ Amos Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 101.

¹⁹ Amos Yong, “*Creatio Spiritus* and the Spirit of Christ: Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Creation,” in *Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith*, ed. Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Beth Felker Jones (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 173.

²⁰ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 120. Admittedly, Yong would raise an objection to my understanding of his intended meaning in this text. Obviously, he did not invest his discussion about human response in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit in the application of salvation. He rather stated that “the dichotomy between salvation as being of God and salvation as demanding human response is a false one.” However, considering my flow of interactions with Yong’s Pentecostal inclusivism above, I do not believe it inappropriate to discuss his view of the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit within his overall judgment about human response.

Spirit in other religious traditions beyond the church has its foundation in the scriptural text of Jesus's words: "the wind [the Spirit] blows wherever it pleases" (John 3:8).²¹

Yong comments on the text:

The Spirit shows up at the most unpredictable moments to do the most disconcerting work at the most unexpected places. The Spirit blows as a mighty rushing wind wherever the Spirit pleases. The Spirit's path cannot be traced, nor can the Spirit's destination be discerned. Yet all who are touched recognize that they have encountered something beyond themselves.²²

Accordingly, an understanding of the salvific presence and activity of the Holy Spirit within the boundaries of the institutional forms of the church is at odds with the scriptural teaching of the Spirit's sovereignty that manifests itself in his unfathomable presence and activity analogous to the blowing of the wind.²³ Thus, Yong affirms that the Holy Spirit blows in the world of religions outside the church.²⁴

Yong incorporates the concept of the catholicity of the church into a discussion about its relation to the reality of other religious traditions in which the Holy Spirit is universally present and active outside the church. His envisioning of the catholicity of the church "alongside of, but yet as interfacing with, the great religious and wisdom traditions of the world" consists in his concept of the church as a multilingual and

²¹ Indeed, Yong draws on John 3:8 in his writings to support his argument of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the world of religions outside the church. See Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 21–22; Amos Yong, "'Not Knowing Where the Wind Blows . . .': On Envisioning a Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology of Religions," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14 (April 1999): 100; Amos Yong, *Mission After Pentecost: The Witness of the Spirit From Genesis to Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 252; Yong, "The Spirit Bears Witness," 38.

²² Yong, "'Not Knowing Where the Wind Blows,'" 100.

²³ Obviously, Yong's statement finds support in his understanding of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh "across the dimensions of both space . . . and time." See Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 40.

²⁴ It seems that Yong refuses to characterize the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the non-Christian religions as being explicitly salvific. As was shown above, his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions does not so much focus on the dispute over whether they are salvific but aims to propose that an engagement in the discernment of the Spirit(s) in them would entail the assessment of them in light of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in a redemptive term. It seems that Yong holds this tension throughout his argumentation of his understanding of a pneumatological theology of religions.

multicultural reality that is inextricably related to multi-religious traditions.²⁵

Notwithstanding the relevance of the catholicity of the church to the multiplicity of other living faiths, Yong fully acknowledges the necessity of “the individual confession of Jesus and participation in his body” for the realization of the catholicity of the church.²⁶ Yet, his acknowledgement is a foil for his argument of the work of the Holy Spirit in engendering the confession and participation apart from the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel within “mystical understandings of the church” to which he seems to subscribe.²⁷

According to Yong’s understanding of the church as the spiritual body of Christ, mystical union or spiritual union with Christ defines the membership of the church. This position minimally has its basis on the three following rationales: (1) the ontological normativity of Christ for salvation, and yet the coming of Christ into the world as the true light for the enlightenment of all people (John 1:9); (2) God’s universal salvific will that is reflected upon his desire of universal repentance and his redemption by grace through faith (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9; cf. Heb 11:6); and (3) the nature of God’s righteous judgment meted out to each human being in proportion to their respective response to the light that they had (cf. Rom 2:14–16; Acts 10:35; Matt 25:31–46). Hence, human beings have varying degrees of knowledge of Christ; simultaneously, they form a wide range of relationship with him. Thus, the church as the mystical body of Christ consists of three groups of members in the wide spectrum of knowledge of Christ. At one end of the spectrum are Christians explicitly confessing their faith in Christ and repenting

²⁵ Amos Yong, *Learning Theology: Tracking the Spirit of Christian Faith* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018), 84. Yong avoided the word “interconnectedness” to express the relation of religion to language and culture in the discussion above. Rather, he mildly spoke of it as relatedness. Nonetheless, this project does hold that he had in mind the idea of interconnection between language, culture, and religion according to his foregoing argument that the incipient church at Pentecost was presumably a multicultural, multilingual, and even multireligious reality.

²⁶ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 146.

²⁷ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 146.

of sins entailed by the epistemological appropriation of his person and work through the hearing and receiving of the spoken gospel. At the other end are those who have never heard of Jesus or the gospel. And somewhere in between are “those having varying degrees of orthodox and heterodox ideas.”²⁸ Therefore, according to Yong’s understanding of the church as the spiritual body of Christ, “the true church of Jesus Christ must exceed those who have conscious knowledge of, and relationship with, Jesus and include all those who through the grace of God are in some kind of mystical or spiritual union with him.”²⁹ Again, “the mystical and universal body of Christ would include the entire spectrum from all those who explicitly confess his name to all who may not be knowledgeable about Jesus but are spiritually united with him by the power of the Holy Spirit.”³⁰

Then, according to the mystical view of the church that Yong likely entertains, the constitution of the membership of the church catholic purely depends upon the work of the Holy Spirit who is universally present in the non-Christian religions and who is poured out on their members. In this sense, Yong proposes that John’s language—“other sheep that are not of this sheep pen . . . [but who] will listen to my voice” (John 10:16)—refers to the members of other living faiths whose possible incorporation into spiritual union with Christ depends on “pneumatological dimension of the Spirit bearing Jesus’s

²⁸ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 130. Though Yong did not employ religious others to designate those in between, this project strongly sustains that his phrase “those having varying degrees of orthodox and heterodox ideas” refer to the members of other religious traditions.

²⁹ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 130. Yong rightly spoke of this view of the church as being called soteriological inclusivism.

³⁰ Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 130. As mentioned above, Yong does not likely say that he would support this view of the church as the mystical body of Christ. However, as he is close to an inclusivist in soteriological discussion, his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions interacts within inclusivism minimally. Further, in terms of his discussion and understanding of the catholicity of the church, he more than likely holds to the concept of the church as the mystical or spiritual body of Christ as was shown above.

witness.”³¹ The Holy Spirit who is poured out on the adherents of the non-Christian religions is “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17; 15:26; cf. 1 John 5:6) testifying to the truth and leading them into all the truth. Religious others might be “those who do the will of God in Christ without even recognizing or knowing him (Matt 25:34–40).”³² They might be “the people of God as communing in the Spirit.”³³

In this section, this project demonstrated that Yong’s soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism manifests itself in his understanding of the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh as the ground of his concept of a theology of religions from the standpoint of pneumatology. In the following section, this project will engage in rehearsing his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions that is grounded upon his contention of the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh.

Yong’s Pneumatological Theology of Religions

Having in mind his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism as was evident in his understanding of the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh encompassing the adherents of other living faiths, we turn to Yong’s discussion of a pneumatological theology of religions.³⁴ He accounts for a

³¹ Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 35. For Yong, the possibility of the work of the Holy Spirit in bearing witness to non-Christians lies in another work of the Holy Spirit in the conception of Christ associated with the coming of Christ for universal enlightenment of all people. Because Yong sees that all human beings live and have their being in the Spirit of God (Acts 17:28), the Holy Spirit is the ground for religious others to be associated with the truth of Christ as the true light of the world.

³² Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology*, 183–84.

³³ Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology*, 184.

³⁴ Though he does not explicitly identify himself as a pneumatological inclusivist, Yong’s approach to the members of other living faiths in terms of the possibility of their salvation is in the broadest sense pneumatologically inclusivistic. Concerning his soteriological position as being close to, or being equivalent to, inclusivism from pneumatological standpoint, see Yong, “Not Knowing Where the Wind Blows,” 91, 91n25, 106–7, 112; Amos Yong, “Whither Theological Inclusivism? The Development and Critique of an Evangelical Theology of Religions,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 71, no. 4. (October 1999): 328, 346; Amos Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency: Toward a Foundational Pneumatology,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3, no. 2 (July 2000): 186; Yong, “The Spirit Bears Witness,” 34–36,

pneumatological theology of religions this way: “a pneumatological theology of religions begins with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the universal presence and activity of God, and attempts to understand the world of the religions within that universal framework.”³⁵ Yong’s theology of religions from a pneumatological standpoint poses a novel approach to the religions as it does not center on the question of whether they are salvific but it “asks whether or not and how, if so, the religions are divinely providential instruments designed for various purposes.”³⁶ Later he offers a positive answer to his inquiry: “The religions of the world, like everything else that exists, are providentially sustained by the Spirit of God for divine purposes.”³⁷ His rationale for asserting God’s ordaining of the religions as part of fulfilling his divine purposes consists in his belief in God’s governance over all that he has made in harmony with his “permissive or active will toward ultimately divine purposes centered around the full revelation of Jesus Christ and the impending kingdom of God.”³⁸ Thus, a pneumatological approach to the diversity of other faiths “enables an inclusive methodology and hermeneutic” given that the Holy Spirit is universally active and present in the non-Christian religions to some extent.³⁹

Yong further develops his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions.

38; Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” 180, 188; Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 27; Amos Yong, “Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Religions: A Pentecostal-Evangelical and Missiological Elaboration,” *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 40, no. 4 (October 2016): 299.

³⁵ Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” 176. See also Robert P. Menzies, “The Nature of Pentecostal Theology: A Response to Velli-Matti Kärkkäinen and Amos Yong,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 26, no. 2 (2017): 207.

³⁶ Amos Yong, “The Holy Spirit and the World Religions: On the Christian Discernment of Spirit(s) ‘After’ Buddhism,” *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 24 (2004): 191.

³⁷ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 46. Seen in the case of the good Samaritan who exhibited the love of God and a Jew thought to be a religious other (Luke 10:25–37), such purposes for Christians might include (1) their learning from the members of other living faiths whom they reckoned as “cultic, irreligious, or even demonic,” (2) the recognition of them as being “capable of demonstrating selfless love,” (3) “the possibility of Jesus meeting [them] in religious others,” and (4) the acknowledgement of the possibility of their inheritance of eternal life on the condition of their love of God and neighbors. Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 243, 241–44.

³⁸ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 46.

³⁹ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 46.

I reiterate his earlier statement: “a pneumatological theology of religions begins with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the universal presence and activity of God, and attempts to understand the world of the religions within that universal framework.”⁴⁰ This statement requires two elaborations. First, a pneumatological theology of religions involves “the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the universal presence and activity of God.” This phrase represents his concept of a foundational pneumatology that develops “a theology of the Holy Spirit which is able to account for the presence and activity of God in the world.”⁴¹ And a theology of the Holy Spirit “emerges out of Christian experience of God’s presence and activity in the world while . . . it enables us to experience that presence and activity in more precise, intense, and true ways.”⁴² However, a theology of the Holy Spirit is not the domain of Christian reflections alone; it also encompasses all human beings because of their shared experience of God’s presence and activity with varying degrees tied to the Holy Spirit as the universal presence and activity of God. Yong affirms: “What is true of the Holy Spirit in a foundational pneumatology cannot be true only for Christians but has to be relevant to, and perhaps compelling for, all.”⁴³

With his conviction of the relevance of a theology of the Holy Spirit to all human beings in terms of their universal experience of God’s presence and activity as background, Yong states that the object of a foundational pneumatology “is to provide

⁴⁰ Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” 176.

⁴¹ For Yong’s interactions with Donald L. Gelpi and David Tracy for their theoretical influences over his formulation of a pneumatological foundation, see Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 167–72; Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 58–63; Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 99–103. The wordings in these three references are nearly identical with one another.

⁴² Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 65; Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 174; Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 103. The wordings in these three references are nearly the same as one another.

⁴³ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 64–65; Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 172–73.

theological reflection on the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁴ Such theological reflection on the Holy Spirit involves “making meaningful *and* truthful statements about the Holy Spirit—God’s way of being in and transforming the world—that have application to the widest possible audience.”⁴⁵ Or, minimally, one can involve oneself in a foundational pneumatology as one enters into “theological conversation [with] any person or public, regardless of cultural-linguistic-religious background, interested in reflecting on and discussing the notion of divine presence and activity.”⁴⁶

Here Yong raises a question of the very possibility of a theological engagement that is governed by his concept of a foundational pneumatology. He is positive about his inquiry. His optimism lies in a “pneumatological imagination” as the cause of his concept of a foundational pneumatology.⁴⁷ A pneumatological imagination indicates “a way of seeing God, self, and world that is inspired by the (Christian) experience of the Spirit.”⁴⁸ In a narrower sense, a pneumatological imagination refers to “a way of seeing God, self, and world that is inspired by the (Pentecostal and charismatic) experience of the Spirit.”⁴⁹ Yong argues that there would be little difficulty in acknowledging the Holy Spirit as the universal presence and activity of God in the world within the scope of a pneumatological imagination arising from the Pentecostal-

⁴⁴ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 66; Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 175.

⁴⁵ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 67 (Emphasis original); Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 175.

⁴⁶ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 67.

⁴⁷ Yong acknowledges that the term “pneumatological imagination” came from Lucien Richard who invented it as he was reading the first draft of Yong’s current monograph *Discerning the Spirit(s)*. Richard gave Yong permission to claim the term as his own. See Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 102n6. Concerning his view of the pneumatological imagination as the cause of a foundational pneumatology, see Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 186.

⁴⁸ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 64.

⁴⁹ Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 173; Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 102. Again, Yong holds that the Pentecostal-charismatic experience provides an untapped resource for a pneumatological approach to the diversity of the non-Christian religions. See Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 147.

charismatic experience of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁰ Thus, a pneumatological imagination on the part of the Pentecostal-charismatic community nurtured by their Pentecostal-charismatic experience of the Holy Spirit is apt for engaging in the enterprise of developing a foundational pneumatology.⁵¹

Second, a pneumatological theology of religions involves understanding other living faiths in the world within Yong's concept of a foundational pneumatology informed by a pneumatological imagination. His acknowledgement of the doctrine of common grace supports the adequacy of his concept of a foundational pneumatology as a framework of engaging in interreligious encounters: the pneumatological imagination "only asserts what has long been affirmed by the traditional doctrine of common grace: that human life and experience is dependent only on the prevenient presence and activity of God through the Holy Spirit."⁵² Yong demands attentiveness "for possible experience

⁵⁰ Yong's reference to the Pentecostal-charismatic experience indicates the holistic manifestations of the Holy Spirit to Christians who have experienced the Spirit baptism since the early twentieth century at Azusa Street down to the present day "via the charismatic renewal, Third Wave, and Toronto Blessing movements." Amos Yong, "The Marks of the Church: A Pentecostal Re-Reading," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 26, no. 1 (January 2002): 61; Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 145; Kirsteen Kim, "'Discerning Spirit' or 'Discerning the Spirits'? Two Paradigms of Engaged Pneumatology Illustrated by the Works of T. Gorringer and A. Yong," *Communio Viatorum* 60, no. 1 (2018): 36–37. Such comprehensive manifestations of the Holy Spirit as the entailment of Spirit baptism includes speaking in tongues or glossolalia, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, empowerment in evangelism, progressive or radical transformation in both domains of individuals and communities, and more. See Yong, "'Not Knowing Where the Wind Blows,'" 96; Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 171.

⁵¹ Again, Yong identifies the experience of the Holy Spirit as the source that binds Pentecostals and charismatics together. In his expression, their mutual experience of the Holy Spirit inspires a pneumatological imagination. Further, he states that their experience of the Holy Spirit and a pneumatological imagination are mutually informing, thus offering the ground for a collaborative approach to religious others. See Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 161.

⁵² Yong, "On Divine Presence and Divine Agency," 186; Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 182. It is unlikely that Yong used the word "prevenient" in the sense of coming before salvation. It is more likely that he does not distinguish between common grace and prevenient presence and activity of God that renders possible a foundational pneumatology as a framework for interreligious encounters. Generally, Augustinian and Reformed tradition understood prevenient grace as being equivalent to irresistible grace which is efficacious for the salvation of the elect to whom it is given. On the contrary, Arminian and Wesleyan tradition viewed it as being equivalent to resistible grace in the sense that human beings to whom it is universally given are freely able to reject the offer of salvation. See Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), s.v. "prevenient grace"; Richard Mouw, "Common Grace," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 197; Keith L. Johnson, "Grace," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 357–58; William W. Combs, "Does the Bible Teach Prevenient Grace?" *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 10, no 1 (2005): 3–4.

of the Spirit and alternative specifications of the pneumatological imagination outside of explicitly [Pentecostal-charismatic] or even Christian contexts.”⁵³ Along this line of theological reasoning, he shows a firm conviction of a foundational pneumatology as a possible approach to exploring and discussing interreligious differences that manifest themselves in each religious tradition and that are experienced among religious adherents. Specifically, a pneumatological theology of religions involves the three following strategies of a foundational pneumatology in interreligious encounters.⁵⁴

First, a foundational pneumatology underscores interreligious commonalities that are recognizable in each religious quest, with an aim for the emergence of comparative categories to enhance interreligious dialogues. Yong believes that this process of a foundational pneumatology will engender the establishment of theological nuances, the identification of issues that are irreconcilable yet respected, and the acknowledgment of interreligious harmonies and differences. Further, this process has its basis on the recognition that all religions pursue God as their supreme object or ultimate reality, no matter what different traditions they entertain. The inevitable differences between religious traditions cannot nullify the universal experience of divine presence and activity mediated by the Holy Spirit.

Second, a foundational pneumatology is an endeavor to acknowledge that each religious tradition has its own system through which to formulate its religious truth on its own terms.⁵⁵ For example, concerning the doctrine of afterlife, Buddhists sustain a conviction of reincarnation or Nirvana while Christians hold belief in heaven or hell.

⁵³ Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 186; Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 182.

⁵⁴ This project put into order the strategies of a foundational pneumatology for the sake of enhancing readers’ comprehension of Yong’s discussion of this part. The strategies for interreligious encounters are completely his. This project delivers them with paraphrases. See Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 178–80; Yong, *Beyond Impasse*, 69–72. The two resources entirely overlap.

⁵⁵ James R. A. Merrick agrees with this point of interpretation of this project of Yong’s foundational pneumatology. See James R. A. Merrick, “The Spirit of Truth as Agent in False Religions? A Critique of Amos Yong’s Pneumatological Theology of Religions with Reference to Current Trends,” *Trinity Journal* 29, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 109.

Each claim is right as long as it is viewed within the framework of its own religious system. On the contrary, given that both claims cannot be simultaneously right when one claim is measured against the framework of the other religious system, either the Buddhist or the Christian claim is right and the other is wrong; indeed, “their ‘truths’ are operative *only* within their respective framework and are meaningless without.”⁵⁶ In this sense, Christian pneumatology pertains to Christians alone affiliated with Christian tradition in seeking Christian truth because it cannot—on its own terms—properly deal with truth claims of other religious traditions outside its own system. Thus, Yong suggests that the task of a foundational pneumatology be to put each religious system into the test of whether its truth claims are in harmony with its internal components; simultaneously, the enterprise of a foundational pneumatology is to put each religious system into competition against the other, resulting in adjudicating which religious system does more justice to its truth claims. He encapsulates his proposal this way: “My point is that while Christians, like everyone else, can only begin with what they have, meaningful participation in the interreligious dialogue requires that one be open at least to assessing other traditions, including their criteria and norms, on their terms.”⁵⁷ Again, the viability of the project of a foundational pneumatology is inextricable from Yong’s conviction of the Holy Spirit mediating divine presence and activity to other living faiths in the whole world for the universal experience of it on the part of their adherents.

Third, a foundational pneumatology is open to interreligious encounters with two complementary principles in mind: the acknowledgement of fallibility of human knowledge and commitment to truth. On the one hand, “Such openness entails vulnerability to criticism and correction,” given that truth claims of each religious

⁵⁶ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 70 (Emphasis original); Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 178–79.

⁵⁷ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 173.

tradition are subject to incomplete nature of human knowledge.⁵⁸ On the other hand, commitment to truth is a more significant principle in the task of a foundational pneumatology. Indeed, the rationale for upholding truth claims against criticism consists in the respective verity of those truth claims which adherents hold within their own religious tradition. The practice of a foundational pneumatology with these two principles will entail a pneumatological theology of religions which becomes “globally accountable and applicable . . . and makes itself contextually particular to each religious-cultural-linguistic tradition.”⁵⁹ The success of a pneumatological approach to the pluralism of religious otherness depends upon interreligious dialogues within the scope of a foundational pneumatology. In this sense, a foundational pneumatology is contextual and missionary as it is universally relevant to all members of all religious traditions in the whole world. It encompasses all truth claims.⁶⁰ It is universally applicable to all religious traditions. Yong avers: “It follows from the foundational pneumatology that the Spirit is present and active in some way in the non-Christian faiths as well.”⁶¹

In this section, this project discussed Yong’s concept of a theology of religions that is established upon his assertion of the universal application of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh including religious others. In the next section, this project will engage in rehearsing Yong’s proposal of the task of discerning the Holy Spirit in other religious traditions as a goal of his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions in keeping with his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism.

⁵⁸ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 71; Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 179.

⁵⁹ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 71; Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 180.

⁶⁰ Obviously, Yong’s statement of the universal relevance of the task of a foundational pneumatology to all truth claims of the non-Christian faiths is foreign to pluralism, a soteriological position that rejects the finality of salvation in Jesus Christ and holds the multiplicity of salvific paths to God in proportion to religious traditions. Yong in no way denies the exclusiveness and finality of Jesus Christ regarding the salvation of sinners. However, as mentioned earlier, he refuses to admit the normativity of the hearing and appropriating of the preached gospel as the indispensable means in the application of salvation. See Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 27.

⁶¹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 30.

The Discernment of the Spirit(s) in the World of Religions

Yong proposes the Christian and Pentecostal-charismatic task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and that of other spirits in the non-Christian religions as a goal of a pneumatological theology of religions in tandem with his envisioning of Pentecostal inclusivism. He holds that the practicing of assessment of religious others concerning whether the Holy Spirit or other spirits are present and active in them is “the overarching goal of a pneumatological theology of religions.”⁶² And because his understanding of a pneumatological approach to the diversity of religions is grounded upon the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh encompassing the members of other religious traditions in universal scope, he suggests that “Pentecost provides not just an anthropological commonality but a theological norm for assessing the encounter between faiths.”⁶³ Yet, the theological norm of the narrative of Pentecost belongs to norms and criteria which are subject to human fallible understanding of the unpredictable nature of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit like that of the blowing of the wind. In this sense, Yong utters a caveat that his suggested norm is not the decisive one with which to discern the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits.

Specifically, Yong likely has in mind “how Christ is proclaimed and where the Spirit’s presence and activity might be manifest” as the theological norm for the discernment in keeping with his contention of the reality of the interconnectedness of language, culture, and religion that is implied in the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh.⁶⁴ Obviously, the Pentecostal narrative

⁶² Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 175; see also Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 180.

⁶³ Yong, “A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World,” 188.

⁶⁴ Yong, “Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Religions,” 300.

envisions that human cultures and religious traditions can be mediums for “declaring the wonders of God” (Acts 2:11) in the analogous way that human languages did as the entailment of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh. Nonetheless, this vision does not lead to an affirmation that “either linguistic or cultural, much less religious, traditions are wholesale conduits of divine salvation in Jesus Christ.”⁶⁵ The rationale for this statement consists in the Christian assumption that in addition to the Holy Spirit “other spirits, perhaps unholy ones—human, institutional, even demonic—are operative in the world in general and in the religions particularly.”⁶⁶ And so, Yong argues that the goal of a pneumatological theology of religions is to engage in putting into practice John’s injunction to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1).

John’s stated norm or criterion for discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits is Christocentric: “every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist” (v. 3). Because discerning the Holy Spirit is a Christological-centered-practice, the task of discernment becomes complex within the context of interreligious encounters.⁶⁷ Yong’s following questions well reflect this intricateness: “is it possible that the religions are infused with general revelation? Is it possible that the religions mediate salvation? What is good, noble, true, or even salvific about the religions?”⁶⁸ He involves the last question with his

⁶⁵ Yong, “Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Religions,” 300.

⁶⁶ Yong, “The Holy Spirit and the World Religion,” 191. See also Yong, “On Divine Presence and Divine Agency,” 180.

⁶⁷ However, Yong adamantly holds to Christ-centeredness in the complicated task of discerning the Holy Spirit and other spirits within the context of interreligious encounters. Indeed, discerning the Holy Spirit is essentially indissoluble from discerning Jesus Christ. And his Christocentric attitude in approaching the question of discerning the Holy Spirit is germane to his vision of inclusivism which this project reckons as Pentecostal inclusivism. And so, his proposal within Christologically restricted, yet pneumatologically opened system of salvation is minimally to “find a via media between the Jesus of history and the Christ of existential faith; between the Jesus of the creeds/confessions and the eschatological/anticipated Christ; between the particularity of Jesus the Nazarene and the universality of the logos spermatikos, “the true light, which enlightens everyone” (John 1:9).” Yong, “The Holy Spirit and the World Religions,” 203.

⁶⁸ Yong, “Whither Theological Inclusivism?” 346. The following reference contains the same wordings as above. Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 170.

argumentation of discerning the Holy Spirit and other spirits. He focuses the task of discernment not so much on identifying what is good, true, noble, and salvific in other living faiths but on comprehending “how goodness, truth, nobility, and salvation as Christians understand them are or are not applicable to the various religions.”⁶⁹ His suggested discernment of the Holy Spirit and other spirits in the non-Christian religious traditions involves two levels of approach, the Christian discernment on the one hand, and the Pentecostal-charismatic discernment, on the other hand.⁷⁰

Concerning the Christian engagement in discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in the non-Christian religions, this approach involves “an indissoluble two-part process of interpretation and comparison.”⁷¹ First, Christians need to engage in a sustained dialogue with religious others “in order to develop the criteria and comparative methodology required for discerning what is good, true, and noble (and perhaps even salvific?) in other traditions.”⁷² Other religious partners in dialogue are “to define the parameters and categories of their traditions.”⁷³ If the collected data is insufficient, then Christians are to sustain an openness to drawing attention to many voices germane to the assessment of other religious traditions. Throughout the dialogical sessions, Christians need to listen emphatically to religious others, thus creating the atmosphere of respect of the integrity of their religious traditions

⁶⁹ Yong, “Whither Theological Inclusivism?” 347; Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 171–72.

⁷⁰ This project admits that it did not find Yong discussing explicitly the assessment of other living faiths for discerning the Holy Spirit and other spirits on two different levels of approach, that is, the Christian one and the Pentecostal-charismatic one. Yet, after analysis and synthesis of his writings on the argumentation of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit, this project observed his dealing with the question of the discernment of the Holy Spirit and other spirits more comprehensive than the task of the Pentecostal-charismatic engagement alone. Obviously, he had in mind Christians in general for his discussion about their engagement in assessing other religious traditions for discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. And so, this project involved Christian discernment on the one hand and the Pentecostal-charismatic discernment on the other hand as two levels of approach to his discussion about discerning the Holy Spirit and other spirits.

⁷¹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 141.

⁷² Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 174.

⁷³ Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 178.

and values which they addressed on their own terms.

Second, Christians can now engage in identifying “categories of comparison and contrast,” thus understanding and adjudicating “contrary truth claims” that emerge from that engagement.⁷⁴ Yong sees this second step “imperative since the task of discerning the Spirit involves the comparison and contrasts of phenomena in diverse religio-cultural traditions.”⁷⁵ As a result of undertaking this second process, Christians “can not only distinguish . . . between different conceptions of spirit(s), but make some preliminary decisions about truth or falsity.”⁷⁶ Yong’s following statement captures the substance of his understanding of the Christian engagement in assessing other religious traditions for the outcome of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in them: “The goal in a pneumatological approach to the religions is to find sufficient analogues in other traditions to the Christian doctrine of Holy Spirit such that we are put in a position to pursue the comparative task and affirm or deny the Spirit’s presence or activity.”⁷⁷

Concerning the Pentecostal-charismatic engagement in discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and that of other spirits in the non-Christian religions, Yong minimally proposes “a three-tiered process of discernment—phenomenological-experiential, moral-ethical and theological-soteriological.”⁷⁸ First, phenomenological and

⁷⁴ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 141–42. Such intersecting categories include creation, re-creation, and final creation. See Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 36–42. See also Gregg R. Allison and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2020), 473; Merrick, “The Spirit of Truth as Agent in False Religions?,” 112.

⁷⁵ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 143.

⁷⁶ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 142.

⁷⁷ See Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 143.

⁷⁸ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 250. Yong seems to hold that the Pentecostal-charismatics gain better access to the task for identifying criteria through which to discern the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and that of other spirits by virtue of his conviction of their experience of the Holy Spirit in keeping with Spirit baptism. He assumes that, through their experience of the Holy Spirit, they may be equipped with “insights into the nature of spiritual experiences which will allow them both to cross over into the religious experiences of others and to discern more acutely the nature of the phenomena in question.” See Yong, “Not Knowing Where the Wind Blows,” 100.

experiential discernment on the part of the Pentecostal-charismatics involves centering on “the comparative category of religious experience.”⁷⁹ In the course of identifying the categories of comparison and contrast, the Pentecostal-charismatics need to engage in discernment that “involves the entire range of phenomena that is operative in the rituals, acts and symbols of religious experience.”⁸⁰ Their primary task while engaging in this initial level of discernment is to raise questions concerning not so much the nature of those religious rituals, acts, and symbols, but how non-Christians experience them in which they engage. Yong admits that the Pentecostal-charismatics’ assessment of whether the Holy Spirit is present in other religious Christians on this level of phenomenological and experiential discernment will be diverse partly because of the subjective nature of religious experience and partly because of the fallible nature of human understanding in the process.⁸¹ Yet, he assumes that Pentecostal-charismatics might make a tentatively positive response to their assessment, that is, the recognition of the presence of the Holy Spirit in other religious traditions, given that they achieve success in demonstrating how religious experience engendered transformation on the part of religious others.

Second, moral and ethical discernment on the part of the Pentecostal-charismatics involves centering on “the comparative category of religious utility” while looking for “concrete signs that follow claims of experiencing the transcendent.”⁸² Yong’s key term in his argumentation of this middle level of discernment is “religious

⁷⁹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 251. Yong underscores the gift of discernment on the part of the Pentecostal-charismatic theologians throughout the process of discernment. Thus, they can “determine where and when the Holy Spirit, in contradistinction to other spirits, is present, as well as where, when and how (if at all) the Spirit is active in the other traditions.” Yong, “Not Knowing Where the Wind Blows,” 104.

⁸⁰ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 251.

⁸¹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 251.

⁸² Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 251. Yong’s term “religious utility” refers to “the gifts and fruits of the Spirit manifest in personal lives and displayed in the socio-ethical realm.” Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 276.

symbols.”⁸³ The Pentecostal-charismatics engaging in this discernment need to be capable of finding answers to how both religious individuals and communities make use of religious symbols and how those symbols bring about moral and ethical transformation in them. If they can offer a positive answer to their inquiry, those religious symbols might indicate “signs of the Spirit . . . that Pentecostals and charismatics search for . . . in the circumstances of history, in the practice of their faith, and in the manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit.”⁸⁴ Still, Yong affirms that the biblical and Christological axioms are normative for evaluating such moral and ethical uprightness. But this statement in no way renders null and void his contention of the ambiguity of the comparative categories of religious praxis because such biblical and Christological norms are pneumatologically driven.

Yong further raises the pivotal question as to “whether or not [the comparative categories of religious utility] are able to register features of importance in other traditions?”⁸⁵ Specifically, “is there . . . evidence of the Spirit’s activity in the non-Christian faiths whereby lives are made whole and communal relationships are continually mended, formed and strengthened?”⁸⁶ The Pentecostal-charismatics can offer either answer. If they give a positive response, then they might evaluate that the Holy

⁸³ Yong’s phrase “religious symbols” is analogous in concept to his reference to symbols of the Holy Spirit like breath, wind, fire, living water, dove, and more. Although religious symbols of each religious tradition might overlap with those of others, what they refer to can be starkly different from what others do. In this sense, religious symbols are subject to, and inseparable from, entire system of each religious tradition. Along this line, one does justice to each religious tradition only if one identifies religious symbols and what they signify within that system on its own terms. This approach is crucial in Yong’s engagement in a pneumatological theology of religious pluralism. For more discussion, see Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 96–148.

⁸⁴ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 252. Obviously, Yong in no way identified religious symbols that engendered moral and ethical transformation with signs of the Spirit in the flow of his argument; he abruptly shifted his attention to signs of the Spirit without further developing the relation of religious symbols and signs of the Spirit. Nonetheless, within the context of his whole argument of the comparative category of religious utility, Yong likely attempts to make an equivalence between religious symbols and signs of the Spirit, or minimally to relate the former to the latter.

⁸⁵ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 253.

⁸⁶ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 253.

Spirit is—in varying degrees—active in both domains of individuals and communities of the non-Christian traditions. If their response is negative, then the task of discernment is to continue for the sake of witness.

Third, theological and soteriological discernment on the part of the Pentecostal-charismatics involves centering on the question: “to what transcendental reality, if any, do religious symbols refer?”⁸⁷ The Pentecostal-charismatics engaging in this ultimate level of discernment is “to confront the theological truth question straight on.”⁸⁸ Yong sustains less certainty about the successful outcome of this discernment than he had about that of two lower levels of discernment. His respective skepticism consists in the inevitable reality that each religious tradition including Christianity claims to have its own supreme being to which each religious symbol refers within each religious system. Therefore, “The theological and soteriological norms that should be applied here are also, at least for Christians (as well as Jews and Muslims), eschatological in that they await complete illumination beyond our respective horizons.”⁸⁹

In this section, this project engaged in demonstrating Yong’s proposal of the Christian and Pentecostal-charismatic task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and that of other spirits in the non-Christian religions as a goal of a pneumatological theology of religions in harmony with his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism.

Assessment

In the previous section, this project engaged in rehearsing the nature of Yong’s Pentecostal inclusivism, that is, the salvation of all flesh upon whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out. This discussion set forth his understanding of the narrative of the

⁸⁷ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 254.

⁸⁸ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 254.

⁸⁹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 254.

Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh as the ground of his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions which demands as its goal the task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in other religious traditions. In the following section, this project will engage in assessing the polemic of Yong's soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism tied to his contention of (1) the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on non-Christians; (2) their universal experience of the presence and activity of God through the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity in their religious traditions, and (3) the feasibility of the task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in them.

The Realized Outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Religious Others

Yong envisions the possibility of salvation for religious others upon whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out from the day of Pentecost onwards in universal scope. He viewed "all flesh" (Acts 2:17; cf. Joel 2:28) to include the adherents of other living faiths. The rationale for their inclusion in all flesh lies in Yong's understanding of the Pentecost narrative that suggests the interconnectedness between language, culture, and religion.

Yong conceives of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit as being already realized on the part of religious others. Because the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit is salvific on a cosmic level, the Holy Spirit who is already poured out on them is at work in a possibly redemptive sense. Though non-Christians have not heard the gospel and had the knowledge of Christ, they hold a wide range of possible membership into the church catholic as the spiritual or mystical body of Christ to whom they are united in some extent by the mediatory work of the Holy Spirit. And so, they might be the people of God by virtue of the Holy Spirit who renders possible their relationship with God.

This project rebuts Yong's soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism. Specifically, the scriptural affirmation of the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel entailing saving faith in Christ and repentance of sins as being prerequisite for the realization of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant is contradictory to Yong's assertion of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on non-Christians for the possibility of their partaking of God's redemptive work and their incorporation into the church catholic in a wide range of relationship apart from their hearing and receiving of the spoken gospel. This objection draws attention to each aspect of pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation and constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant: (1) the necessity of the external calling of the preached gospel for the realization of the internal calling of the Holy Spirit effecting salvation; and (2) the hearing and appropriation of the spoken gospel entailing saving faith in Christ and repentance of sins as being the precondition for the realization of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that makes effective incorporation into the body of Christ.

First, the understanding of this project of the preached gospel from without as the necessary means in the realization of the internal calling of the Holy Spirit for salvation rejects Yong's contention. As rehearsed above, the salvation of God's new covenant people necessarily involves the realization of twofold aspects of God's calling within time: the general call of the gospel and the special call of the Holy Spirit. While the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit is essential for the achievement of God's drawing of his people to salvation, Scripture sustains a consistent teaching of the external calling of the preached gospel in a temporal time as being instrumental in the realization of the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit for rendering effective the appropriation of the knowledge of Christ leading to salvation (cf. Acts 16:13–15; 2 Thess 2:13–14). Thus, God's twofold callings are to be co-present in a temporal time of his irreversible summoning of his people to salvation.

This project draws attention to John 3:8 to which Yong refers as a key text in arguing the possibility of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in other religious traditions into which he blows like the wind. John locates this utterance of Jesus within the context of dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus the central theme of which is “born again” (John 3:3, 7) or “born of water and the Spirit” (v. 5), that is, regeneration or new birth made efficacious by the life-giving Holy Spirit (v. 6; cf. 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5–6).⁹⁰ With the new birth in view, Jesus employs the analogy of the wind that helps Nicodemus grasp the incomprehensible and uncontrollable nature of the work of the Holy Spirit in imparting new life that involves the transformation or renewal of nature: “The wind blows wherever it pleases . . . you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going” (v. 8).⁹¹ Nonetheless, the effects of the new birth wrought by the Holy Spirit are inevitable: “You hear its sound . . . So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (v. 8).

Jesus’s following expressions are pivotal in the discussion of the way the new birth is realized: “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him” (vv. 14–15). He identifies himself with the Son of Man “who came from heaven” (v. 13) to “be lifted up” (v. 14). His remark anticipates his crucifixion yet to come. Whoever believes in the crucified Jesus—“the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29)—will

⁹⁰ As rehearsed above, theologians see a parallel in meaning between being born again and the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit. See Gregg R. Allison and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2020), 369–74; Michael S. Horton, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit: God’s Perfecting Presence in Creation, Redemption, and Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 205; Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Theology of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 144, 214; Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*, Contours of Christian Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 118–20.

⁹¹ For the discussion on the unknowability and uncontrollability of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, see D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1991), 197–98. For a similar comment, see also Edward W. Klink, *John*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 216. Interestingly, Craig S. Keener argues that Jesus intended the analogy of the wind to be compared with those born of the Holy Spirit. And so, he emphasizes a parallel in nature between the origin and destiny of the Holy Spirit and that of the children of God born of him. See Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 1:555.

appropriate eternal life that is in him (v. 4). Indeed, they “shall not perish but have eternal life” (3:16). The receiving of the gift of eternal life is then contingent upon the finished cross-work of Jesus (Rom 6:23). This principle is arguably true for the new birth that Jesus incorporates into the account of the lifting up of the Son of Man.⁹² Being born again presupposes the consummation of his work on the cross. Here Scripture tells of one further element that is instrumentally prerequisite for, and logically prior to, the realization of regeneration and conversion: the new birth or “born again” is through the hearing of the preached gospel, equivalent to “the living and enduring word of God” (1 Pet 1:23; cf. Jas 1:18). Thus, the new birth and conversion presuppose the absolute necessity of the hearing of the spoken gospel of God’s agents as being logically antecedent to the course of their realization.

Therefore, according to the discussion of this project of John 3:8, Yong errs in his assertion that the Holy Spirit is present and operative in their traditions in some extent by virtue of the unpredictable nature of his presence and activity analogous to that of the wind which blows wherever it pleases. The Holy Spirit is in no way redemptively at work in illuminating religious others through his internal calling apart from the external calling of the preached gospel.

Second, the position of this project of the necessity of the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel entailing conversion in the realization of the outpouring of or baptism with the Holy Spirit for incorporation into the church catholic of the new covenant raises objection to Yong’s contention of the possibility of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on religious others for their spiritual union with Christ apart from the hearing and embracing of the spoken gospel. As discussed above, Scripture draws an established pattern in the realization of the outpouring of or baptism with the

⁹² Carson states: “The new birth, the acquisition of eternal life, has been grounded in the ‘lifting up’ of the Son (vv. 14–15).” See Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 204.

Holy Spirit within time: the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel, conversion, and the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit in consonance with the outpouring of or baptism with the Holy Spirit. Thus, the hearing of the gospel on the part of the people of God in a temporal time is the initial step of their shared experience of baptism with the Holy Spirit as the one and only entrance into the body of Christ.

This project calls attention to Jesus's utterance in John 10:16 to which Yong refers in contending the possibility of religious others' mystical union with Christ on the ground of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them apart from the hearing and receiving of the preached gospel. In the text, Jesus expresses: "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd" (v. 16). Though Yong understood "other sheep" as the members of other faith traditions who might be incorporated into "one flock" under the shepherding of Jesus, it is more likely that Jesus had in mind the Gentile believers with reference to other sheep.⁹³ Jesus affirms that the inclusion of the Gentile believers into the one people of God involves his calling and their positive response to it. Obviously, they are "the scattered children of God" for whom Jesus died (11:51–52; cf. 10:11, 15). Nonetheless, this reality of their being dispersed all over the nations of the world in no way nullifies the absolute necessity of their proper response to Jesus's calling that manifests itself in the general call of the gospel as the initial step of their inclusion into the new covenant people of God. This exclusivistic soteriology that is evident in the scriptural teachings holds true for religious others. Apart from their hearing and appropriation of the spoken gospel of God's agents, they can be neither converted, nor baptized with the Holy Spirit, nor incorporated into the body of Christ.

⁹³ On this point, see Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 388; Murray J. Harris, *John, The Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2015), 197–98; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:818–20; Edward W. Klink, *John*, 465–66; Gary M. Burge, *John, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 292.

Thus, Yong errs in his contention of the possibility of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on non-Christians with the result of their possible participation in God's redemptive work apart from the hearing and receiving of the preached gospel on their parts. His soteriological view of Pentecostal inclusivism for the possibility of salvation of religious others deviates from the explicit teachings of Scripture of the hearing of the preached gospel as the very beginning in the course of the realization of conversion and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for incorporation into God's new covenant people. The Holy Spirit is in no way poured out on non-Christians who have not heard the preached gospel.

The Holy Spirit as the Presence and Activity of God

Based on his understanding of the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh including religious others, Yong sets forth a pneumatological theology of religions. His concept of a theology of religions from pneumatological standpoint consists of twofold aspects: a foundational pneumatology and the comprehension of other religious tradition within the framework of a foundational pneumatology. First, a pneumatological theology of religions involves a foundational pneumatology which is to develop "a theology of the Holy Spirit which is able to account for the presence and activity of God in the world."⁹⁴ He holds a firm conviction of universal relevance of a theology of the Holy Spirit to all people due to the reality of their shared experience of the presence and activity of God in varying degrees mediated by the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity.

Second, a pneumatological theology of religions involves understanding the world of other living faiths within the framework of a foundational pneumatology. Specifically, Yong suggests the three strategies of a foundational pneumatology in the

⁹⁴ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 99.

task of understanding other religious traditions: (1) to emphasize common features in interreligious encounters and quests, with an aim for the establishment of comparative categories that help foster interfaith dialogues; (2) to admit the particularity of religious system of each religious tradition in establishing its religious truth on its own terms; and (3) to sustain openness to interfaith encounters that are to be governed by two complementary principles: fallible nature of human understanding and commitment to truth.

Within the context of Yong's soteriological view of Pentecostal inclusivism, this project repudiates his conviction of religious others' experience of divine presence and activity in some extent mediated by the Holy Spirit according to his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions. Specifically, the scriptural teaching of the hearing and embracing of the spoken gospel entailing saving faith in Christ and repentance of sins as being prerequisite for the realization of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit making efficacious the abiding of divine presence in believers is antithetical to Yong's contention of the universal experience of the presence and activity of God on the part of non-Christians by virtue of the mediation of the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity apart from the hearing and receiving of the preached gospel. This opposition calls attention to one synthetic aspect of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: the hearing and receiving of the preached gospel entailing conversion as being a precondition for the realization of the indwelling Holy Spirit in God's new covenant people in whom Christ and God dwell.

As demonstrated above, Scripture teaches that the realization of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the people of God depends upon the hearing and receiving of the preached gospel on their part with the result of their confession of faith in Christ and repentance of sins (Acts 2:1-4; 11:16-17; cf. 1 Thess 2:13). Further, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the people of God entails the inauguration of the abiding

presence of Christ and the Father. Thus, the inauguration of the triune God's presence in his people essentially begins with the hearing of the preached gospel.

This project draws attention to Yong's assertion in his pneumatological theology of religions that other religious members experience the presence and activity of God in some extent by virtue of the mediation of the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity apart from the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel. He did not explicitly incorporate his conviction of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them into his discussion of their shared experience of the presence and activity of God mediated by the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, he more than likely had in mind the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them as its foundation, given the fact that his pneumatological theology of religions is grounded upon the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh.⁹⁵ If this inference is tenable, religious others' universal experience of God's presence and activity in some degree rendered possible by the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity is inseparable from Yong's soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism. They might experience God's salvific presence and activity by virtue of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them apart from the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel.

Admittedly, he seems to avoid identifying the presence and activity of God mediated by the Holy Spirit on the level of other religious members' experience as being salvific as that of God which is brought about by the indwelling Holy Spirit on the level of believers' experience in keeping with baptism with the Holy Spirit. An inevitable question then arises as to the exact nature of religious others' common experience of God's presence and activity enabled by the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity. Because he refuses to endorse that other religious traditions are salvific in themselves, he

⁹⁵ Yong, "A P(new)matological Paradigm for Christian Mission in a Religiously Plural World," 176.

likely entertains the idea that their adherents' universal experience of God's presence and activity facilitated by the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity in those religions is not salvific, either. Indeed, he puts this discussion under the doctrine of common grace. "For in him [other religious members] live and move and have [their beings]" (Acts 17:28). They experience God's abundant blessings that manifest themselves in his common bestowal of what enriches them to sustain their lives (Ps 145:9, 15–16; Matt 5:45; Luke 6:35–36; Acts 14:16–17). The Psalmist attributes the fundamental source of their universal experience of God's common grace to the Spirit of the Lord: "When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground" (Ps 104:30; cf. Ps 33:6; Job 33:4). In this sense, other religious members' shared experience of God's presence and activity connected to the mediation of the Holy Spirit is not likely salvific.

Such an ambiguous stance toward the very essence of other religious adherents' universal experience of God's presence and activity through the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity leaves Yong liable to criticism: his argument of a pneumatological theology of religions is at odds with his conviction of Pentecostal inclusivism. This criticism likely derives from his being a Pentecostal-charismatic-evangelical theologian whose soteriological view is close to inclusivists.⁹⁶ Because he attempted to position himself as a kind of moderate inclusivist not fully leaning toward inclusivism, his whole discussion of a pneumatological theology of religions seems lack of clarity concerning whether God's presence and activity experienced by non-Christians in their religions by virtue of the Holy Spirit present and active in them is salvific. On the

⁹⁶ A wide spectrum of inclusivists with whom Yong interacted in his articles and monographs include, and are not limited to, Clark H. Pinnock, Georg Khodr, Stanley J. Samartha, Jacques Dupuis, and more. See Yong *Beyond the Impasse*, 86–103, 107–21; Yong, "Whither Theological Inclusivism?" 329–46; Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996); Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992); Jacques Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions: From Confrontation to Dialogue*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002); Stanley J. Samartha, *One Christ—Many Religions: Toward a Revised Christology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991); Stanley J. Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-Religious Relationships* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981).

one hand, he denies salvific efficaciousness of divine presence and activity in other religious traditions. On the other hand, he still seems optimistic about it, given that his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions is established upon the narrative of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit in which he holds the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on other religious adherents in a possibly salvific sense. Thus, he should make his inclusivistic position clear of his ambivalence toward the nature of the presence and activity of God mediated by the Holy Spirit on the part of other religious members' experience. Such clarification will give precision to the nature of religious others' experience of divine presence and activity engendered by the Holy Spirit who is present and operative in their religious traditions.

Therefore, the position of this project of the necessity of the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel entailing conversion in the realization of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit as the inauguration of the salvific presence of the triune God in his people is antithetical to Yong's reasoning of non-Christians' shared experience of God's presence and activity mediated by the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity apart from the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel. The Holy Spirit in no way indwells other religious members who have not heard the preached gospel; he by no means mediates divine presence to religious others who have not heard the preached gospel. They in no way experience the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in a salvific sense.

The Feasibility of Discerning the Holy Spirit

Yong suggests the Christian and Pentecostal-charismatic task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in other religious traditions as a goal of a pneumatological theology of religions in harmony with his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism. Due to the presence of other spirits at work in the world of the non-Christian traditions, he makes necessary the task of discerning the

presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in them. His discerning task conforms to John's injunction to "test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1).

His suggested norm for the discerning task is Christocentric, namely, "how Christ is proclaimed and where the Spirit's presence and activity might be manifest" in the non-Christian traditions.⁹⁷ He discusses this way of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in them with two levels of approach, the Christian one and the Pentecostal-charismatic one. First, the Christian discernment involves "an indissoluble two-part process of interpretation and comparison."⁹⁸ Second, the Pentecostal-charismatic discernment involves "a three-tiered process of discernment—phenomenological-experiential, moral-ethical and theological-soteriological."⁹⁹

Within the context of Yong's soteriological position of Pentecostal inclusivism, this project objects to his understanding of discerning the Holy Spirit that finds expression in his proposal of making assessment of other faith traditions concerning whether the Holy Spirit or other spirits are present and active in them apart from the hearing and appropriation of the spoken gospel on the part of their members. Specifically, the scriptural teaching of the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel as the norm for discerning the reception of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the outpouring of or baptism with the Holy Spirit stands opposed to Yong's understanding of discerning the Holy Spirit. This objection draws attention to one aspect of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant: the realization of the reception of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the outpouring of or baptism with the Holy

⁹⁷ Yong, "Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Religions," 300.

⁹⁸ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 141.

⁹⁹ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, 250.

Spirit as the entailment of the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel.

As rehearsed above, the reception of the Holy Spirit on the part of the people of God in harmony with baptism with or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit becomes realized as the effect of the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel entailing conversion. Scripture states the normativity of the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel as the initial stage of, and the indispensable element in, the realization of the reception of the Holy Spirit on God's new covenant people with the result of their active experience of his presence and activity in their life. Thus, the task of examining the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit hinges on the receiving of the Holy Spirit which indissolubly presupposes the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel as the prerequisite for the realization of it.

This project draws attention to John's injunction to "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1) on which Yong relies as a biblical ground of his argumentation of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in other faith traditions. As Yong rightly understood, Christology governs the task of discernment (cf. 1 Cor 12:10).¹⁰⁰ Again, he rightly speaks of the reality of the existence of evil spirits at work in the world of other religious traditions. Nonetheless, his urging of Christians in general and the Pentecostal-charismatics in particular to engage in assessing them in an effort to distinguish between the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits is irrelevant to the very nature of the testing of spirits enjoined by John's apostolic authority.

Specifically, "the spirits" whom John had in mind were most likely demonic

¹⁰⁰ Commentators to which this project referred show consensus on this point. See I. Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 204–6; John R. W. Stott, *The Letters of John*, 2nd ed. Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 155; Daniel L. Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, The New American Commentary 38 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 172–73; See Karen H. Jobes, *1, 2, and 3 John*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 177; Robert W. Yarbrough, *1–3 John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 223.

spirits working behind “many false prophets [who] have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1) as the source of their inspiration.¹⁰¹ In this sense, John shows no interest in evaluating how other spirits are present and operative in pagan religions of the Mediterranean world from his Christian standpoint so as to discern and understand the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in them. Further, two more reasonings come to the fore to support this discussion of the unrelatedness of other spirits of John’s letter to those spirits present and active in the world of other faith traditions. First, John applies the Christological axiom of the reality of the incarnation of the preexistent Son of God to the testing of spirits within the setting of Christian community. Indeed, Christian discernment of the Holy Spirit depends on the following Christological affirmation: “This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God” (1 John 4:2–3). John’s language here presupposes the acquired knowledge of Christ which leads to either the orthodox confession of full humanity taken by the divine Son of God (John 1:1–14; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 John 1:1–3) or a heretical denial of it in the form of Docetism.¹⁰² Given this fact, the Christian task of distinguishing the Holy Spirit from other spirits urged by John is foreign to Yong’s proposal of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in the world of other living faiths in which their members have neither heard the preached gospel nor possessed the knowledge of Christ.

Second, John establishes the interconnection between his injunction to

¹⁰¹ Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, 204; Stott, *The Letters of John*, 154–55; Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, 170–71. For the discussion of the nature of the spirits in this text, see Jobes, *1, 2, and 3 John*, 176–77; Yarbrough, *1–3 John*, 220–21.

¹⁰² Docetism refers to a Christological heresy denying the full humanity of Jesus Christ. Namely, he appeared to be a human being; he was not a full human being. For reference, see Gregg R. Allison, *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016), s.v. “Docetism.” Commentators on this section of John’s letter further state that John had in mind the early form of Docetism when he wrote that the false prophets denied the coming of Christ in human flesh. See Yarbrough, *1–3 John*, 223; Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, 172–73; Jobes, *1, 2, and 3 John*, 179.

examine other spirits and the realized reception of the Holy Spirit as the precondition for putting it into practice. Indeed, he sets forth the Christian reception of the Holy Spirit right before his utterance of the necessity of their active engagement in the task of discernment: “The one who keeps God’s commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us. Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 3:24–4:1). Though he did not describe in this letter how the Holy Spirit would come upon them and indwell them, he elsewhere affirmed that the realization of their sharing in the gift of the Holy Spirit would come from their faith in Christ (John 7:38-39) through the hearing of the preached gospel (17:20; cf. Acts 11:14; Rom 10:14, 17; Col 1:4–6; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Thess 2:13–14). And so, when John spoke of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the part of the recipients of his letter, he more than likely presupposed the logical priority of their hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel that entailed the confession of faith in Christ and repentance of sins. In this sense, the people of God baptized with the Holy Spirit alone are legitimately able to engage in the task of discernment and achieve success.

The foregoing discussion has a bearing on Yong’s contention of the viability of the task of discernment that is irreducibly governed by his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism. Though he outright denied the salvific instrumentality of the non-Christian religions, he firmly holds the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all their members which effects the possibility of their partaking of God’s salvific work apart from their hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel. Then, dualism is likely at work in his approach to the question of the possibility of salvation for religious others. One principle is that the non-Christian religions are in no way salvific. The other principle is that non-Christians who have neither heard the preached gospel nor known Christ might be saved by virtue of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them. If

this reasoning is tenable, then this project argues that Yong’s proposal of the Christian and Pentecostal-charismatic task of discernment—“how goodness, truth, nobility, and salvation as Christians understand them are or are not applicable to the various religions”—is ultimately a foil for the argumentation of his soteriological vision of the possibility of salvation for non-Christians on whom the Holy Spirit has been already poured out.¹⁰³ To put otherwise, the task of distinguishing between the Holy Spirit and other spirits gives way to corroborating his soteriological conviction: religious others might be saved in Christ inasmuch as the Holy Spirit has been already poured out on them. His following statement well captures the thrust of this discussion in light of the relation between the task of discernment and his soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism:

The question of discerning the Spirit involves that of discerning Jesus the Christ. Christians thus seeking to discern Jesus the Christ have to find a *via media* between the Jesus of history and the Christ of existential faith; between the Jesus of the creeds/confessions and the eschatological/anticipated Christ; between the particularity of Jesus the Nazarene and the universality of the *logos spermatikos*, “the true light, which enlightens everyone” (John 1:9).¹⁰⁴

Thus, this project’s understanding of the scriptural teaching of the normativity of the hearing and embracing of the preached gospel for probing the reception of the Holy Spirit repudiates Yong’s proposal of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in other faith traditions apart from the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel on the part of their adherents. His proposal is misleading because the task of distinguishing between the Holy Spirit and other spirits is to be performed within the boundary of Christian community consisting of the recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit as the entailment of their hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel that leads to their response in faith and repentance.

¹⁰³ See Yong, “Whither Theological Inclusivism?” 347; Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, 171–72.

¹⁰⁴ Yong, “The Holy Spirit and the World Religions,” 203.

In this section, this project engaged in offering a rejoinder to the polemic of Yong's soteriological vision of Pentecostal inclusivism that (1) manifests itself in his conviction of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on religious others; (2) becomes the ground of his assertion of their universal experience of God's presence and activity through the Holy Spirit; and (3) warrants the viability of the task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in their religious traditions.

Conclusion

This project upholding pneumatological exclusivism for the church catholic of the new covenant rejects Yong's pneumatological inclusivism understood as Pentecostal inclusivism. He errs in contending for the possibility of salvation of religious others bound up with his understanding of the account of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh as the ground of his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions which requires as its goal the task of discerning the Holy Spirit and other spirits in the non-Christian religions.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Over against inclusivists who contend that the Holy Spirit possibly brings salvation in Jesus Christ to the people who have not heard the preached gospel, this project upheld that the making and salvation of the new covenant people of God in whom Jesus Christ is universally and salvifically abiding hinges on the work of the Holy Spirit which becomes efficacious on the condition of the prior realization of their hearing of the preached gospel of God's spokesmen in a temporal time. In the course of substantiating the thesis, this project proceeded with two parts. In part one, it rehearsed its soteriological position of pneumatological exclusivism, that is, the work of the Holy Spirit in forming and applying salvation to the new covenant people of God who have heard the preached gospel and responded to it in faith and repentance.

Concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in constituting the church catholic of the new covenant, this project discussed the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel entailing saving faith in Christ and repentance of sins on the part of God's new covenant people as being the prerequisite for the realization of the outpouring of, baptism with, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in bringing about the making of the church catholic of the new covenant.

Concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the application of salvation to the church catholic of the new covenant, this project demonstrated that the prior realization of the hearing of the preached gospel of God's agents on the part of God's new covenant people is a precondition for the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling that makes inwardly realized the external calling of the preached gospel, in regeneration that involves the renewal of human hearts for enabling the proper response in faith and

repentance, and in union with Christ that involves the realization of the salvific presence of Jesus for the appropriation of all redemptive blessings in him.

In part two, by means of the theological lens of pneumatological exclusivism for the making and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant, this project engaged in discussing and assessing pneumatological inclusivism minimally expressed as institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church, Jürgen Moltmann's universal inclusivism, and Amos Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism.

Concerning the position of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church, this project defined it as the salvation of religious others in particular and the unevangelized in general through the visible Roman Catholic Church. This project unfolded its nature as it interacted with the documents of Vatican II and John Paul II's encyclicals and messages that identifies the Roman Catholic Church as the universal sacrament of salvation for the adherents of other living faiths and the unevangelized who are in varying degrees related to it by virtue of the universal presence and activity of the Holy Spirit calling them through the seeds of the Word and offering them the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mystery. In defense of pneumatological exclusivism, this project offered a rejoinder to the polemic of institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church with the appraisal of its three pivotal ideas for its soteriological formulation: the seeds of the Word, the Paschal mystery, and relatedness to the Roman Catholic Church.

Concerning the view of Jürgen Moltmann's universal inclusivism, this project described it as the salvation of all created beings in God through the Holy Spirit. This project unveiled its substance as it rehearsed his dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ, his understanding of perichoretic panentheism as the framework of universal inclusivism, and his concept of the church in relation to the universality of the kingdom of God. In defense of pneumatological exclusivism, this project gave a rejoinder to the polemic of his universal inclusivism with the assessment of his understanding of Christian universalism, the mutual indwelling of God and the world, and the salvific

agencies of the Holy Spirit outside the church catholic.

Concerning the outlook of Amos Yong's Pentecostal inclusivism, this project understood it as the salvation of all flesh upon whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out. This project divulged its essence as it demonstrated that his understanding of the account of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh is the ground of his concept of a pneumatological theology of religions which entails as its goal the task of discerning the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and of other spirits in the non-Christian religions. In defense of pneumatological exclusivism, this project offered a rejoinder to the polemic of his Pentecostal inclusivism with the evaluation of his understanding of the realized outpouring of the Holy Spirit on religious others, his contention of their universal experience of the presence and activity of God mediated by the Holy Spirit as divine presence and activity, and his assertion of the feasibility of the task of discernment between the Holy Spirit and other spirits.

With all the foregoing discussions, this project affirms that the Holy Spirit mediates the universal and salvific presence of Christ to the new covenant people of God alone who have heard the gospel and responded to it by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of sins.

For a future study, this project suggests the following areas of research to be done for further development, improvement, enhancement, or advancement from its theological conclusions: (1) Christological ecclesiology which is grounded upon the works of Christ, (2) Soteriological ecclesiology which centers on the nature of the church as the telos or goal of salvation, (3) the discussion of the relationship of the Old Testament believers to the universal church of Christ, and (4) the question of the salvation of deceased infants who have not heard the gospel and experienced conversion.

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ABSTRACT

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH: PNEUMATOLOGICAL EXCLUSIVISM FOR THE UNIVERSAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE PEOPLE OF GOD

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Over against pneumatological inclusivism arguing for the possibility of salvation of religious others in particular and the unevangelized in general, this dissertation champions pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.

In chapter 1, this dissertation provides an outline of this project containing its thesis, methodology, history of research, significance, and argument.

In chapter 2, this dissertation demonstrates pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution of the church catholic of the new covenant: the hearing and appropriation of the preached gospel that leads to conversion as the prerequisite for the realization of baptism with, the outpouring of, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in putting into effect the constitution of the new covenant people of God.

In chapter 3, this dissertation establishes pneumatological exclusivism for the salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant: the hearing of the preached gospel as the precondition for the realization of the work of the Holy Spirit in effectual calling, regeneration, and union with Christ.

In chapter 4, this dissertation discusses the nature of pneumatological inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church represented as institutional inclusivism: the salvation of religious others and the unevangelized through the visible Roman Catholic

Church. It then assesses and refutes institutional inclusivism of the Roman Catholic Church on the ground of theological principles of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.

In chapter 5, this dissertation discusses the essence of Jürgen Moltmann's pneumatological inclusivism understood as universal inclusivism: the salvation of all created beings in God through the Holy Spirit. It then evaluates and repudiates his universal inclusivism on the ground of theological principles of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.

In chapter 6, this dissertation discusses the substance of Amos Yong's pneumatological inclusivism expressed as Pentecostal inclusivism: the salvation of all flesh upon whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out. It then assesses and rebuts his Pentecostal inclusivism on the ground of theological principles of pneumatological exclusivism for the constitution and salvation of the church catholic of the new covenant.

In chapter 7, this dissertation reaffirms its thesis and recapitulates the thrust of the foregoing discussion in chapters 2–6.

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