

**PENTECOST, PROCESS, AND POWER:
A Critical Comparison of Concursus in
Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology and
Philosophical Process-Relational Theology**

By

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DECLARATION

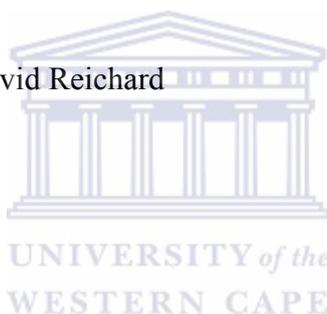
I declare that **Pentecost, Process, and Power: A Critical Comparison of Concursus in Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology and Philosophical Process-Relational Theology** is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledge by complete references.

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Date: 2009-05-15



Signed



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ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis comprises a critical comparison of the theme of *concurus*, the way in which God and humanity interact, in the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions. The comparison is literature-based; similarities and differences in the theological literature of each tradition are compared in order to determine the extent of compatibilities and incompatibilities. The hypothesis is that similarities in the literature sufficiently leverage differences. The first chapter includes a statement of the problem, namely that the global expansion of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements necessitates interaction with more academically and philosophically oriented theological traditions such as Process-Relational theology. The second chapter comprises an historical survey of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, including key dogmas and practices. Chapter three comprises an historical survey of Process-Relational theology, including its philosophical, metaphysical, and scientific orientations. Seminal Process-Relational theists such as Whitehead, Hartshorne, and Cobb are surveyed. Chapter four consists of a broad historical survey of the theological theme of *concurus*, including the notions of causation, free will, and determinism in both philosophy and theology. Further, the fourth chapter includes a broad historical survey of pneumatology, which is framed as the basis for a comparison of *concurus*. Chapters five and six comprise surveys of *concurus* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions respectively. Chapter seven entails an extensive analysis of differences and synthesis of similarities between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational notions of *concurus*. Four differences and four similarities are identified. Differences and similarities are ranked and compared for compatibility. Ultimately, the research question is answered affirmatively and conditionally: yes, according to the literature of both traditions, similarities sufficiently leverage differences, but socio-linguistic barriers may obstruct meaningful mutual transformation. Chapter eight concludes with a brief exploration of ecclesial and social implications.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Methodological Clarification

1. Introduction

This doctoral thesis entails a critical-analytical comparison of the theme of *concurus* (the way in which divine agency interacts with human agency) within the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theological traditions. Conceptions of *concurus*¹ is analyzed within two traditionally divergent theological traditions: Process-Relational theology, which has found support within liberal Christianity, and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, which has been popularized within evangelical-fundamentalist Christianity. The similarities and the differences between the respective theological positions concerning the theological theme of *concurus* are assessed in order to establish whether the common ground (similarities) allows sufficient leverage to address significant differences.

The research question that is investigated in this doctoral thesis is as follows:

What compatibilities and incompatibilities may be identified between the notions of divine and human power (*concurus*) as articulated in two corpuses of academic literature, namely philosophical Process-Relational theology and operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology?

The central hypothesis of this doctoral thesis is that compatibilities between Process-Relational theology and operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology are supported by the literature. Inevitably, incompatibilities will also be identified. If sufficient leverage does not support the possibility of overcoming such differences, options for continued dialog and potential compromise are proposed.

The doctoral thesis comprises a focused comparison of operational conceptions of

¹ The theologies are divergent insofar as Process theology has historically garnered support among liberal movements within Western Christianity while Pentecostalism has flourished worldwide among more Evangelical-fundamentalist movements within global Christianity.

concurus within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements by means of a pneumatological² framework. Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology, specifically its conceptions of *concurus*, is compared with the panentheistic and dipolar perspective of Process-Relational theology's conceptions of divine power and immanence. The review of literature is focused on the operational theology rather than the professed theology of Pentecostals-Charismatic adherents – in an attempt to identify theology in practice rather than official theological statements of organized denominational entities. Wesleyan-Arminian theology³ is utilized as common ground to initiate a comparison between Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology. Further, analysis of the contemporary movement of Open theism will serve as a bridge between Evangelical theologies, Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, and Process-Relational theology. Open-Evangelical theism is utilized as a source that may aid in the identification of similarities and differences between a Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational understanding of *concurus*. The discovery of similarities between Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, Process-Relational theology, and Open theism may help to describe differences. In particular, the issue of divine power, which has been a point of impasse in Open-Process dialog, informs the comparison.

A constructive theological reinterpretation of *concurus* in light of compatibilities and incompatibilities between both traditions is proposed. Identified

² The framework will be pneumatological on the basis of a Pentecostal-Charismatic point of reference. Pentecostals emphasize the biblical event of the giving of Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) as an enduement of power to humanity (Joel 2:28). While the research project will not entail a hermeneutical exposition of biblical pneumatology, pneumatological concepts will be utilized to speak in Pentecostal terms of God's power and action in relation to humanity and the world. Concerning process thought, broader pneumatological terminology (such as "spirit", non-sensory perception, and metaphysical categories) may be utilized throughout the research project, but generally confined to issues related specifically to divine power.

³ Pentecostal and Process-Relational theology share common ancestry in the Wesleyan traditions. The Assemblies of God and the Apostolic Faith Mission, for instance, trace their roots to Wesleyan holiness movements while Process-Relational theologies have found acceptance among United Methodists and the Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California.

compatibilities are synthesized to formulate a distinct theological interpretation of *concursum* that utilizes concepts from both traditions. A brief analysis of the social implications of the research will form the conclusion. The exploration of social implications is brief and non-exhaustive, as the emphasis is primarily theological rather than sociological.

2. Context and Relevance

The literature review that comprises this doctoral thesis is grounded in several contexts. First, the two corpuses of literature share common geographical and traditional contexts; both Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology share geographical origins in the greater Los Angeles, California, area and both traditions share common Wesleyan roots (§2.1). The literature review of this doctoral thesis is focused on a contextualization of the research question by starting with broad surveys of both the Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and narrowing to the specific theme of *concursum* in both traditions (§2.2, 2.4). Focusing the review of literature on the specific theological theme of *concursum* ensures a concise comparison of one issue, rather than a broad and potentially boundless comparison (§3.1 – 3.3). Open-Evangelical theology is surveyed as a “middle ground” between the two traditions; Open-Evangelical literature may reveal similarities and differences between Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology (§2.3).

The research question is relevant to contemporary theological inquiry for two primary reasons. First, there have been public calls for dialog between Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology (§2.5); Process-Relational theologians have challenged Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians to pursue philosophical justification for their religious claims and Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians have challenged Process-Relational theologians to spiritual renewal. Second, existing literature suggests that both traditions would benefit from mutual transformation (§2.6), insofar as they can enrich one another and lead to positive socio-religious change.

Finally, this doctoral thesis is relevant to a personal context. My employment with an international Pentecostal-Charismatic educational organization makes this doctoral thesis immediately relevant to my personal work and interests.

2.1 Geographical and Traditional Contexts

Both Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology trace significant historic roots to greater Los Angeles, California, USA. Pentecostal movements find historic roots⁴ in a revival that occurred on Azusa Street in Los Angeles from 1904 to 1906. Process theology has been largely championed by the Claremont School of Theology⁵ in Claremont, California (a suburb of Los Angeles), beginning primarily with the process thought of ornithologist-theologian Charles Hartshorne and perpetuated by resident theologians such as John B. Cobb, Jr., David Ray Griffin, and Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki. However, while Pentecostalism has been widely popularized on an international scale and continues to expand relentlessly, Process-Relational thought has found relatively little popularity and remains confined to primarily intellectual communities.

Primitive developments within the Pentecostal tradition were rooted in the holiness movements of Wesleyanism (Creech 1996:405-424). Although not exclusively Wesleyan, the Claremont School of Theology is an official United Methodist seminary and a number of the significant process theologians are likewise United Methodist.⁶ While both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational influence have expanded far beyond any recognizable form of Wesleyanism, the subtle commonality of their heritage is contextually notable. Given the synergistic model that informs Wesleyan conceptions of the God-world relationship, many Wesleyans have been historically attracted to both

⁴ See Bartleman, F. (2003) and Seymour, W. (1906-1908), *The Azusa Street Papers*, reprinted by the General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1997.

⁵ The Claremont School of Theology houses the Center for Process Studies. See www.ctr4process.org.

⁶ In particular, John B. Cobb, Jr., and Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, who are United Methodists.

Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theologies. The Wesleyan influences upon Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology are examined throughout the thesis.

2.2 A Brief Survey of Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology

According to Pentecostal observer Walter Hollenweger (1998), worldwide Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and practice is characterized by irregularity. Theologically, most Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations align themselves with evangelicalism in that they emphasize the authority of the Bible and the need for the transformation of the lives of individuals by faith in Jesus. Because many Pentecostal denominations are primarily descended from Methodism and the Wesleyan Holiness Movement, Pentecostal soteriology is generally Arminian rather than Calvinist.

One of the most prominent characteristics distinguishing Pentecostalism from the rest of evangelicalism is its emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. Most Pentecostals believe that everyone who is “genuinely saved” has the Holy Spirit with them. But unlike most other Christians, Pentecostals and Charismatics believe that there is a second work of the Holy Spirit called the “baptism of the Holy Spirit”, in which the Holy Spirit dwells more fully within them. The “second work of grace” of the Holy Spirit empowers believers for Christian service, thereby defining the uniqueness of Pentecostal pneumatology.

Most Pentecostals cite “speaking in tongues”, also known as *glossolalia*, as the normative proof or evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism. Some Pentecostals have adopted a more liberal view claiming that other evidences of Holy Spirit baptism exist. The doctrine of “tongues” as the initial evidence of receiving the Holy Ghost is uniquely Pentecostal and is one of the few doctrines that distinguish it from broad Charismatic theology which generally claims diverse evidences. While

American Pentecostals⁷ tend to focus on the experience of “speaking in tongues”, most Pentecostals and Charismatics emphasize that God has given a multiplicity of supernatural “gifts”, a uniquely divine empowerment of human agency, and is thereby actively involved in human affairs. The doctrine and experience of speaking in tongues is a distinguishing element of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, but the doctrine is not a primary focus of this doctoral thesis. Hollenweger described the Pentecostal understanding of supernatural gifts as an expression of “diverse gifts to diverse people”; a definition Hollenweger admitted was “not a strictly theological definition but a phenomenological one” (Hollenweger 1998:42).

The key to Pentecostal-Charismatic theology is its pneumatologically framed spirituality. Pentecostalism is invigorated by a spirit that declares God to be active in this world and is unafraid to demonstrate such activity. The Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences of divine healings, miracles, and speaking in tongues reinforce the pneumatological emphasis of God’s activity in the world and among humankind. Pentecostal-Charismatic theology thereby becomes intensely practical. The immanence of God, as the Holy Spirit, becomes the central focus of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and practice. The operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology in daily and social life, especially in comparison with Process-Relational conceptions of God and reality, is a focus of this doctoral thesis.

2.3 A Brief Survey of Open-Evangelical Theology

Open theism, also known as Free Will theism (herein referred to as Open-Evangelical theology), is a theological movement that developed in the late twentieth century within evangelical and post-evangelical Protestant Christianity.

⁷ Such as the General Council of the Assemblies of God (USA), Springfield, Missouri, the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, and the Church of God in Christ. The most significant South African Pentecostal denomination is the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM).

Like Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, Open-Evangelical theology shares a common Arminian-Wesleyan heritage.⁸ Some contemporary open theists regard aspects of the classical, orthodox-evangelical conceptions of the doctrine of God as an historical synthesis of Greek philosophy and Christian theology; in particular, overemphasizing the Augustinian-Calvinistic perspectives on divine sovereignty and omnipotence. Several ideas within classical theism (a designation which is not to be taken as inclusive of all of orthodox theism) state that God is immutable, impassible, and eternal (timeless). Classical theism maintains that God fully determines the future; thus, humanity does not have libertarian free will, or, if necessarily free in part, only insofar as that freedom remains compatible with God's determining actions.

Open theism is a foundational theology within evangelicalism that attempts to explain the practical relationship between the free will of humanity and the sovereignty of God. Based on traditional Arminian theology, open theism elaborates the idea of the free will of human agency. Open-Evangelical theists primarily deny the classical doctrine of omniscience⁹ suggesting that the future is "open" and can be determined by God and humankind in cooperation; the future is unknowable, even to God. Open theists describe the divine attribute of omniscience as God's ability to "know all that is knowable", which does not include the unknowable, undetermined future.

The development of Open-Evangelical theology is part of the ongoing philosophical and theological dialog of free will versus determinism. John Calvin (1509-1564), in framing the reformed tradition, affirmed a God who determines the minute details of reality and knows the past, present, and future as a single moment. Calvin's theology, built upon a primarily Augustinian tradition, was an

⁸ See the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38.2 (Fall 2003): pp. 69-102.

⁹ Insomuch as the future is not fixed, but flexible and yet undetermined. Open theists maintain that God remains thoroughly omniscient, (that is, God knows all there is to be known), but God does not *determine* future events because God cannot possibly know them in full.

essential component of the soteriology that defined the Reformation. The thought of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), John Wesley (1703-1791), and Ellen G. White (1827-1915), however, contributed to the development of classical free-will theism as an alternative to Calvinism. Classical Arminians such as Wesley and White maintained that God knows the past, present, and future with equal completeness but that God does not determine everything that occurs because God gives human beings genuine freedom.

Open theists argue that the belief in the meticulous sovereignty of God is not biblical but instead influenced by Hellenistic philosophical ideas of divine perfection. The Greek philosophers viewed God as an immovable, detached, all-controlling force. This view, Open theists argue, influenced later Christian thought. Open Theists argue that the God of the prophets grieving over Israel and the God of Jesus of Nazareth demonstrate that God is intimately involved in God's creation; in contrast with this detached view of God as the "unmoved mover".

2.4 A Brief Survey of Process-Relational Theology

Process theology (herein referred to as "Process-Relational theology") refers to philosophical conceptions of God and cosmology inspired by or in agreement with the metaphysical orientations of the British philosopher-mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) and the American philosopher-ornithologist Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000). There exist Forms of Process theology exist that are similar but unrelated to the work of Whitehead exist (such as that of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Henri Bergson), but Process theology generally refers primarily to the Whiteheadian school.

Process philosophy maintains that the fundamental nature of all of reality is one of process, dynamism, becoming, and perpetual change. The intrinsic nature of reality as processive is itself fixed, permanent, eternal, and immutable. Whitehead (1979) himself maintained that "God is not to be treated as an exception to all metaphysical principles, invoked to save their collapse. [God] is their chief exemplification" (Whitehead 1979:521).

Process-Relational theology offers a unique and controversial theodicy that reconstructs classical-orthodox views of divine power. The process theodicy is stated thus: if God is all-powerful, then God can prevent unjustified suffering; if God is perfectly good, then God has the motive to prevent unjustified suffering; but unjustified suffering apparently exists; therefore, there is reason to believe that God is either not all-powerful or not perfectly good. Process-Relational theists prefer to surrender traditional notions of God's omnipotence rather than surrender God's omnibenevolence.

Process-Relational theologians view the classical conception of omnipotence as logically and morally incoherent. Hartshorne (1978) argued that the classical concept of omnipotence was hardly coherent enough to be false (Hartshorne 1978:86). Hartshorne's arguably most accessible work *Omnipotence and other theological mistakes* (1983) is utilized in the review of literature (see chapters 3 and 6).

A central contention of process theism is that the problem of evil is aggravated by flawed accounts of omnipotence commonly assumed by theists and their critics. Griffin (1976) warned against "the omnipotence fallacy", an assumption that if a state of affairs is logically possible, then an omnipotent being could unilaterally cause it to be so (Griffin 1976:263). Griffin represents all process theists in considering omnipotence a theological fallacy. The doctrine of divine power in process theism can be summed up as follows: "God acts by persuasion rather than by coercion" (Griffin 1991:98-99). Process theists maintain that every actual entity¹⁰ retains some power of self-determination, however minimal or slight it may be (Hartshorne 1970:272). The Process-Relational understanding of extreme Arminian freedom for individuals is logically possible insofar as classical

¹⁰ The model of the basic unit of reality developed by Alfred North Whitehead: All things can be explained as processes of actual entities, interrelated and varying in degree of complexity. Each actual entity is a dipolar, momentary event which is partially self-created and partially influenced by other actual entities.

conceptions of omnipotence are abandoned (Griffin 1991:104).

2.5 Existing Calls for Dialog Between Pentecostal and Process Theologies

The relationship between Pentecostal-Charismatic theologies and Process-Relational theologies has been identified as common ground for broader ecumenical dialog between evangelical and process theologians. Process and evangelical theologians alike have identified the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements as most potentially receptive to Process-Relational theology among present evangelical movements. Basic compatibility between the traditions is identifiable in the literature.

Nazarene¹¹ theologian Thomas J. Oord (2006) identified the Pentecostal-Charismatic branch of evangelicalism as a key conversation partner in an evangelical-process dialog. Process theologian David Ray Griffin voiced hope that dialog between evangelicals and process theists may lead evangelicals to “look more seriously at process theology as a framework for articulating Christianity’s good news” (Griffin 2000:38). Further, Oord argued that “because Pentecostals and Charismatics claim to be in direct communication with God, they should find a sophisticated philosophical basis in process philosophy for their claim” (Oord 2006:254). According to Oord, Pentecostalism needs process thought for philosophical justification.

Evangelical open theist Clark Pinnock argued that “theological integrity and the credibility of the concept of God in our time are at stake. It is difficult to believe the conventional model of God because of its intellectual contradictions and lack of existential appeal” (Pinnock 2001:181). Pinnock argued for a reformed and modernized theological understanding of reality as dynamic, not static, and opened the door for Process-Relational dialog. Oord suggested that Open-

¹¹ The Church of the Nazarene is an Evangelical Wesleyan denomination in the United States with some measure of international influence.

Evangelical theists such as Pinnock look to Process-Relational categories for philosophical support (Oord 2006:255).

Process-Relational theologian John B. Cobb, Jr. (1997) observed that “evangelicals and process theologians are both concerned with the way things are [in daily experiences]. Because process theology is proposing ideas about questions that are real questions for evangelicals and claiming continuity between its answers and biblical ones, a good many evangelicals take it seriously.”¹² A Process-Relational interpretation of the Pentecostal experience of *concursum* (divine action in the world through humankind) may not only substantiate aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic experience, but offer correction where theological constructs within Pentecostal-Charismatic professions do not adequately match experience. The expectation of a physical demonstration of God’s power in Pentecostal practice contrasted with the often disillusioned experience of common Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents (Anderson 2004:198, Anderson 1991:41-6, 104-20; Anderson 2000:239, 244-55) is an area in which Process-Relational theology can offer alternative conceptions of how God works in the world.

Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians as well as critics outside of the movements have estimated that the praxis of their adherents is not entirely consistent with its evangelical dogmatic professions of the nature of God and God’s action in the world. While Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians have attempted to provide biblical, rational, and systematic theological justification for their experience and praxis, some theologians argue that concessions have been made to conform to twentieth century Evangelical dogmatism.¹³ Further, Cobb (1990) specifically

¹² The quote is located in an unpublished manuscript by John B. Cobb, Jr. that was presented at *The Enlightenment in Evangelical and Process Perspectives* conference 20-22 March 1997. The manuscript is entitled “Evangelical Theology in Process Perspective” and is available at the Center for Process Studies in Claremont, California.

¹³ Such inconsistencies are documented by Pinnock and Basinger from the Open-Evangelical perspective and by Anderson from the Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective. Anderson’s analyses will be utilized by the research project to demonstrate that Pentecostal-Charismatic praxis meets with disillusionment from its adherents because of an inconsistency between

urged Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians to rise to the challenge of addressing theological inadequacies and inconsistencies within the movements. While Cobb recognized that the number of Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents have grown exponentially worldwide, he contended that Pentecostal theology in its present form is unsustainable. Cobb (1990:1) suggested:

Pentecostalism may produce leaders who can deal wisely and effectively with the broader historical, cultural, and intellectual issues to which its present teachings are inadequate. This may lead to a transformation of Pentecostal teaching that maintains its health and renders it sustainable.

This doctoral thesis may be conceived as a response to Cobb's challenge. Hollenweger (1998:42) noted that young, well-educated Pentecostal scholars are able to "speak in the university language, in the language of concepts and definitions, but they can also speak in the oral language of Pentecostalism"; a development that is an "extremely important part of [Pentecostal-Charismatic] success". The goal of this doctoral thesis is to build a bridge between the Process and Pentecostal communities based on common ground related to conceptions of *concursum*, and to inspire mutually beneficial theological and social change.

2.6 Relevance: Why Pentecostalism and Process theology may benefit from mutual transformation

On September 11, 2007, John B. Cobb, Jr., delivered a lecture¹⁴ at the Claremont School of Theology entitled, "Why faith needs process philosophy". In the lecture, Cobb described his understanding of the *salugenic* and *pathogenic* aspects of religion. By *salugenic*, Cobb referred to the generative power of religion to improve society, enlighten and liberate individuals, and promote universal peace, charity, and justice. By *pathogenic*, Cobb referred to the destructive power of

professed and operational theology.

¹⁴ This is an audio lecture available online at the Center for Process Studies website: <http://www.ctr4process.org> : *Why faith needs process theology*. .

religion to fragment society, condition and constrain individuals, and promote conflict, intolerance, and inequity. By contrasting these aspects of religion, Cobb promoted Process-Relational thought as intrinsically salugenic in its interpretation of the universe, reality, and humanity. The essential nature of the God of Process-Relational theology is love, not power (as classical theology tends to emphasize). According to Cobb, the Process-Relational understanding of God as loving and merciful in all relations to the physical world promotes salugenic values for people of faith.¹⁵

Similarly, Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians believe that even mainline Liberal Christianity (wherein Process-Relational theology remains popular) can benefit from the spiritual renewal of Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. To Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, the “Pentecostal event” is of utmost importance to the Christian life and relate to the way in which God works in the world. Charismatic-Reformed theologian J. Rodman Williams (1997:2) described the “imperative of the Pentecostal experience”, that is, the operationalization of the Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatological *concursum*, as follows:

It is scarcely an exaggeration, therefore, to say that this rediscovery of the Pentecostal reality in our day is of vast importance. For it is not some theological or biblical matter of relatively minor significance, but concerns the whole dimension of power which is available for Christian life and witness.

Further, Williams (1997:1) noted that “the rediscovery of the Pentecostal reality” was critical to the global survival of Christendom. Such a rediscovery may be possible for liberal Christians who have embraced contemporary Process-Relational theology, but have either rejected or have not been exposed to

¹⁵ The concept of “love” in God’s essential nature is a core theological component of process thought. Process maintains that if God is truly loving and merciful, God cannot be “Almighty” or all-powerful. The tension between the process understanding of divine power, the classical understanding of divine power, and the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of divine power will form the basis for research in this study. An attempt to demonstrate salugenic religious values from a critical analysis of the data is the ultimate goal.

Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences. Opportunities for the mutual transformation of both traditions may be supported by the literature.

Pentecostal commentator Walter Hollenweger (1998:42) described three recent positive changes in global Pentecostalism that have opened the movement to ecumenical dialogue: scholarship, ecumenical openness, and explosive growth. Hollenweger noted that “more and more young Pentecostals are becoming scholars through reputable universities”. Hundreds of young Pentecostal scholars with doctorates have, according to Hollenweger, changed the “breadth and depth of Pentecostalism”. Hollenweger argued that the increase in education in Pentecostal-Charismatic communities has led to more ecumenical openness. David du Plessis, for example, was a pioneer in Pentecostal ecumenism.¹⁶ The explosive growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements has precipitated a need for educated scholars and ecumenical dialogue. The developments noted by Hollenweger are signs that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements are maturing toward what Cobb would identify as a more salugenic role in global society. Dialogue and analysis of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements in the light of Process-Relational theology may aid these developments, especially in terms of theological and interdisciplinary scholarship and ecumenism.

The central hypothesis of this doctoral thesis is that compatibilities exist between Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology in ways that other evangelical theologies are otherwise incompatible; thus, by identifying these compatibilities the salugenic qualities of the both traditions may be broadened in society and in the world. Further, this doctoral thesis is directed by the conviction of Cobb (1990) that Pentecostal-Charismatic theology could benefit from Process-Relational dialog to maintain its health and render it sustainable; but sustainable as a salugenic religious force in the world.

¹⁶ Perhaps the most important work by Du Plessis was *Pentecost Outside “Pentecost”* (1960), which opened the Pentecostal movement to other Christians worldwide.

Finally, because Pentecostal-Charismatic theology has been identified as a key factor in Open-Evangelical and Process-Relational dialogue, a critical analysis of its compatibility with Process-Relational theology may help bridge the gap between the traditionally fundamentalist evangelical movements and more philosophically and scientifically compatible movements such as process thought. Theological conceptions of *concursum* and its corresponding practical implications are the primary focus of this doctoral thesis.

2.7 Personal context

I am personally concerned about this doctoral thesis because of the professional and ministerial context in which I find myself. I am employed by the Vision International Education Network, a ministry comprised mainly of Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents. Vision International Education Network provides ministerial training and theological education in more than 150 nations worldwide. My extensive global travel and teaching experience in diverse Pentecostal-Charismatic faith communities worldwide has provided a unique context in which to consider the research topic at hand. My denominational heritage is United Methodist (Wesleyan) though I find myself teaching and working largely among Pentecostals and Charismatics. Thus, a critical comparison between a philosophical theology with Wesleyan roots (Process-Relational theology) and operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology has personal and professional significance for me. While I anticipate that this doctoral thesis will contribute to the body of literature in contemporary theology, it should likewise prove valuable to my personal life and work.

3.0 Delimitation and Statement of the Problem

The theological theme of *concursum* in both Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theologies are the central focus of the doctoral thesis. Three aspects of the research focus and intention will guide the review of literature (§3.1). The review of literature is delimited to focus on the specific problem of *concursum* by starting with broad survey of *concursum* as a philosophical and theological problem common among many traditions (§3.1-3.2). *Concursum* is a dialogical

impasse between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theological traditions. The focus of the literature review is delimited to deal with the specific problem in two specific traditions (§3.4-3.6). Open-Evangelical literature on *concurus* is surveyed only insofar as it informs the research problem (§3.7). A comparison of the theological theme of *concurus* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theologies is the ultimate goal of the thesis (§3.8). The research problem is thus stated as an open-ended question: Does the common ground (similarities) between the two traditions concerning the theme of *concurus* allow sufficient leverage to address significant differences?

3.1 Research Focus and Intention

The goal of each phase of doctoral thesis outlined below is to work toward a focus on the comparison of *concurus* in both traditions. Three aspects of divine power from the Pentecostal-Charismatic, Open-Evangelical, and Process-Relational perspectives will guide the review of literature: 1) conceptions of the inherent power of God and God's action in the world, 2) conceptions of the inherent power of humanity and human action in the world, and 3) God and humanity acting together in the world (*concurus*). Ultimately, the research will concentrate on the single issue of *concurus* for identifying compatibilities and incompatibilities between the two theological traditions.

3.2 *Concurus*: Divine and Human Power

Concurus is the theological term referring to the ways in which the action of God and the action of human beings interact to accomplish a goal. In philosophical terms, Kant described *concurus* as "causality with more than one cause". Where there is only a single cause (*causa solitaria*), there is no *concurus*. In the case of *concurus*, the effect is comprised of these causes in a united fashion. Kant described united causes as *concausae* (cooperating causes). Without cooperation, causes working simultaneously would not be, in Kant's terms, *complimentum ad sufficientiam* (cooperation to the point of sufficiency). In theological terms, *concurus* is the interaction of God and humanity as the causal forces of some particular effect.

Concursus is the primary theological theme of focus in the review of literature for this doctoral thesis. *Concursus* is the point of comparison between the Process-Relational and Pentecostal-Charismatic traditions throughout this doctoral thesis.

3.3 *Concursus*: A Theological Problem

Concursus is a longstanding theological and philosophical problem. The question of *conkursus* is: to what extent does God interact with humanity to accomplish God's goals and to what extent can humanity realistically interact with God? The problem is framed in the context of the ancient theological and philosophical debates of free-will versus determinism and Arminianism versus Calvinism. The goal of this doctoral thesis is not to resolve this debate or offer any solution to the philosophical and theological problems raised by *conkursus*. Rather, this doctoral thesis will be focused on a comparison of conceptions of the theme of *conkursus* in the two traditions of Process-Relational and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology.

3.4 Statement of the Research Problem

Divine power (and thus *conkursus*) may be regarded as the primary issue of dialogical impasse between Process-Relational theology and Open-Evangelical theologies. As Oord (2004) noted, Pentecostalism may be the key partner to bridge the gap between these two theological perspectives. By focusing on a critical analysis of the issue of *conkursus*, the review of literature is limited to a particular theme that is relevant to both theological traditions. The Pentecostal-Charismatic emphasis on pneumatology and the immanence of God is compared to Process-Relational conceptions of divine power and pantheism. Unique theological conceptions within Pentecostal theology that distinguish its compatibility with Process-Relational theologies from its Open-Evangelical counterparts are identified.

3.5 A brief survey of Pentecostal-Charismatic conceptions of *conkursus*

This study is focused primarily on the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *conkursus* and the empowerment of the believer as the primary means by which

God works in the world. The Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of the immanence, transcendence, and omnipotence of God is explored in comparison with Process-Relational theology. Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatological conceptions are critically analyzed in comparison with the panentheistic conception of God and the world in Process-Relational theology. Miracles, faith healing, and spiritual gifts are considered as examples where the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of divine power is expressed. The phenomenological changes in global Pentecostalism noted by Jenkins (2002) and Hollenweger (1998) serve as a platform for exploring dialogue between Pentecostal, Open-Evangelical, and Process-Relational theologies. Primary sources in the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition are utilized as a common historical denominator between the three contemporary movements.

3.6 A brief survey of Process-Relational conceptions of *concursum*

Process-Relational theology conceives God's power as persuasive and rejects the doctrine of omnipotence as coercion. This conception is critically compared with Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* to identify possible similarities and differences. Process-Relational theology insists upon a thoroughly interdependent relationship between God, the universe, and humanity. Hartshorne's term for God's dipolar nature was "surrelativism"; that is, God is the supreme expression of universal relativity. The absoluteness and transcendent supremacy of God is constituted by the everlasting and maximal relativity and immanence of God. Hartshorne, in the Whiteheadian tradition, maintained that God is intrinsically related to the world and eternally affected by changes in the material world. *Concursum*, for Hartshorne, can be summed up in his doctrine of contributionism, whereby "true religion is contributing value to God which [God] would otherwise lack" (Hartshorne 1967:274).

The review of literature is focused on four primary theologians in contemporary Process-Relational theology: Charles Hartshorne, John B. Cobb, Jr., David Ray Griffin, and Marjorie Hewitt Suchoki. The philosophical work of Alfred North Whitehead is not directly engaged (but is occasionally referenced) within this

doctoral thesis.

3.7 A brief survey of Open-Evangelical conceptions of *concursum*

On the issue of omniscience and an undetermined future, Open-Evangelical theology has in common many aspects of Process-Relational theology, but its primary point of impasse is the issue of omnipotence, which it maintains. Open theists concur with process theists that God cannot determine a creature's decisions without depriving it of its freedom. Open theists like William Hasker and John Sanders speak of God as "a risk-taker", but unlike process theists, insist that God can still perform miracles (in the biblical sense) and guarantee the ultimate triumph of good over evil (Pinnock 1994:151; Sanders 1998). Open theists maintain that Open-Evangelical theology bridges contemporary process theology on the one hand and traditional-classical theism on the other. Not unlike Process-Relational theology, Open-Evangelical theology maintains that human beings have enough freedom to partly determine the future. Like classical theism, however, Open-Evangelical theology holds that human freedom is not inherent; rather, it is a contingent gift from God.

Open theist Clark Pinnock (1994:103-104) described the Open-Evangelical view of human freedom as follows:

God rules in such a way as to uphold the created structures and, because he gives liberty to his creatures, is happy to accept the future as open, not closed, and a relationship with the world that is dynamic, not static ... We see the universe as a context in which there are real choices, alternatives and surprises. God's openness means that God is open to the changing realities of history, that God cares about us and lets what we do impact him.

Open theists attempt to resolve some apparent inconsistencies in the classical theology of God such as evil, sin, and *concursum*.¹⁷ For open theists, prayer has

¹⁷ These "inconsistencies" are described at length by Pinnock and Basinger and establish

real value, because humankind can influence God's decisions in an undetermined future. The affirmation of prayer and human-divine cooperation is compatible with the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concursum* and the doctrine of Holy Spirit baptism as an empowerment to service with God in the world. Because of its similarities with both of Process-Relational and Pentecostal-Charismatic theologies, Open-Evangelical sources are analyzed in this study and utilized as a bridge between them, but is not a significant focus of this doctoral thesis.

The works of Open theist Clark Pinnock, *Church in the Power of the Holy Spirit: The Promise of Pentecostal Ecclesiology* (2006), and *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (1996), are utilized as a bridge between Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology and praxis (ecclesiology and missiology) and Process-Relational theologies. Pentecostal-Charismatic phenomenology such as claims of miraculous occurrences, faith healing, prophetic insight, and divine intervention are critically analyzed from a Process-Relational perspective.

3.8 Comparison

This doctoral thesis is focused on a comparison of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology, beginning with a broad review of academic literature from both traditions that eventually focuses on the specific theological theme of *concursum* in both traditions. Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology is analyzed in comparison with the philosophical aspects of Process-Relational theology.

The similarities and the differences between the respective theological positions concerning *concursum* are identified and assessed as to whether the common ground (similarities) allows sufficient leverage to address significant differences. Differences are categorized according to apparent differences and significant

their practical formulation of Open theism as a response to experiential contradictions rather than theological paradoxes or rational fallacies.

differences, apparent differences being superficial or cultural nuances and significant differences being clear theological distinctions. Comparison is conducted by means of nominally ranking similarities and differences.

A constructive theological reinterpretation of *concurus* in light of compatibilities and incompatibilities between both traditions are proposed. Identified compatibilities are synthesized to formulate a distinct theological interpretation of *concurus* that utilizes concepts from both traditions. A brief analysis of the social implications of the research is offered in a concluding chapter. The exploration of social implications is brief and non-exhaustive, as the emphasis is primarily of a theological rather than sociological nature.

4.0 Hypothesis

The central hypothesis of this doctoral thesis is that compatibilities between Process-Relational theology and operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology are supported by the literature. Inevitably, incompatibilities are also identified. If sufficient leverage does not support the possibility of overcoming such differences, options for continued dialogue and potential compromise are proposed.

5.0 Research Procedures

The research for this doctoral thesis is conducted from an exploratory, inductive qualitative approach. The methodology is hermeneutical, comparing the works of authors in both Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theologies. While the research is inductive, the preliminary hypothesis states that compatibility between operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology is possible. The central hypothesis is tested by means of a comparative review of the literature.

The research procedure consisted of eight phases. The first four phases of the project consisted of broad surveys of literature in the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition, Process-Relational tradition, Open-Evangelical tradition, as well as a broad survey of the theological theme of *concurus* (§5.1-5.4). The next two phases of the project consisted of a focused review of literature on the theme of

concurus in the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions (§5.5-5.6). The final two phases of research consisted of a comparison of the findings and analysis of the implications, thereby formulating a conclusion for this doctoral thesis (§5.7-5.8).

5.1 Research Phase I: Historical overview of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements

The first phase of research included a focus on a survey of literature related to the historical context and development Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. The emergence of Pentecostalism from Arminian-Wesleyan traditions is traced. In this phase of research, a broad historical perspective is developed, describing how and why the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements emerged and why they have experienced such explosive growth worldwide. The literature review of this phase is framed on a survey of the operational theology (praxis) of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, rather than ethereal professed theologies, in an attempt to analyze compatibilities with Process-Relational theology. The research findings of this phase formed Chapter 2 of this doctoral thesis.

In an effort to narrow the review of literature to key theologians representative of Pentecostalism and to focus on the issue of divine power, the review of literature is limited to selected primary works.

5.2 Research Phase II: Historical overview of Process-Relational theology

The second phase of research included a focus on a survey of literature related to the historical context and development of Process-Relational theology. The emergence of process philosophy and its popularity among intellectual communities is explored. The review of literature is focused on the role of Process-Relational theology in the Arminian-Wesleyan traditions and why it has gained popularity among free-will theists, including a brief exploration of the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead. Themes within process philosophy are limited to those relevant to the research problem. The nature of God, dipolar theism, and panentheism are surveyed. The research findings of this

phase formed Chapter 3 of this doctoral thesis.

The Wesleyan roots of contemporary Process-Relational theologies are explored by utilizing volumes such as *Process Theology and the Wesleyan Witness* (1984) by Schubert Ogden, *Coming Home: Wesley, Whitehead, and Women* (1987) by Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, and *Reconceptions of Divine Power in John Wesley: Panentheism and Trinitarian Theology* (2001) by Tyron L. Inbody. The seminal work by Bryan P. Stone and Thomas J. Oord, *Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love: Process and Wesleyan Theologies in Dialogue* (2001) are relied upon in this doctoral thesis. Sources focusing on the Wesleyan roots of Process-Relational theology also included Lodahl (2003), Lodahl (2005), and Staples (1977).

In an attempt to delimit the diversity of theological opinion that exists within Process-Relational theology, the literature of the research study is focused rather than exhaustive.

5.3 Research Phase III: Historical overview of Open-Evangelical theology

The third phase of research included a focus on a survey of literature related to the historical context and development Open-Evangelical theology. The relation of Open-Evangelical theology to Arminian-Wesleyan traditions is traced. The question of why Open-Evangelical theology has gained popularity in recent years and why it may serve as a key for comparing Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology are investigated in this phase of research. This phase relied heavily on the primary works of the contributors to *Searching for an Adequate God: A Dialog between Process and Free Will Theists*, edited by Cobb and Pinnock (2000). The research conducted in this phase formed a minor contribution to Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Contemporary evangelical theologians currently espousing the open view of God include Gordon Olson, Winkie Pratney, Richard Rice, Gregory Boyd, Thomas Jay Oord (a process theist), Clark Pinnock, John E. Sanders, C. Peter Wagner, William Hasker, and David Basinger. Primary sources in Open-Evangelical theology that are explored include Basinger (1996), Rice (1980), Pinnock (1994),

Pinnock (1975), Pinnock (1976), Pinnock (2003), Sanders (1998), Hasker (1998), Boyd (2000), Pinnock (2001), Hasker (2004). The text *Searching for an adequate God*, edited by Clark Pinnock and John B. Cobb, contains a dialogue between open-evangelical and process-relational theists and are utilized extensively in exploring the windows of opportunity for dialogue between Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, Open-Evangelical theology, and Process-Relational theology.

5.4 Research Phase IV: Historical overview of *concurus*

The fourth phase of research included a focus on a survey of literature related to the historical problem of *concurus* both in philosophy and in the Christian theological tradition. A broad survey will help set the problem of *concurus* in its proper historical context. The ways in which the interaction between human action and divine action may be understood are explored. The research findings of this phase were documented in Chapter 4 of this doctoral thesis.

5.5 Research Phase V: Theological survey of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus*

The fifth phase of research will include a focus on a survey of literature related to the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concurus*, especially in light of the Pentecostal experience of Holy Spirit Baptism. This phase of the research relied on the following sources: *Spirit and Power* (date) by Menzies, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* by Anderson, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* by Jacobson, *Renewal Theology* by Williams, and the *International Dictionary of Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements* eds. Burgess and Van Der Maas. The research findings from this phase are documented in Chapter 5 of this doctoral thesis.

Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology is surveyed insofar as it relates to the theme of *concurus*. Primary sources included the following: Dietterich (1987), Lodahl (1992), Pardington (1976), Pittenger (1974), Rae (1984), Reynolds (1983), and Woodhouse (1972). *Pneumatology: the Holy Spirit in ecumenical, international, and contextual perspective* by Veli Matti Kärkkäinen (2006) is a

primary resource for the survey of ecumenical pneumatology.

The Journal of Pentecostal Theology, *Encounter: Journal for Pentecostal Ministry*,¹⁸ and the European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism (GloPent)¹⁹ were utilized as resources in this thesis.

5.6 Research Phase VI: Theological survey of Process-Relational *concursum*

The sixth phase of research included a focus on a survey of literature related to the Process-Relational understanding of the *concursum* problem. This phase of the research relied on *Omnipotence and other theological mistakes* (1984) by Hartshorne, *The handbook of Process theology* (2006) eds. McDaniel and Bowman, *Process theology* by Cobb, *The process perspective* (2003) by Cobb and Griffin, and *Process theology* (1993) by Mesle. The research conducted in this phase formed Chapter 6 of this thesis.

5.7 Research Phase VII: Comparison of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* with Process-Relational *concursum*

The seventh phase of research included a critical comparison the findings of Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concursum*. By analyzing similarities and differences, points of comparability and incompatibility are identified. The similarities and the differences between the respective theological positions concerning the theological theme of *concursum* are assessed in order to establish whether the common ground (similarities) allow sufficient leverage to address significant differences. The hypothesis was tested. The research findings of this phase formed Chapter 7 of this thesis. Further, this phase constitutes the core of this doctoral thesis; the research problem and research question are directly engaged in this phase.

¹⁸ Published by the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS), Springfield, Missouri.

¹⁹ An initiative by three leading European Universities in Pentecostal studies networking academic research on Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

5.8 Research Phase VIII: Conclusions

The final phase of research includes a proposal for a constructive theological reinterpretation of both traditions' conceptions of *concursum* in light of compatibilities and incompatibilities with one another. Identified compatibilities are synthesized to formulate a distinct theological interpretation of *concursum* that utilizes concepts from both traditions. Social and ecclesial implications are briefly explored to formulate the final chapter and the conclusion of this doctoral thesis.



CHAPTER 2: The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: A Brief Historical Survey

2.1 Introduction to the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements

This chapter consists of an historical overview of the theological constructs that characterize the global rise of the Pentecostals-Charismatic movements. Beginning with ancient notions of Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality, the survey demonstrates an historical shift from eighteenth century Wesleyan pietistic sects to the contemporary Neo -Charismatic movements. A brief overview of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology is also explored. The survey culminates with an overview of the operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology in a global context.

A marginal religious sect in its infancy, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement grew to become not only the largest single group in Protestantism (McClung 1994:11), but also the fastest growing at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is worthwhile to note that by the mid-twentieth century historian William McLoughlin asserted that Pentecostalism did not constitute a dynamic new force in American religion and that Pentecostalism, like other reactionary religious movements in American history, would fade away with time (McLoughlin 1986:47). However, that was far from the case. As classical Pentecostalism matured and new sects developed, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements continued to grow rapidly throughout the twentieth century. Theological and sociological reasons for the growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements are considered insofar as they are relevant to the research question.

It is difficult to frame a proper survey of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology without noting the conclusion of Pentecostal observer Walter Hollenweger (1998) that worldwide Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and practice is “characterized by irregularity”. The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have been historically irregular, diverse, and fragmented, thus making broad theological generalizations difficult. Near the end of the twentieth century, David Barrett noted that

Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents numbered more than “400 million and growing by 19 million per year and 54,000 per day” with “amazing variety” and more than “38 major categories, 11,000 Pentecostal denominations, and 3,000 independent Pentecostal denominations spread across 8,000 ethnolinguistic cultures and 7,000 languages” (McClung 1994:11). As the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements grow exponentially in the developing world, the diversity of contextualized theologies among differing socio-cultural groups is undeniable. However, there exist core similarities amidst the diversity that united the groups under one Pentecostal-Charismatic banner.

Theologically, most Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations align with contemporary evangelicalism in that they emphasize the authority of the Bible and the need for the transformation of the lives of individuals through personal faith in Jesus Christ. Further, because many Pentecostal denominations descended primarily from Methodism and the Wesleyan Holiness movements, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend to embrace a generally Arminian, freewill, soteriology. It should be noted, however, that Pentecostal-Charismatic theology was largely experimental, as evidenced by its many sects and factions. In relation to the broader Christian traditions, Lederly (1994:22) noted that Pentecostal-Charismatic theology was “still in its infancy”, even by the dawn of the twenty-first century.

One of the most prominent characteristics that distinguished the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements from broader evangelicalism was an emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. Most Pentecostals believed that everyone who was “genuinely saved” has experienced the Holy Spirit. But unlike most other Christians, Pentecostals and Charismatics believed that there is a second work of the Holy Spirit called the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit”, in which the Holy Spirit dwelt more fully within individual Christians. The motif of Spirit Baptism came to be the “most distinctive feature of classical Pentecostalism” (Land 1993:18). The “second work of grace” of the Holy Spirit is understood as empowering believers for Christian service. The doctrine thereby defines the uniqueness of Pentecostal pneumatology. Anglican theologian Alister McGrath noted that “the rise of the

charismatic movement within virtually every mainstream church has ensured that the Holy Spirit figures prominently on the theological agenda. A new experience of the reality and power of the Spirit has had a major impact upon the theological discussion of the person and work of the Holy Spirit” (McGrath 1994:240).

Most Pentecostals cited the phenomenon of “speaking in tongues”, also known as *glossolalia*, as the normative proof or evidence of Holy Spirit baptism. Some Charismatics have adopted a more liberal view claiming that other evidences of Holy Spirit baptism exist. The doctrine of “tongues” as the initial evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit is uniquely Pentecostal and one of the few doctrines that distinguished it from broader Charismatic-Renewal theology which generally claimed diverse evidences. While American Pentecostals²⁰ tended to focus on the experience of “speaking in tongues”, most Pentecostals and Charismatics worldwide emphasized that God had given a multiplicity of supernatural “gifts”, a uniquely divine empowerment of human agency, and is thereby actively involved in human affairs. The doctrine and experience of speaking in tongues is a distinguishing element of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, but the doctrine is not a primary focus of this doctoral thesis.

The key to Pentecostal-Charismatic theology is its pneumatologically framed spirituality. Hollenweger described the Pentecostal understanding of supernatural gifts as an expression of “diverse gifts to diverse people”; a definition Hollenweger admitted was “not a strictly theological definition but a phenomenological one” (Hollenweger 1998:42). Pentecostalism was invigorated by a spirit that declared God to be active in this world and adherents were unafraid to demonstrate such activity. The Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences of divine healings, miracles, and speaking in tongues reinforced the pneumatological emphasis of God’s activity in the world and among humankind. Pentecostal-

²⁰ Such as the General Council of the Assemblies of God (USA), Springfield, Missouri, the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, and the Church of God in Christ. The most significant South African Pentecostal denomination is the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM).

Charismatic theology thereby became intensely practical. The immanence of God, as the Holy Spirit, became the central focus of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and practice. The operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology in daily and social life is a focus of this thesis and a contact point for comparison and critical analysis.

2.2 Overview and Historical Framework

Pentecostal-Charismatic movements traced their history to the day of Pentecost and point to a variety of documents in early church history and medieval church history to demonstrate a continuing witness of their theological position. However, the majority of Pentecostal-Charismatic history is confined to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. For purposes of this survey the historical stages identified by Vinson Synan (1986) are utilized to trace the development of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Each stage of historical development brought different emphases and different conceptions of the work of Holy Spirit to the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.

The first major stage in the historical development of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements was the Wesleyan-Holiness movements of the nineteenth century. The Wesleyan Pentecostals emphasized the Wesleyan doctrine of the “second blessing” of instantaneous and entire sanctification. Within the Wesleyan-Holiness movement, the second blessing evolved into a third blessing, evidenced by speaking in tongues.

The second major stage in the historical development of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements was the classical Pentecostal movement (referred to as the “Baptistic Pentecostals” by Synan²¹) that commenced in the United States of America in 1901 CE at Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California and formalized

²¹ Though I am inclined to utilize the historical stages proposed by Synan, I prefer to use the typical convention of “classical Pentecostalism” rather than “Baptistic Pentecostalism”, which is rarely seen in the broader literature.

with the organization of the Assemblies of God in 1914 CE. Most organized Pentecostal groups after 1914 CE adhered to the doctrine of Spirit baptism much in line with that which was formalized by the Assemblies of God. Major theological divisions and conflicts emerged during the classical Pentecostal period including the Apostolic Faith Movement led by Charles Fox Parham, the Tongues Movement, and the Latter Rain Movement. The classical Pentecostal movement eventually gave rise to several Evangelical-Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), and the Church of God in Christ. The classical Pentecostal movement also launched missionary endeavors which spread the Pentecostal message globally, forming denominations such as the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in South Africa. Synan noted a third major stage, the Oneness Pentecostals, who separated from classical Pentecostalism through a series of doctrinal controversies; though the Oneness Pentecostals are peripherally considered, they are not a major focus of this survey.

The fourth major stage in the historical development of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements emerged during the 1960s and was known as the Charismatic Renewal movement (or neo-Pentecostalism). The movement emerged outside of traditional holiness-Pentecostal circles. The charismatic renewal movement differed from classical Pentecostalism in that it penetrated many mainline Protestant and the Roman Catholic congregations. Because of its situation outside conventional fundamentalist circles, the Charismatic Renewal movements were considered to be “less dogmatic” than classical Pentecostalism.

The fifth major stage in the historical development of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements occurred in the 1980s and 1990s, and was generally known as the Restoration Movement or the Third Wave.²² The Vineyard Movement and its leader John Wimber, as well as the “Toronto Blessing” and “Pensacola Revival”

²² “Third Wave of the Holy Spirit” is term coined by Neo-Charismatic phenomenologist C. Peter Wagner. Wagner prefers not to be called a theologian or a sociologist; rather, he defines his own contributions to the Neo-Charismatic movements as “phenomenological”.

were significant to the theological and practical developments that occurred during this period.

The sixth major stage in the historical development of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements was categorized by Synan as the independent movements of the developing world that contribute to their global heterogeneity. The rapid growth of the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements that occurred during the 1990s and early 2000s were largely contextualized and domesticated sects that emerged primarily in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.

In this chapter, the literature surrounding the six historical stages of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements proposed by Synan is surveyed, beginning with an early church and culminating with the present situation of the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Throughout the survey a functional shift is documented from theological conceptions of pneumatology to an operationalization of the otherwise spiritual and pietistic theology that has characterized the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Following this survey, the implications of the evolution of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology through its six historical stages of development are explored.

2.3 Early Church history and the diminishing use of the *charismata*

Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians recognized that their contemporary experiences and theology had to be reconciled with church history. While the New Testament practice of speaking in tongues was central to the doctrine of Holy Spirit Baptism for Pentecostals, it was notable that evidence of the practice in early church literature is conspicuously scarce. Church historians note that the practice of speaking in tongues altogether ceased during the fifth century CE. Hippolytus (c. 170-236) asserted that through the work of the Holy Spirit, the traditions of the apostles would be preserved (Kärkkäinen 2002:40). After the time of Origen (c. 184-254 CE) most Western church scholars observed that the charismatic gifts were for apostolic times and had ceased. Origen denied that prophesy still occurred in the church and implied that Paul's claim to

supernaturally “speaking in tongues” was his ability to speak Greek and Latin. However, Origen, as well as Novation, regarded spiritual gifts such as healing and exorcism as evidence validating the power of Christ. Justin Martyr believed that the *charisms* would accompany the church to the end (Congar 1993:65). Cyprian stated that the miraculous was necessary to bring “ignorant men and infidels” into the church, although this was conceived as the prerogative of God alone (Anderson 2004:21).

Generally, theologians outside the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements assert that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit had ceased²³ with the death of the last apostle and the completion of the New Testament canon. The assumption was made that supernatural gifts were imperative only for purposes of establishing the institutional church. Subsequent to the establishment of the church, the miraculous gifts, including speaking in tongues, were no longer necessary. Nevertheless, Eastern orthodoxy has argued that “in these later days, [the] charismatic ministries have been less in evidence, but they have never been wholly extinguished” (Ware 1993:250).

Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians, however, largely argue that the practice of speaking in tongues did not cease at the end of the apostolic age, but rather diminished from common use due to the rise of bishops, the development of formal liturgy, and the preoccupation with formal intellectual debate. Some Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians maintain that the rise of bishops and various ecclesiastical offices stifled lay sensitivity to the activity of the Holy Spirit in church life. Clergy restricted the laity from practicing supernatural gifts; therefore, they gradually waned from general practice. As clergy performed liturgical rites in ceremonial public worship, supernatural expression (such as speaking in tongues)

²³ Cessationist positions such as that of Ruthven (1993) are helpful in understanding the historical absence and decline of the *charismata*. Note that I use the word “miraculous” here to distinguish supernatural or sensational gifts from the broader understanding of spiritual gifts in the Christian tradition.

gradually diminished from usage. Montatus was the first to make a distinction between the church of the Spirit and the church of the bishops (Kärkkäinen 2002:40). Further, the involvement of Early Church in intellectual doctrinal debates may have distracted the general Christian population from practicing spiritual gifts.

Nevertheless, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents maintained that the use of spiritual gifts was preserved by a faithful “remnant” of followers who perpetuated the tradition until the rise of Pentecostalism in the late nineteenth century. New Testament theologian James Dunn argued that from the beginning of the Christian movement, enthusiastic groups wanted to keep alive the “vivid flame of charismatic experience that was characteristic and central to early Christianity” (Dunn 1991). Thus, the “salient characteristic of Pentecostalism is its belief in the present-day manifestation of spiritual gifts, such as miraculous healing, prophecy, and most distinctively *glossolalia*. Pentecostals affirm that these spiritual gifts (*charismata*) are granted by the Holy Spirit and are normative in contemporary church life and ministry” (Ruthveran 1993:14). The terminology employed by Charles Parham and other early Pentecostals prior to 1909 was the “apostolic faith”. The Pentecostal experience was regarded as a last-days restoration of Christianity to that of the faith of the New Testament Apostles (Blumhoffer 1985:154).

2.4 Wesleyan-Holiness Movements

This section includes a brief survey of Wesleyan theology insofar as it relates the rise of Pentecostalism. Connections are drawn between Wesleyan soteriology and the emergence of the doctrine of Spirit baptism. American holiness movements and the later factions that led to the birth of various denominations, including classical Pentecostalism as a distinct movement are included in this survey.

The first historical stage of Pentecostalism traced its modern roots to the evangelistic ministry of John Wesley (1703-1791 CE), the founder of Methodism. Wesley’s proclamation of “inward and outward” holiness as well as religious experience invigorated the extensive eighteenth century evangelical revivals

(Blumhoffer 1985:158). Theologians such as Paul Fleisch, Fredrick Bruner, Walter Hollenweger, and Vinson Synan, among others, recognized the indebtedness of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements to the revival preaching and doctrinal formulations of John Wesley (Dieter 1975:59). Synan (1971:13) deemed John Wesley the “spiritual and intellectual father” of the modern Pentecostal movements. Wesley’s soteriological emphasis on a second “crisis experience subsequent to conversion” was one of several theological formulations that prepared the context from which organized classical Pentecostalism would eventually emerge (Williams & Waldvogel 1975:77). Modern Pentecostal theology, in its various forms, was thereby primarily Wesleyan in its soteriology.

John Wesley deemed sanctification an enduring process, and asserted that entire sanctification was possible, but progressive. Wesley’s soteriology informed his Christian praxis, which was formulated on the basis of love (Bosch 1991:258). The connection between sanctification and love was a unifying aspect of Wesley’s theology and a means by which Wesley attempted to humanize Christian praxis. Wynkoop (1972) asserted that love is the central dynamic of Wesleyanism (Wynkoop 1972:21). Elaborating the Wesleyan formation of the doctrine of Christian Perfection, Wynkoop (1972:306-307) stated:

In Wesleyanism, sanctification is both an imputation and an impartation. It has in it elements of crisis and process. It is both a separation and a uniting, a cleansing and a discipleship. It is objective and subjective. It is a theology and a personal experience, theory and life. And yet it is a unit of experience and a unifying experience.

Wesley’s soteriological argument for entire sanctification was referred to as the “Doctrine of Christian perfection”. The basis of the doctrine was an assertion that there were “two separate phases of experience for the believer: the first, conversion, or justification, and the second, Christian perfection, or sanctification”. Wesley did not teach a doctrine of “sinless perfection”. Rather, “the perfection which he taught was a perfection of motives and desires; sinless perfection would come only after death” (Synan 1971:18). Entire sanctification, as confused with sinless perfection, was Wesley’s most distinctive but most often misunderstood teaching (Outler 1991:51). When Wesley was asked what Christian

perfection (entire sanctification) meant, he often replied: “It is loving God with the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves” (according to Dunning 1988:488). Though Wesley’s response may seem overly simplistic at face value, the idea that entire sanctification was possible, even at the most rudimentary level was his most significant contribution to later movements that would claim his legacy.

A common strain of Wesleyan theology can be traced throughout the major historical stages of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, in particular those movements which originated in the United States. Methodism, American Revivalism and the National Holiness movements, all emphasized a “second work of grace” after regeneration. The sanctifying second work of grace was primarily pneumatological: sanctification was maintained by “reckoning daily on the fact of the union of the believer with Christ’s death and resurrection” as well as “offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit” (Blumhoffer 1985:158). The Wesleyan role of the Holy Spirit in sanctification led to later theological developments in Pentecostal pneumatology.

Methodism made a theological contribution to the rise of Pentecostalism while American revivalism made a methodological contribution. In the American revivals and the National Holiness movements of the nineteenth century, the terminology “baptism of the Holy Spirit” was employed to describe the second work of grace subsequent to the regeneration experience. The revivalist and holiness movements stressed individual faith and the emotional aspect of the Christian experience, demonstrating strong Wesleyan roots. Rationalism was regarded as a stifling of the Holy Spirit. While the various forms of Wesleyanism²⁴ generally emphasized a second work of grace, Pentecostalism supplemented the doctrine with “evidence” of Holy Spirit Baptism. Nevertheless, Pentecostal soteriology maintained traces of its Wesleyan heritage.

²⁴ For purposes of this study, I did not explore the Baptist factions of Pentecostalism; rather, I focused solely on the Wesleyan movements.

2.4.1 American Holiness Movements of the 1800s

The first among American religious movements to claim Wesley's theological heritage were the American Holiness movements. The Holiness movements emerged in the nineteenth century and advocated a modification of Wesley's original teaching of Christian Perfection. While Wesley's doctrine of Christian Perfection allowed for both gradual and instantaneous perfection, Holiness teachers proclaimed a "definite second work of grace" that was always instantaneous (Blumhoffer 1985:18). Holiness teachers were concerned with personal perfection as well as a perfection of American society. Holiness advocates were alienated by the growing wealth and impiety of mainline American churches. Discontent to remain in mainline churches, including organized Methodism, Holiness factions formed new religious communities committed to the theological doctrine of perfectionism (Dieter 1996:199-200).

In the mid-nineteenth century, Phoebe Palmer and Sarah Langford, two female evangelists from New York, both daughters of a devout Methodist physician, claimed to have experienced entire sanctification (in the Wesleyan sense). Affirming the teachings of John Wesley on the doctrine of Christian perfection, Palmer and Langford launched a campaign to teach and preach the holiness dogma of instantaneous and entire sanctification. Palmer played a significant role in spreading the Wesleyan soteriology throughout the United States and Europe. Palmer authored several books, including *The Way of Holiness*; was largely considered a seminal work within the Holiness movements.

Unlike Wesley, however, Palmer asserted that sanctification was an instantaneous event that was not progressive; that is, sanctification is an experience that is both entire and instantaneous. Palmer and Langford attempted to revive American Methodism by starting "Tuesday Meetings" for the promotion of the instantaneous sanctification. The experience was affectionately referred to as the "Second Blessing of the Christian Life". The doctrine of instantaneous sanctification taught by Palmer and Langford contributed to the birth of classical Pentecostalism insofar as they maintained that entire sanctification was a second work of grace after salvation. As a second work of grace, entire sanctification was a precursor to

the later Pentecostal dogma of Holy Spirit Baptism subsequent to regeneration for the empowerment of Christian life and service.

The Holiness movement evolved and was comprised of other preachers such as William Boardman, Hannah Smith, and Joseph H. Smith, all of whom taught doctrines of two “works of grace”. Common to the Holiness teachers was a claim that the second work of grace occurred after a justifying or regenerative experience and concerned an event related to sanctification. According to the array of Holiness teachers, the two works of grace were considered “the cure for sin” and elapsed time between the justification and sanctification experiences was not requisite. Sin was regarded as an act or a thought rather than a state of being. Christian Perfection (or entire sanctification), was therefore seen as relative to the knowledge and ability of each individual. Within the bounds of Holiness dogma, an individual was perfected to the degree that the individual did not consciously practice sin in his or her life. Thus, the Holiness doctrine of sanctification was quite operational²⁵ rather than merely professed. The American Holiness movements had important social consequences and validated the reform efforts of “individuals who wanted to reform society as well as their souls” (Blumhoffer 1985:19).

4.2.4 Holiness Separations and Wesleyan factions

The American Holiness Movement, which functioned largely as a fundamentalist alignment of Wesley’s Methodism, produced four significant outcomes that contributed to the future development of Pentecostalism. The first significant outcome of the Holiness Movement was the rising popularity of the colloquial

²⁵ The operationalization of Holiness dogma is important in understanding later operationalization of Pentecostal dogma. The idea of entire sanctification as an act or practice is similar to the very practical nature of Pentecostalism. While the second work of grace for both Holiness and Pentecostal adherents is thoroughly experiential, it also directly affects praxis. For this reason, emphasis will be placed on *operational* Pentecostal-Charismatic theology as it relates to conceptions of power, rather than on professed theology, which tends to lack substance and is less tangibly assessed.

religious phrase “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” as a synonym for the doctrine of entire sanctification as a second work of grace. The second outcome of the Holiness Movement was the rise in popularity of the phenomenon of speaking in tongues throughout the 1870s. The third outcome of the Holiness Movement was the emergence of the Keswick Conventions in the 1870s in England. The fourth outcome was the emergence of the Salvation Army which also maintained that the second work of grace was a distinct baptism. Though these four outcomes of the Holiness Movement were separations that led to new sects and doctrines, and each contributed to the impending rise of Pentecostalism as a new movement that would in turn contribute a new theological perspective to the ongoing Holiness Movements. The first three separatist groups from Methodism retained the “holiness” perspective in their creedal formulations and practical operationalizations of the doctrine of sanctification as well as a strong commitment to the doctrine of two distinctive works of grace. However, the fourth separatist group, evolved into the classical Pentecostals in the early twentieth century when a third work of grace was added to the Holiness definitions of Spirit Baptism.

Several national Holiness groups were formed in the United States due to the separations and factions within the American Holiness Movements. The Central Holiness Association (a group of affiliated churches in New England), the Association of Pentecostal Churches in America, the New Testament Church of Christ, the International Holiness Church, and the Independent Holiness Church all emerged as new denominations and religious fellowships. Smaller groups merged and formed the Church of the Nazarene. Groups such as the Pentecostal Mission, the Pentecostal Church of Scotland and England, the Layman’s Holiness Association also joined the Church of the Nazarene. The Church of the Nazarene was organized as a formal denomination and a member of the National

Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in the United States.²⁶

The contemporary Pentecostal-Charismatic movements found their genesis in Holiness factions of early Methodism. Pentecostalism was rooted in an “experiential hunger”, a “rebirth of interest among Wesleyans for a recovery of the eighteenth century message of John Wesley and his followers” (Menzies 2000:17). The Spurling Revival was a significant event that perhaps marked the beginning of the Pentecostal Movements in the United States. The Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), grew out of the Spurling Revival, and its participants taught the doctrine of a third work of grace following sanctification, which they called the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit”. Branches of Pentecostalism emerged from the Wesleyan-Holiness factions ranging from Reformed to Unitarian traditions (Wacker 1988:199-200). However, the most significant new development was the brand of classical Pentecostalism that emerged from the Azusa Street Revival in 1901.

2.5 Classical Pentecostalism

This section includes a survey of the development of classical Pentecostalism as it emerged from the Wesleyan-Holiness movements of the nineteenth century. The events of Azusa Street, various doctrinal conflicts surrounding the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the Emergence of the Assemblies of God are explored. Further, this section includes a summary of the theological characteristics of classical Pentecostalism. The section concludes with a brief survey of the Healing revivals as a catalyst in the rise of the Charismatic-Renewal movements.

According to most Pentecostal scholars, the event that occurred on January 1, 1901 CE in the bible school of Charles Fox Parham in Topeka, Kansas marked the official beginning of the classical Pentecostal movement. Parham advocated an

²⁶ It is noteworthy that Thomas Jay Oord, an evangelical open/process theist, is a Church of the Nazarene theologian and serves on faculty Northwest Nazarene University in the United States. Oord’s work on open theism will be utilized throughout the study as a bridge between Pentecostal Evangelicals and Process Theists.

“Apostolic Faith” with an emphasis on the empowering work of the Holy Spirit; however, Parham did not initially propose a “uniform initial evidence” of Spirit Baptism (Blumhoffer 1985:25). Agnes Ozman, a student at Parham’s bible school, had expected that she would “speak in tongues” as confirmation that she had been baptized by the Holy Spirit. Ozman received the gift of tongues as Charles Parham laid hands on her and prayed. Although other individuals had rediscovered the tongues phenomenon prior to this event, it was significant in that speaking in tongues was identified as the evidential sign of the post-conversion Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Parham himself, along with other students, later spoke in tongues as well. Thus began the first wave of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, classical Pentecostalism, and its emphasis on Holy Spirit Baptism with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues (Goff 2002:957).

William Seymour, a working-class African American preacher, attended Charles Parham’s bible school in Houston, Texas where he was taught the doctrine of the third work of grace: the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the accompanying phenomenon of speaking in tongues as the outward evidential sign (Blumhoffer 1985:28). In 1906, Seymour was invited to the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, California and was thus credited with commencing the Azusa Street Revival. The events of Azusa Street allowed classical Pentecostalism to rapidly spread across the United States and eventually around the globe (Burgess & Van Der Maas 2002:349).

The early expansion of Pentecostalism was not coincidental. In the early twentieth century, the city of Los Angeles, California experienced expansive population growth along with an influx of holiness sects and teachers. However, it should be noted that the Welsh Revival also ignited the revival in Los Angeles (Blumhoffer 1985:20-22). Joseph Smale, who visited the Welsh Revival, was convinced that a revival was God’s will for the Los Angeles, and thus, started a church called “The New Testament Congregation” with the intention of starting a revival similar to that in Wales (Burgess & Van Der Maas 2002:1188). Another notable contributor to the Azusa Street Revival was Frank Bartleman, who initiated a series of intense Holiness meetings. F.B. Meyer, who like Smale was also involved in the Welsh

Revival, likewise played an important role with Bartleman in preparing for the Los Angeles revival on Azusa Street (Burgess & Van Der Maas 2002:346).

2.5.1 Global effects of Azusa Street

The Azusa Street Revival provided classical Pentecostalism with an international platform that led to its rapid growth as a global movement. Classical Pentecostalism first spread throughout the United States in various geographic regions such as the Pacific Northwest via Florence Crawford, the Midwest via Rachel Sizelove, and major cities such as Chicago via W.H. Durham and others. Classical Pentecostalism, in its relative infancy, also spread to other states such as Indiana and Ohio, the New England states, and the Southern states. The effects of the Azusa Street Revival spread to Canada, primarily through the work of W.H. Durham. Europe was affected by the revival through the work of Thomas Ball Barrett. As the effects of Azusa Street reverberated throughout North America and Europe, the influence and legitimacy of classical Pentecostalism strengthened as an international religious movement.

Thomas Ball Barrett was primarily responsible for spreading Pentecostalism into Europe. Barrett's theology served as a key link between the Holiness movements of the nineteenth century and the burgeoning Pentecostal movement of the twentieth century (Burgess & Van Der Maas 2002:365). The doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was taught by Barrett as "a gift of power upon the sanctified life".²⁷ Barrett's Pentecostal influence extended to European countries such as Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Germany, and England (his country of birth). The central figures through whom his influence was spread throughout Europe were preachers such as Anna Larson, Lewi Petrus, Gerhard Smidt, Alexander A. Booty, Jonathan Paul, and Edward Meyer. As a result of Thomas Ball Barrett's impact on spreading Pentecostalism to Europe, he was called the

²⁷ See T.B. Barrett, *The Apostolic Faith* 1:4 (December 1906), p.3.

“Apostle of Europe”.

As Pentecostalism spread internationally, the need for religious cohesiveness emerged. The Pentecostal World Fellowship was formed to encourage Pentecostal fellowship, facilitate coordination among Pentecostals, demonstrate to the world the unity of Spirit-filled believers, coordinate and respond to missionary needs, promote courtesy and mutual understanding among Pentecostals, offer practical prayer and spiritual support to Pentecostal bodies in need of help, and maintain the Scriptural purity of the fellowship of Pentecostal truths (Blumhoffer 1985:108-109). The Pentecostal World Fellowship served early Pentecostals as the movement expanded. However, though the Fellowship attempted to maintain doctrinal unity within global Pentecostalism, conflicts inevitably arose (Burgess & Van Der Maas 2002:972).

2.5.2 Conflict regarding the doctrine of sanctification

Most early Pentecostals shared a Wesleyan view of three distinct and separate works of grace: justification, sanctification, and baptism of the Spirit. However, Pentecostals lacking a specifically Wesleyan background viewed sanctification as a finished work that occurred in tandem with justification (Blumhoffer 1985:40). Therefore, these Pentecostals believed that there were only two works of grace: salvation and sanctification as the first work, and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as the second work. This theological difference caused conflict and disruption within the classical Pentecostal movement. The crisis concerning sanctification was deemed the “finished work theory” of the atonement. One prominent advocate of the Finished-Work Theory was W. H. Durham (Riss 2002:594). Differing views on sanctification led to a schism between Durham and Seymour, and thus a schism between their followers.

2.5.3 Emergence of the Assemblies of God

In 1914 approximately 300 preachers and laymen representing the classical Pentecostal movement from more than twenty states and various countries convened in Hot Springs, Arkansas, USA. The purpose of the convention was to

provide fellowship between Pentecostal ministers and to protect the results of the Pentecostal revivals. From this convention emerged the General Council of the Assemblies of God, which rose to become the world's largest Pentecostal denomination by the end of the twentieth century (Blumhoffer & Armstrong 2002:339).

The General Council of 1914 and subsequent General Councils provided organization to the classical Pentecostal movement (Blumhoffer 1985:35). This organization provided Pentecostal clergy standardization against moral failures, extreme ministerial methods, fanaticism, and mishandling of funds. The Assemblies of God published periodicals that claimed to speak for the Pentecostal movement as a whole, and started general clergy training schools and issued clergy credentials. The Assemblies of God also oversaw funds for Pentecostal missionaries. Theologically, the Assemblies of God did not enforce strict doctrinal standards, but encouraged all Pentecostals to participate and fellowship with one another in order to bring "edification and advancement of the Kingdom of God as a whole in the bond of love and peace" (Blumhoffer 1985:37).

However, the Assemblies of God formed a 16-point creed in 1916. In response, a group of Pentecostals who shared similar beliefs but rejected the idea of a formal creed met in 1919 to form the Pentecostal Assemblies of the USA under the leadership of John C. Sinclair and George Brinkman, which later became the Pentecostal Church of God in America. Initially, the Pentecostal Church of God did not adopt a formal creed in fear that it would be disadvantageous to the movement and would be a step toward ecclesiastical formalism (Blumhoffer & Armstrong 2002:339).

Another faction of classical Pentecostalism emerged when Aimee Semple McPherson founded the Foursquare Gospel church in 1914 in Los Angeles, California. Semple McPherson's contributed significantly to the global spread of classical Pentecostalism (Robeck 2002:856). Semple McPherson was regarded as talented in speech, music, acting, and writing; she also claimed to possess the gift of supernatural healing. Her charismatic personality and preaching style won the hearts of crowds easily. Semple McPherson initiated an influential periodical

entitled “The Bridal Call” (Robeck 2002:857). Further, the very first religious broadcast in America was initiated by the effort of Aimee Semple McPherson. The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel remains one of the fastest growing religious denominations in America and around the world. Pentecostal preacher and writer Jack Hayford was also affiliated with the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (Moore 2002:692).

2.5.4 Characteristics of classical Pentecostalism

Five major doctrines may be identified in classical Pentecostalism. The classical Pentecostal movements emphasized three definite separate works of grace: justification, sanctification, and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The doctrines of divine healing together with premillennial eschatology were also central in classical Pentecostalism. Pentecostal believers viewed their gospel message as the “Full Gospel”; thus implying that non-Pentecostals possessed an incomplete gospel message. The “Full Gospel”, according to classical Pentecostals, comprises the four doctrines that emerged to define the movement during the first half of the twentieth century: salvation, healing, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of tongues, and the second coming of Christ (Dayton 1987:173-174).

Exclusivist theology led to self-isolation of Pentecostals for decades. Pentecostalism profoundly distrusted intellectualism and relied instead on validation of their faith by experience. The World Christian Fundamentalist Association condemned the Pentecostals in 1928 stating that the movement was a “menace in many churches and a real injury to the sane testimony of Fundamentalist Christians” (Spittler 1976:108-109). However, the Assemblies of God eventually joined the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States, though not without controversy. Other classical Pentecostal bodies eventually followed (Blumhoffer 1985:107).

2.5.5 Healing revivals

The classical Pentecostal movements produced itinerant ministers known as “deliverance evangelists” or “healing evangelists”. The deliverance evangelists

preached that the atonement was effectual not only for spiritual regeneration, but also for physical healing. The deliverance evangelists maintained that bodily healing should be preached along with spiritual redemption. An emphasis on supernatural healing for all Christians as an aspect of the atonement became a definitive aspect of classical Pentecostal theology (Kidd 2002:694).

The most notable of the deliverance evangelists was William Branham (1909-1965) who was credited as the progenitor of the Healing Revival movements of the 1940s and 1950s. Branham claimed to have experienced supernatural visions at the ages of three and seven, and an angelic visitation in 1946. Branham believed that he had been imparted with various gifts of the Holy Spirit that enabled him to discern people's diseases and to discern demonic oppression through the gift of the Word of Knowledge (Kidd 2002:708). Branham lost popularity in the 1960s because his theology was considered too controversial, if not altogether unorthodox. Branham embraced Oneness Theology and taught that believers baptized in the Trinitarian formula should be re-baptized in the name of Jesus only (Blumhoffer 1985:47). Though killed in a car accident in 1965, Branham became a central figure in the later Kansas City Prophets Movement and the Vineyard movement (Wilson 2002:440).

Radicalism brought disaster to the Healing Revivals of the 1940s and 1950s. Individualism prevailed as a religious value within deliverance evangelism. Greed, jealousy, fraud, and exploitation plagued the movement's leaders. Scandals among prominent healing evangelists were not uncommon (Kidd 2002:709). Therefore, deliverance evangelism did not succeed in resuscitating the classical Pentecostal movement as its leaders had hoped. Disappointments with the healing revivals and healing evangelists as well as the establishment of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International in 1951 led to an important evolution in classical Pentecostalism (Blumhoffer 1985:113). A burgeoning influence of Pentecostal message within the mainline churches marked the transition from the era of deliverance healing to Charismatic Renewalism. An interest in divine healing was in part a means by which a realization of the Pentecostal experience was possible within established mainline churches (Kidd 2002:708).

2.6 Charismatic Renewal movements

This section includes a survey of the Charismatic Renewal movements within both Protestant and Roman Catholic Christianity. Although a survey of charismatic experiences within all historical divisions of Christianity (Anglican, Reformed, Orthodox, etc.) is possible, in an attempt to delimit the research, the focus remains on those events which most affected the North American Charismatic-Renewal movement and served as a springboard for the future global expansion of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. The survey is primarily chronological but also demonstrates an evolution of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology from early personal ecstatic experiences to more functional ministry-oriented praxis that was present in the Vineyard movements. Finally, the section concludes with a brief survey the Toronto and Pensacola Revivals.

The rise of the charismatic movement within virtually every mainstream church has ensured that Holy Spirit figures prominently on the theological agenda (Kärkkäinen 2002:12); “a new experience of the reality and power of the Spirit has had a major impact on the theological discussion of the person and work of the Holy Spirit” (McGrath 1994:240). The second wave of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements commenced with the penetration of the Pentecostal experience into the mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. The second wave was called the “Charismatic Renewal” movement. The preaching styles, methods, and environment of the Charismatic Renewalists were much different than that of the classical Pentecostals. Meetings were held more in banquets than in tents, technology was adopted, and there was less appeal to emotional sensationalism. Charismatic renewal services were characterized by an exuberant worship style and the use of supernatural gifts in the small prayer groups (Hocken 2002:479).

However, the most important difference was not with reference to the clergy, but the laity. The disenfranchised that largely comprised the classical Pentecostal movements expanded into middle-class, mainline Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, thus forming the Neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic Renewal movements (Hocken 2002:480). The movements were decentralized and

propagated by a number of leaders such as William Jean Stone (Blessed Trinity Society; the *Trinity* magazine), Ralph Wilkerson (Melodyland Christian Center), Oral Roberts (Oral Roberts University), Katherine Kuhlman, David Wilkerson, Michael Harper, Pat Boone, among many other independent voices (Hocken 2002:482).

2.6.1 Protestant Renewal Movements

The assumed beginning of the Charismatic Renewal movement was Passion Sunday, April 3, 1960 CE, when Episcopal priest Dennis Bennett announced to his congregation that he received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The event was largely regarded as the commencement of the Charismatic Renewal movement (Hocken 2002:485). The Charismatic Renewal movement sought to answer several lay-level theological concerns. Questions such as “how do believers know that the Holy Spirit is dwelling within them?” and “through what means do different bodies in Christendom come to true unity?” Charismatic Renewalists claimed that it was through the mutual experience of the Holy Spirit that believers could “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”.²⁸ Further, Charismatic-Renewalism sought to answer the inadequacies of the healing revivals in a renewed attempt to revive classical Pentecostalism.

Demos Shakarian’s establishment of the Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship International promoted the growth of the Charismatic Renewal movement. The ecumenical influence of David Du Plessis among mainline denominations also facilitated the movement’s growth (Spittler 2002:592). The defection of evangelist Oral Roberts from classical Pentecostalism into a mainline Methodist church, along with the founding of Oral Roberts University also strengthened the movement (Hocken 2002:488). The theology of Charismatic Renewalism was not as dogmatic as that of classical Pentecostalism. Therefore, Charismatic

²⁸ Ephesians 4:3

Renewalism found broader acceptance among traditional churches. Moreover, the fact that mainline denominations were experiencing a decline in spiritual fervor and number in the United States also made Charismatic Renewalism more attractive and acceptable to leaders as a means of organizational growth and spiritual revitalization (Hocken 2002:489).

David Du Plessis, a South African theologian affectionately deemed “Mr. Pentecost” (Spittler 2002:593), was a principal figure responsible for the changing attitude toward the Pentecostal message within mainline churches. Initially, Du Plessis joined the Assemblies of God and opposed the World Council of Churches. But after an automobile accident, Du Plessis reevaluated his ministry and claimed that God called him to go to the World Council of Churches as a Pentecostal witness (Blumhoffer 1985:114). The World Council of Churches warmly received him, and subsequently Du Plessis was invited to lecture at mainline theological schools such as Princeton Theological Seminary during the emergence of Charismatic Renewalism in the 1960s. While Du Plessis met with skepticism from the classical Pentecostal community (especially the Assemblies of God), he argued that common ground could be found with the mainline Protestant denominations in the World Council of Churches. While classical Pentecostals argued that an experience of Holy Spirit Baptism was incompatible with mainline theological persuasions (insofar as they did not align with evangelical doctrine) and Du Plessis countered by noting that unity was to be found in common experience rather than common doctrine (Blumhoffer 1985:115). The ecumenical work of Du Plessis laid the foundation for the Charismatic Renewal movements.

Kathryn Kuhlman was perhaps the singular figure who bridged the gap between the healing revivals and the Charismatic Renewal movements. Kuhlman established the 2,000-seat Denver Revival Tabernacle and creatively utilized media such as radio and television to promote her message (Wilson 2002:826). Kuhlman claimed to be able to discern individual ailments and heal them in what she deemed “miracle services”. Kuhlman propagated the phenomenon whereby people would “fall under the power” as she prayed for them. Kuhlman conducted

large-scale crusades, at venues such as the 7,000-seat Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium. Kuhlman was not well accepted in classical Pentecostal circles, inasmuch as she was a divorcee and she did not emphasize speaking in tongues in her ministry. Kuhlman's warm reception of Roman Catholics was also one of the traits that made her an influential Renewalist (Wilson 2002:827). Many who claimed physical healing from her services were mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, and even Greek Orthodox adherents. Kuhlman's ecumenical ministry was a significant developmental aspect of the growth and expansion of the Charismatic Renewal movement (Wilson 2002:827).

The Charismatic Renewal movement within mainline Protestantism affected Roman Catholics and precipitated the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in 1967. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement was spread through persons and events such as Kevin Ranaghan, Edward O'Connor, Ralph Kiefer, Ralph Martin, Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council, the Duquesne University, Michigan State Weekend, and Notre Dame University.

2.6.2 Catholic Charismatic Movements

The Charismatic Renewal movements would not have experienced such widespread growth had it not been for success within Roman Catholicism. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII' stressed the importance of church renewal and linked church renewal and unity with the work and power of the Holy Spirit. Pope John XXIII encouraged Catholics to pray and seek the renewal of the Holy Spirit: a "new Pentecost experience". The supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit were emphasized as vital in Christian service and for the unity of the Church in the Second Vatican Council. Further, the council stated that the Holy Spirit ministered directly to laity. The theological emphases of the council were laid the foundation for the Catholic Charismatic Movement. The Second Vatican Council served as a catalyst for Charismatic Renewalism within the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholic Renewalism embraced a Pentecostal message, but continued to honor the sacraments, rites, and hierarchy of the institutional Church. Pope Paul VI noted that the documents of the Second Vatican Council

contained 285 referenced to the Holy Spirit (Marc'hadour 1974:248).

Kevin Ranaghan was a significant figure in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement who organized major local and international conventions to support its growth. Ranaghan was a member of the "People of Praise", an ecumenical Catholic organization in South Bend, Indiana. Ranaghan authored the book *Catholic Pentecostals Today* and thereby introduced the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement to the public. Ranaghan and his wife Dorothy championed the spread of renewal that began at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewalist view of the phenomenon of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was distinct from classical Pentecostalism insofar as tongues were not regarded as the only evidence of Spirit Baptism. However, the phenomenon of speaking in tongues was viewed as one of many possible signs of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The definition of Spirit-Baptism in the Catholic Charismatic tradition was that of a new level of God's presence and power in the Christian life, often accompanied with one or more supernatural gifts of the Spirit. The term "Baptism of the Spirit" retains two meanings in the theological framework of Roman Catholicism. In the first sense, all members of the Church are Spirit-baptized since they received the Holy Spirit through the sacramental initiation of water baptism. In the second sense, as members of the Church progress spiritually, they receive the presence and reality of the Spirit in a conscious and experiential way. Charismatic Catholics identified with the latter meaning. Seeking the Baptism of the Spirit, according to the Charismatic Catholic movement, was a proper response for all mature believers. Therefore, it was necessary, in a sense, for all mature Christians to pray and be more open to Spirit-Baptism. Further, for Roman Catholics, the Spirit was seen as working through tradition (Kärkkäinen 2002:95).

Most Catholic Charismatic Renewalists affirmed that both *charism* and institution were necessary for a healthy church life. The vitality of the church was contingent upon the balance of these two aspects of the Christian religion. Institution provided the church with unity and order. Inspiration of the Holy Spirit gave the church life and power. The supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit were considered to

work within the structured Church because they were given by God for the strengthening of the Church. The institutional Church regulated the gifts and retained the final authority over the gifts. Vatican II emphasized the Holy Spirit's sovereign freedom to dispense the *charisms* and the Council affirmed the universal accessibility of spiritual gifts.²⁹ The Catholic Charismatic movement was shaped as much by a commitment to the Catholic Church as it was to spiritual experience (McDonnell 1987:36-61).

While Catholic Charismatic renewalists shared many similarities with the Charismatic Renewal movements in mainline Protestantism, there were several notable distinctions. First, Catholic renewalists often celebrated the Eucharist in prayer group meetings; a practice uncommon among Protestant Charismatics. Second, Catholic Charismatic Renewalists expressed devotion and trust in the intercession of the departed saints, especially the Blessed Virgin Mary, thereby preserving the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Communion of the Saints praying for members of the Church on earth. On the other hand, most Protestant Renewalists did not affirm the doctrine. Third, Catholic Charismatic Renewalists conducted regular weekend retreats and seminars. The retreats included two or three prayer meetings, lengthy teaching sessions, and various sacramental rites. The seminars were designed for seekers of Holy Spirit Baptism. These three aspects of religious life were unique to Catholic Charismatic Renewalism and were typically not present in Protestant Charismatic Renewalism (Hocken 2002:480).

2.6.3 Prophetic Movements

The fifth historical stage of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements was preceded by a series of "prophetic" movements that were distinct from classical Pentecostalism and Charismatic Renewalism. William Branham was a leading

²⁹ See Vatican II documents AA 3; *Ad Gentes* 23, LG 7.

figure in the Healing and Deliverance Revivals of the 1940s; he was influenced by Franklin Hall's book *The Atomic Power With God Through Fasting and Prayer* (Gohr 2002:817). The origin of the Kansas City Prophets was traced to William Branham's teachings, some of which included doctrines such as the restoration of the fivefold ministries, the emphasis on fasting and prayer, the elect seed and the Serpent's seed, the "advocation of immortalization" theory, divine healing, personal prophecy, and accurate words of knowledge (Gohr 2002:816).

However, some prophecies of the Kansas City Prophetic movements that concerned major events did not occur, such as a predicted financial collapse of the 1980s CE. Sometimes prophecies were interpreted as divine and infallible. The movement met with immense challenges and there were over-emphases on supernatural activity and a peculiar doctrine known as "the elect seed teaching". As a result, elitism, pride and spiritual abuses were prevalent. Leaders from the Kansas City movement urged other churches to join the fellowship. Further, many of the leaders interpreted scriptures using "personal subjective experiences" (Gohr 2002:817).

2.6.4 The Vineyard movement and the Neo-Charismatic movements

The Vineyard movement generally characterized the third major wave of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements of the twentieth century. Principal leaders included John Wimber, who started the Association of Vineyard Churches, and Peter Wagner, who co-taught a signs and wonders course at Fuller Theological Seminary; both events were pivotal in the movement's initiation and persistence. The beginning of the movement can be traced to 1982 CE when Wimber left the Calvary Chapel association and joined with figures such as Kenn Gulliksen and Lonnie Frisbee. Generally speaking, adherents of the Vineyard movement did not consider themselves self-identified Pentecostals or Charismatics, although there were notable similarities in their beliefs concerning the Holy Spirit's "supernatural gifts" (Wagner 2002:1200).

John Wimber was the primary founder and leader of the Vineyard movement, but

came to be one of the most controversial figures in North American Evangelicalism at the end of the twentieth century (Kidd 2002:701). Wimber founded Vineyard Ministries International and the Association of Vineyard Churches (Wagner 2002:1201). Wimber's teachings on "Power Evangelism", "Power Encounters", and "Kingdom Now" theology were the movement's major distinction. Wimber was described as an approachable and humble leader who was gifted not only with healing and prophetic gifts, but also public speaking and musicality. As a result, Wimber effectively spread the key doctrines of the Vineyard and expanded the movement. Wimber's appeal to "power" to authenticate his message was characteristic of the experiential tradition, in which Pentecostal-Charismatic expressions found themselves (Kidd 2002:701).

According to Wimber, the term "power evangelism" meant that the presentation of the gospel with "signs and wonders" confirmed the validity of the message. Signs and wonders included any supernatural demonstrations such as healing, prophecies, demonic deliverance, and other alleged divine activity. Wimber maintained that the gospel demanded a proclamation with power, not merely an intellectual proposition. Further, Wimber implied active demonic forces were present on the earth and therefore had to be conquered by the power of God to set people free. Wimber described this methodology of "power encounter" as the biblical pattern of New Testament evangelism. According to Wimber, programmatic evangelism promoted proselytization as the goal, but in power evangelism, discipleship was the goal. In programmatic evangelism, Wimber maintained that most people did not encounter God's power; as a result, they remained shallow and unformed in their faith. In power evangelism, however, people were not only to be "saved", but also matured as Christians. Further, Wimber argued that in power evangelism, individuals were intentionally sent to one another by the Holy Spirit as a gospel witness (McClung 2002:619). In programmatic evangelism, Wimber contended, individuals simply expressed their faith in general obedience to scriptural command. Hence, in the latter scenario, according to Wimber Christians were often fearful as they proclaimed the gospel, but in Wimber's method of power evangelism, the commissioned Christians were

understood as under the control of the Holy Spirit if they were so willing (Kidd 2002:701). The vision Wimber (1986:35) had for power evangelism was as follows:

By power evangelism I mean a presentation of the gospel that is rational but that also transcends the rational. The explanation of the gospel comes with a demonstration of God's power through signs and wonders. Power evangelism is a spontaneous, Spirit-inspired, empowered presentation of the gospel. Power evangelism is evangelism that is preceded and undergirded by supernatural demonstrations of God's presence.

Wimber's strategy for advancing the Vineyard movement rested on several assumptions. The first assumption was that many Christians excluded the supernatural power of God from their worldviews due to the influence of the Enlightenment. Having rationalized their perceptions of reality, they no longer believed in or expected miracles to happen. Wimber argued that most Christians talked as if God was real, but acted as if God was unable to intervene supernaturally and work signs and wonders in their daily practical living. The second assumption was that the Kingdom of God was on the earth inasmuch as Christ was reigning through the church. In the Vineyard movement, the concept of the Kingdom of God was understood not a geographical area, but as the rule of Christ in heaven and on earth. The authority of the Kingdom of God was demonstrated by signs and wonders. Hence, the Kingdom of God was already in the "here and now", but the fullness of the Kingdom of God was yet to come when Christ was expected to return (Wimber 1988:7). In Wimber's Kingdom theology, as believers proclaimed the gospel and thereby the Kingdom of God with signs and wonders following, they were demonstrating and extending the Kingdom of God over the Kingdom of Darkness (Wimber 1988:8). Further, Wimber's "democratization of healing" was characterized by his unique teaching ministry designed to empower others to pray for the sick just as he did (Kidd 2002:702).

The Vineyard movement was similar to the Charismatic Renewal movements in that it embraced miraculous spiritual gifts as operative in the present-day church.

Expression of exuberant worship styles and church growth strategies also marked similarities. However, the critical differences were that Wimber believed that an individual was Spirit Baptized upon the salvation (justification) experience and that speaking in tongues was not necessarily the explicit evidence of Spirit Baptism. Wimber also rejected the notion that physical healing was an essential aspect of the atonement (Kidd 2002:702).

2.6.7 Toronto and Pensacola revivals

The central figure in the Toronto Revival was Rodney Howard-Brown. Brown's ministry was marked by the manifestation of "holy laughter". When a Vineyard pastor, Randy Clark, attended one of Howard-Brown's meetings in Tulsa, Oklahoma, he received the same experience and brought the teaching back to his church (Barnes 2002:445). Subsequently, John Arnott, pastor of the Toronto Airport Vineyard Fellowship, invited Clark to minister at a four day conference at his church in January of 1994. The same laughing manifestation erupted in the services. Therefore, the Toronto Revival began as a result of this series of meetings, which lasted much longer than initially expected. The movement significantly affected parts of the United States, Canada, and especially Great Britain (Poloma 2002:1151). Some of the common characteristics of the associated revivals were the holy laughter experiences (or called the Baptism of Joy), falling and quaking, and "drunkenness in the Spirit". Some less common manifestations included roaring, barking, and other animal sounds (Poloma 2002:1151).

The Pensacola Revival and the Toronto Blessing inspired a new strain of "charismatic mysticism" that inspired other branch movements at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries (Poloma 2002:1152). Movements such as the "prosperity gospel" and manifestations such as gold dust, gold teeth, and other claims of supernatural activity were initiated by the events at Toronto and Pensacola and have come to identify many extreme aspects of the Neo-Charismatic movements.

2.6.6 Theological distinctions between Pentecostals and Charismatics

Theologically, classical Pentecostals were more fundamentalist, and Renewalists were more progressive. Classical Pentecostals typically did not have a fixed liturgical schedule in worship services and worship was usually exuberant and loud. On the other hand, Neo-Pentecostals stressed the quiet Spirit, allowing only certain charismatic activities in formal services, leaving other charismatic exercises to the small prayer groups (Hocken 2002:515). The first wave of Pentecostalism was strict and isolated; Neo-Pentecostals did not demand a structural or even doctrinal change in order to engage in the charismatic experience. On the issue of education, classical Pentecostals mostly distrusted higher education while Renewalists were more open to higher education. On the matter of social issues, Renewalists were more socially active than classical Pentecostals. The early Pentecostals also had a view that anything secular was inherently evil, thus, their cultural values imposed many legalistic taboos, whereas Neo-Pentecostals were not as legalistic. Lastly, classical Pentecostals' constituency appealed more to the socially and economically disadvantaged. Renewalists appealed more to middle-class and white-collar congregations (Hocken 2002:516). In this sense, Renewalists were rightly described as "Neo-Pentecostals" in that they emerged because of influence from classical Pentecostalism but did enter into the social or ecclesial structures that defined classical Pentecostalism.

2.7 Globalization of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements

This section includes a survey of the statistics and developments relevant to the global expansion of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and demonstrates a shift from North American factions to global influence. The expansion of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements in the Developing World and the Global South is explored. The literature in this section demonstrates a functional and practical appropriation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic message that relates to daily concerns and needs of the Developing World.

According to the World Christian Database, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Pentecostalism was the second-fastest growing religious movement in the world,³⁰ following the Roman Catholic Church. However, the rapid growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements in the Global South³¹ has caused concern among Roman Catholic leaders, including the papacy. In May 2007, during a trip to Brazil, Pope Benedict XVI described Pentecostal churches as “sects” and argued that they used aggressive tactics to proselytize. In Brazil, Roman Catholics accounted for about 90 percent of the population in the 1960s; by 2005 Roman Catholics accounted for only 67 percent of the population.³² The Vatican has been increasingly lamenting the rise of Pentecostal communities in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere, and the resulting flight of Catholics from the Roman Catholic Church. Cardinal Walter Kasper, who serves as president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, noted however, that the Roman Catholic Church “must not ask first what is wrong with the Pentecostals but ask what our pastoral failings are and come to a spiritual renewal.”³³ Nevertheless, the rapid growth of the movements caused entrenched interests with Roman Catholicism and mainline Protestantism to take notice. The movement that commenced in otherwise marginalized North American Wesleyan pietism became a worldwide phenomenon by the end of the twentieth century.

During the twentieth century, Christianity enjoyed explosive growth in the Global South: in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Jenkins (2002) predicted that by the year 2020, Christianity would be overwhelmingly a non-European, non-white

³⁰ Growth rates over the period from 2000 to 2005; all figures from the nondenominational World Christian Database, a project of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston, Massachusetts, USA (www.worldchristiandatabase.org).

³¹ The “Global South” is characterized by Philip Jenkins (2002) in *The Next Christendom: the coming of global Christianity*, and includes: Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

³² The Christian Post, *Rise of Pentecostalism Spurs Call for Catholic “Self-Examination”*, online resource: <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20071126/30226.htm>

³³ According to the Agence France Presse.

religion. Jenkins argued that the explosive growth of worldwide Pentecostalism was “nothing less than the creation of a new Christendom”, which, for better or worse, would play a major role in world affairs. The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements that triumphed all over the Global South were viewed as primarily fundamentalist and even reactionary by the standards of economically advanced nations, and their message tended to be charismatic, visionary, and apocalyptic. Because Islam expanded in the same areas as the militant Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, Jenkins argued that renewed religious rivalry would emerge. The resulting confrontations gave rise to deadly conflicts in places such as Nigeria, Malaysia, and Indonesia. According to Jenkins, an unprecedented and potentially dangerous global change was underway. The influence of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements would arguably continue to penetrate all aspects of society, thereby affecting not only small religious communities, but ultimately global politics.

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have experienced astounding growth by fostering a pragmatic spirit focused on teaching its adherents to do whatever is necessary to achieve the goal of winning converts through preaching the Pentecostal message and demonstrating the Pentecostal experience (McClung 2002:620). Sociological insight, however, informs the observation of religious movements, noting that as they matured, the pragmatic, entrepreneurial emphases were stifled by the inevitabilities of organization, administration, and bureaucratization. The Assemblies of God in the United States was among the first of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements to have experienced formalization. The long-term growth rate of Pentecostalism under denominational structures remains to be seen.

According to *Christianity Today* (2000), Pentecostalism is intrinsically a religion of the disinherited. Pentecostalism, even from its earliest roots among Holiness factions, was “a vibrant faith among the poor; it reaches into the daily lives of believers, offering not only hope but a new way of living”. In the infancy of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, sociologist John Holt (1946) noted that Pentecostalism attracted most of its adherents from society’s dispossessed, rural

poor. The success of Pentecostalism as a response to social crisis was a natural byproduct of social disorganization. Holt (1940:740-741) posited that, “migration and concomitant urbanization of an intensely rural and religiously fundamentalist population” initiated the emergence of holiness sects which attempted to “recapture their sense of security” in the midst of social disorder. Pentecostalism flourished in its infancy as a religion of the disinherited and was greeted with broad support as it expanded into the Developing World. A movement that once channeled its social protest and alienation into the “harmless backwaters of religious ideology” (Andersen 1979:239) grew in the twentieth century to become a global force of influence, shaping the very identity of the worldwide Christian religion.

According to observations by David Barrett (as reported by McClung 1994:11), international Pentecostals and Charismatics of the late twentieth century were “more urban than rural, more female than male, more Third World (66%) than Western world, more impoverished (87%) than affluent, more family-oriented than individualistic, and on average, younger than eighteen”. In this context, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, especially in the Developing World, have accomplished something that no other religious movement, even liberation theology, has done thus far: it has found a way of overcoming the “hazards” of being poor. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents remained economically poor, but they discovered in Pentecostalism a means by which they no longer had to live in a culture of poverty. Similarly, African Christians³⁴ rejected both an intellectualized Western view of orthodoxy, which to most African Pentecostals and Charismatics “left Christians helpless in real life, and therefore, an alternative pneumatology [was] needed that [could] relate to needs other than those of a spiritual nature alone” (as reported by Kärkkäinen 2002:172). In Africa, even churches that did not identify themselves as specifically Pentecostal or

³⁴ Kärkkäinen references Derek B. Mutungu, “A Response to M.L. Daneel” in *All Together in One Place*, 127-131.

Charismatic demonstrated a spirituality similar to that which characterized the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements;³⁵ they proclaimed a “holistic gospel of salvation that includes deliverance from all types of oppression, such as sickness, sorcery, evil spirits, and poverty” (Kärkkäinen 2002:172).

However, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements were changing in the West by the late twentieth century. Mega-churches and wealthy congregations were no longer found only in upper-class mainline Protestant churches. In the United States, for example, there was little emphasis on premillennial eschatology among affluent Pentecostals (Shaul 2000), where the movement was much more diverse and did not attract only the disinherited; an alternative worldview to deal with social ills was no longer necessary for suburban, upper-class Pentecostals and Charismatics. As the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements expanded globally, it was arguable that complacency and cultural conformity prevailed in the West.

2.8 Theology of the *charismata*

This section includes a brief synopsis of the Pentecostal-Charismatic theology of the *charismata*. The preceding sections have demonstrate a shift from the isolated, separatist, spiritual experiences of early Pentecostals to a functional application of Pentecostal spirituality that comes to bear on virtually every aspect of daily life, especially in the context of the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Pneumatological foundations of such theology are briefly explored as well. Insofar as it is relative to the broader questions of this thesis, it is prudent to develop a sense of how Pentecostals and Charismatics view the *charismata* and how it relates to the work of the church and Christian life. This section serves as a bridge to an exploration of the operational expression of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology in the final section of this chapter.

David Du Plessis argued that the distinctive feature of Pentecostalism was not

³⁵ Kärkkäinen strengthened this position by referencing to A.H. Anderson (1992), *Bazalwane: African Pentecostals in South Africa*. University of South Africa: Pretoria.

evangelical zeal nor physical healing but Holy Spirit Baptism with the manifestation of spiritual gifts (as noted by Kärkkäinen 2002:96). Two characteristics distinguish the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements from broader Christendom are the doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and an emphasis on spiritual gifts. The doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was the primary theological concept that distinguished Pentecostals and Charismatics from other Christian denominations and sects. Pentecostals and Charismatics generally view the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a distinct event subsequent to the event of regeneration (salvation). Regeneration or “new birth” is a central tenant of the broadly diverse movements within Evangelicalism. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, the event of Holy Spirit Baptism empowers adherents to live a victorious Christian life of service to God and the world. Lederle (1994:28) declared that the Pentecostal-Charismatic ideal of “life in the spirit” is an “existence between the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’, filled with expectation but not with guarantees”. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit as an empowering experience is foundational to the Pentecostal-Charismatic conception of spiritual gifts.

Routinely, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is realized by Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents through a four-step process. First, the believer must demonstrate a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ. Second, the believer must demonstrate a commitment to the possibility of personally appropriating the experience of Spirit Baptism. Third, the believer must demonstrate faith that God would answer a prayerful spirit. Fourth, the believer must yield to the gifts of the Spirit at the moment of prayer for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. According to this formula, when an individual asks in pure faith, he or she receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Generally, the effects of Spirit baptism are regarded as greater peace and joy, and often accompanied by speaking in tongues and other spiritual gifts. The process is conducted primarily within a community of believers praying and laying hands on the “Spirit seeker” (Williams 2002:358).

Spiritual gifts (the *charismata*) are another distinguishing characteristic of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and were secondary to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Culpepper (1977) referred to the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the

“gateway” to spiritual gifts (79). Spiritual gifts were described in the New Testament, primarily in First Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. There exist within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements various opinions as to the number of spiritual gifts. British Charismatic author Michael Harper (1968) contended that there are five New Testament words (primarily in 1 Corinthians 12) to refer to spiritual gifts: *pneumatika*, the supernatural endowments, *charismata*, gifts of unmerited favor, *diakonai*, the services, *energemata*, the powers, and *phanerōsis*, the manifestations (20-21). The distinction of gifts is important only inasmuch as each set of gifts are considered different in their usage, purpose and origin. The diversity of praxis within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements warrants only recognition that spiritual gifts are acknowledged and encouraged; everything from the gift of tongues (in the classical Pentecostal sense) to claims to Apostolic authority are identifiable in the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.

It is more important to recognize that Pentecostals and Charismatics generally affirm a literal contemporary operationalization³⁶ of the spiritual gifts found in the New Testament. While non-Charismatic Christians in diverse denominations affirm some of the *charismata* found in the New Testament as contemporarily operational, they tend not to literalize the New Testament in the same way that Pentecostals and Charismatics do. This is particularly true concerning spiritual gifts such as miracles, divine healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues (Macchia 2002:1137). It is through the experience of Holy Spirit baptism and the appropriation of spiritual gifts that Pentecostals and Charismatics develop their unique identity and worldview. The idea of empowerment and “spiritual gifting” for engagement with the outside world is perhaps most vivid in the teachings of John Wimber of the Vineyard movement, a latter stage in the evolution of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.

³⁶ That is, spiritual gifts become functional in the life and work of the individual and of the church. I will explore this concept in greater detail in the final section of this chapter.

Margaret Poloma observed that through spiritual gifts Pentecostals have demonstrated an “anthropological protest against modernity” by “providing a medium for encountering [the] supernatural” to thereby “fuse the natural and supernatural, the emotional and rational, the charismatic and institutional in a decidedly postmodern way”. Further, Poloma characterized the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements by their “belief in and experience of the paranormal as an alternative *Weltanschauung* for [an] instrumental and rational modern society” (as cited by Cargal 1993:163).³⁷ By appropriating spiritual gifts and engaging supernatural experiences, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents emerged from social and ecclesial isolation with a very different way of viewing the world around them. With this alternative vision, Pentecostals and Charismatics are able to operationalize the *charismata* and put their theology of spiritual empowerment and spiritual gifts to practical use in the world.

2.9 Operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology

“Operational theology” has been identified in different ways within the discipline of theological inquiry and sociological analysis of religious behavior. Pyle (1995:111) referred to operational theology as “functional theology”:

In supervised ministry courses the actual practice of ministry often reveals a different theology [than your professed or formal beliefs]. You express your functional theology through your actions, not your words. All of us have some discontinuity between our formal theology (what we say we believe) and our functional theology (how we live).

By exploring the operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic beliefs, a foundation can be established for comparison of concepts of *concursum* with Process-Relational theology in later chapters. In this final section the operational expressions of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology are explored. As the Pentecostal-

³⁷ This quotation from Poloma is useful, though it is nearly tertiary by this point. I found the citation in Karkkainen (2002) who referenced the citation from Cargal (1993).

Charismatic movements evolved, adherents began to personally appropriate their spiritual experiences for practical use. Even the *charismata*, as spiritual gifts, were utilized in ministry practice to meet very real needs. The preceding sections documented the globalization of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements described the utility of the Pentecostal experience to meet social and physical needs in the Developing World and the development of a theology of the *charismata* for praxis. Together, these sections demonstrate a culmination of Pentecostal-Charismatic experience that has come to define the movements. The operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology is important to the overall thesis insofar as operationalization, not necessarily profession, forms the real substance of the Pentecostal-Charismatic experience; through this lens, the theological theme of *concursum* can be adequately analyzed.

The holiness roots of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements suggest a practical theological emphasis. John Wesley sought to promote “a vital practical religion and by the grace of God to beget, preserve, and increase the life of God in the souls of men”, a faith that was both spiritual and practical.³⁸ American Pentecostals during the late 1800s emphasized Spirit Baptism as intensely practical. The desire of early Pentecostals for an “endowment of power for service” was fueled by a premillennial eschatology. Expectation of the imminent return of Christ motivated early Pentecostals to seek the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit; “supernatural empowerment was necessary to evangelize the world in a single generation” (Blumhoffer 1985:11). The experience of Holy Spirit Baptism was not merely a pious, personal experience. Rather, bolstered by missionary zeal, the Pentecostal experience became a means by which Christians could evangelize the world before the return of Christ. As decades passed, however, classical Pentecostals discovered new ways of “practicing” the Pentecostal faith. Blumhoffer (1985:117) stated that the Pentecostal ability to

³⁸ From Wesley's letter to Samuel Walker, September 3, 1756, Works, XIII, p. 167.

effectively “identify on appropriate occasions with what God was doing throughout the world without compromising its distinctive testimony” enabled the movement to extend its influence on American religious culture.

Social and cultural changes of the twentieth century forced Western Pentecostals to deviate from their Holiness-separatists roots to engage broader social issues. While Pentecostals traditionally valued evangelism over social concern, promotion of an awareness of social duty in the second half of the twentieth century brought about Pentecostal participation in efforts to change society at large (Blumhoffer 1985:135). Further, Blumhoffer (1985:131) noted that “the new outpouring of the Holy Spirit in mainstream liberal denominations had made some classical Pentecostals question the puritanical life-style their fellowship had historically stood for”.

Pentecostalism has been attractive to the developing world largely because its cultures see life as a totality with no separation between the sacred and the secular. Religion, in these contexts, must be “brought to bear on all human problems” (Anderson 1991:100-104). Shaull, Cox, and Cesar (2000) made the argument that Pentecostalism was in fact very “this-worldly”. The result of such “this-worldliness” was the transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic individuals into “new social actors”. Living in the Pentecostal reality provides adherents a means by which to live not only in the world, but in it more fully and with a new purpose. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents perceived the reality that God was intimately active in the world and in their personal lives. According to Shaull (2000), “poor and broken people” found a way to experience the same reality they read about in the Gospel accounts in their immediate life and cultural context. The Pentecostal-Charismatic message brought with it a “breaking-in” of the kingdom of God into the “here and now” and thus, real social and physical change.

The roots of Pentecostalism among the poor, dejected, and chastised affirmed for Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents that God “uses everyone, including those of us who have shortcomings and weaknesses” (Menziez 2000:182). According to Pentecostals and Charismatics, God “calls us to participate in [God’s] work and equips us for this task”. The Pentecostal reality was to live with a sense of

expectancy, “a sense that God will use us to meet the pressing needs around us” (Menzies 2000:186-187). Pentecostals and Charismatics proclaimed that the same God who saved the soul also healed the body and was a “good God” interested in providing answers to human fears and insecurities, accepting people has having genuine problems and trying conscientiously to find solutions to them (Anderson 2004:199).

Pentecostals and Charismatics found common ground with contemporary prophetic traditions (such as liberation theologies and feminist theologies) insofar as they affirmed an ongoing prophetic ministry in the church (Reuther 1983:122-123). The link between a Pentecostal voice for the powerless and liberation theologies may be one explanation for the growth of Pentecostalism in areas of the world where liberation theology once flourished. In many ways, Pentecostalism empowers those who had no power with a transformative vision of the world.

The operationalization of the Pentecostal experience, the idea that people can be empowered by God for service to effectively change the world around them is the *kerygma* of Pentecostal-Charismatic identity. Beneath the veneer of doctrinal nuances concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit, tongues, or sanctification is a genuine sense that people can overcome circumstances, alter reality, and change the course of society. Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, when operational, extends beyond the bases of liberation theology or the social gospel; its historical assumption is that God empowers people to act. Whether that action is alleviating poverty, or as some assert, working miracles, the global Pentecostal vision for Christian praxis has evolved past the point of ecstatic spiritual experiences to a theology that endeavors to affect the world on the basis of the operational expression of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology. The theme of *concursum* is surveyed in a later chapter; from which comparison is made with conceptions of *concursum* in Process-Relational traditions.

CHAPTER 3: An Historical Survey of Process-Relational Theology

3.0 Introduction to Process-Relational Theology

This chapter entails an historical overview of Process-Relational theology³⁹ from the seminal process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, to the neoclassical theology of Charles Hartshorne, to the Christian process theology of John B. Cobb, Jr. The survey demonstrates the historical development of Process-Relational theology from speculative metaphysics to practical, operational theology⁴⁰ in the Christian tradition. The survey also includes a brief exploration of Open-Evangelical theology and an overview of the doctrine of God in Process-Relational theology.

Process-Relational theology refers to philosophical conceptions of God and cosmology inspired by or aligned with the metaphysical perspective of the British philosopher-mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947 CE) and the American philosopher-ornithologist Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000 CE). Process-Relational theologies that are similar but unrelated to the work of Whitehead (such as that of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin) exist, but Process-Relational theology is primarily characterized by the Whiteheadian school. Whitehead's philosophy was expanded to develop a more comprehensive Process-Relational theology by Charles Hartshorne (1897–2000 CE) and John B. Cobb, Jr. (1925- CE), both of whom shared a common rejection of metaphysics that privileged “being” over “becoming” (Whitehead 1929:33-35) and sought to affirm the relational aspects of Whitehead's philosophy into theological and religious thought.

³⁹ I relied on the entry on “Process Theism” by Donald Viney (2008) in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy for this survey.

⁴⁰ There are similarities between the “operationalization” of Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology; however, for Process-Relational theists, much of the operational expression of their beliefs has been evident in contextual theologies and liberation movements.

Process-Relational philosophy, in the Whiteheadian tradition, maintains that the fundamental nature of all of reality is one of process, dynamism, becoming, and perpetual change. Thus, the intrinsic nature of reality is “processive”. Whitehead sought to develop a comprehensive metaphysical system on the basis of realism over idealism that would make a place for both mind and matter and trace the metaphysical connection between them (Heron 1980:145). In Whitehead’s metaphysic, the universe is conceived as a network of interactions that form a cosmic whole with particular emphasis on the inter-relatedness of all things. Further, Process-Relational philosophy describes reality as ultimately comprised of “experiential events” rather than inert substances.

The Process-Relational philosophy of Whitehead describes every event, and consequently the entire universe, as the result of a continuous process wherein relevant past events are creatively synthesized to become new events. Reality is conceived as processive creative movements in which past events are integrated into present events and thereby construct future events. In the Process-Relational system, all of reality proceeds in a sequence of integrations at every level and moment of existence. Process-Relational philosophy thus replaces the traditional Western “substance metaphysic” with an “event metaphysic”. The fundamental contribution of Whitehead was a philosophical perspective wherein all of reality was perceived as a series of interrelated moments of experience; “connectedness and wholeness are fundamental rather than independence and atomism” (Mesle 1993:130). Whitehead maintained that for all moments of experience, “being cannot be extracted from becoming” (Whitehead 1929:31). In Whiteheadian metaphysics, the process of becoming is more fundamental to reality than the being that is perceived. While the word “being” generally suggests a static reality, Whitehead preferred the verb “becoming” to describe occasions of experience and thereby emphasize the processive nature of reality.

Process-Relational theology was popularized within liberal Christianity and maintained the Whiteheadian philosophical conviction that reality is “becoming rather than being”, “in process rather than static” (Mesle 1993:49). Process-Relational theology is categorized as Natural theology and is thus associated with

empirical theological traditions of North America that advocated a scientific approach to Liberal theology. Advocates of Process-Relational theology seek to express a system of metaphysical coherence that integrated science and theology; Mesle (1993:44) asserted that “one of the great virtues of process theology is its ability to offer views of God and the world that hang together, that accept and build on what we know of nature through scientific investigation”. However, rather than reducing theology to a purely materialistic view of reality, as natural theologies often do, Process-Relational theology seeks to provide a plausible conception of a dynamic and personal view of God. In Process-Relational theology, “personal qualities such as self-consciousness, creativity, knowledge, and social relatedness are attributed to God in the most literal sense” (Dhiel 1996). The Process-Relational term that was conceived to describe God’s relation to the world is *panentheism*.⁴¹ Unlike *pantheism*, *panentheism* does not mean that “all that exists is God”; in *panentheism*, God maintains a transcendent character, yet all that exists is contained in Godself, thereby emphasizing the immanence of God. Therefore, God is conceived as “in-process”, evolving along with the material world into future possibilities. Process-Relational theists argue that too great a distinction between God and the world is “virtually bound to provoke itself or topple into atheism” (Heron 1980:148). *Panentheism* attempts to avoid the extremes of separating too completely or associating too closely God and the universe. Process-Relational theology diverged from traditional theism and arrived at a new definition of God and God’s relatedness by recognizing not only the abstract essence of God (that which is eternal, absolute, and transcendent), but also a “concrete actuality of God” (that which is temporal, dependant, and immanent).

3.1 Early Conceptions of Process Philosophy

This section includes a survey of the ancient historical development of Process-

⁴¹ Greek: παν (all) εν (in) θεός (God).

Relational thought. The literature survey begins with the Greek philosophers, primarily Heraclitus, and explores the rise of substance metaphysics. The survey includes a brief review of process thought in the Age of Enlightenment and the early modern era. A brief comparison of process thought with that of Hegel and other modern philosophers is included. While early philosophical concepts related to Process-Relational philosophy were articulated by various philosophers and theologians, all such concepts were not all directly linked to the system of Alfred North Whitehead. Several turning points in Western philosophy and theology that informed Whitehead and later Process-Relational theologians are explored. Beginning with a survey of early Greek thought, followed by Enlightenment and Modern perspectives, the survey concludes with a survey of Wesleyan connections to Process-Relational theology. The purpose of this survey is to set Process-Relational philosophy in the context of history in order to explain the later development of Whitehead, Hartshorne, and Cobb.

3.1.1 Process-Relational Philosophy in Greek Thought

Process-Relational philosophy originated within the scope of classical philosophy. Plato (c. 430 - 350 BCE) and Diogenes (c.412 - 323 BCE) both conceived the world as the “body of God”, not unlike the concept of God in *panentheism*. Hippocrates (c.460 - 370 BCE) highlighted the theme of interrelatedness by declaring that “there is a common flow, one common breathing,⁴² all things are in sympathy”.

However, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (c.504 BCE) was credited as the primary classical contributor to Process-Relational philosophy. Heraclitus believed that “the basis of reality was change and flux” (Mellert 1975:12) and declared that it was impossible to “step twice in the same river; for other and yet other waters are ever flowing on”. Heraclitus suggested the concept of *noumenon*,

⁴² The translation may also read one common “psyche”.

“the ground of becoming”, as *agon* or a “strife of opposites” that formed the underlying basis of all reality which was defined by change. Cratylus, the disciple of Heraclitus, took the analogy further by declaring that it was impossible to step into the same river once; the river was in such a state of flux and change that there was no river at all, only an illusion cast by its change (Nahm 1964:70-78). Whitehead (1929) utilized Heraclitus’ concept that “the flux of things is the one ultimate generalization around which we must weave our philosophical system” and asserted that “mathematical physics translates the saying of Heraclitus, “all things flow ‘into its own language’. It then becomes, all things are vectors” (Whitehead 1929:317,471). Further, Whitehead (1929:37) argued:

That “all things flow” is the first vague generalization which the unsystematized, barely analyzed, intuition of men has produced ... it appears as one of the first generalization of Greek philosophy in the form of the saying of Heraclitus ... the flux of things is one ultimate generalization around which we must weave our philosophical system.

Physicist Werner Heisenberg (1958:63) commented on the philosophy of Heraclitus:

Modern physics is in some way extremely near to the doctrines of Heraclitus. If we replace the word “*ire*” by the word “energy” we can almost repeat his statements word for word from our modern point of view. Energy is in fact that substance from which all elementary particles, all atoms and therefore all things are made”.

Parmenides (c. 500 BCE), however, suggested in a poem about nature that “underlying every change was some more fundamental reality that endured” (Mellert 1975:12). Thus, Parmenides argued that “being” was prior to “becoming” and that underlying every change some fundamental reality endured. The substance metaphysics of Parmenides and Aristotle dominated Western philosophy for much of history. God was claimed by Western theology to be the “fundamental reality” that Parmenides suggested. God was conceived as timeless, immutable, unchangeable, and eternal; the view that dominated Western philosophy and eventually, Western Christian theology for much of the history of Christianity.

3.2.2 Process-Relational Philosophy in Enlightenment and Modern Thought

The strict rationalism that emerged from the Enlightenment contributed to a shift toward naturalism in the West. Naturalism, in its mechanistic conception of the universe is largely contrary to the metaphysics proposed by early Process-Relational thought. However, some traces of Process-Relational thought can be extrapolated from Hegel's dialectical method. Hegel's understanding of "truth as process" favored a dynamic view of reality (Walsh 1951:137). From the Hegelian perspective, that which is "absolute" moves in and through determinates, it is not the essence of the determinates themselves, but the process and movement that are fixed concepts. Hegel proposed an "ontology of the relationship between opposites" that was the basis for synthesis, and thus, a uniquely Hegelian perception of reality. Hegel's method was a tension between opposites. Hegel differed from the Whiteheadian Process-Relational philosophy that would follow him in that Hegel considered that which moves in and through determinates a *telos*, the end-state of the "march of the Absolute through history". For Hegel, "reality itself is the history of God, God going out from and returning to God's own self" (Pinnock 1996:103). Process-Relational philosophy, in its Whiteheadian form, however, does not proclaim or predict a perceived teleological end.

In the early twentieth century, advances in the physical sciences eclipsed interest in Process-Relational thought as relativity and quantum theory conquered the Newtonian concept of a clockwork universe. During that time, a philosophy of mathematics developed that dispelled the belief in the completeness of any mathematical system. However, it was during that period of scientific progress that the mathematician Alfred North Whitehead resurrected earlier notions of Process-Relational thought in the early twentieth century.

3.2 Whitehead's Process-Relational Theology

This section entails a survey of the philosophy and theology of Alfred North Whitehead. Unarguably the father of Process-Relational theology, a survey of Whitehead's thought is necessary to build a foundation for the remainder of the chapter. In the survey of Whiteheadian metaphysics, the propositions of actual

entities, actual occasions, and eternal objects are explored; terms which form the basis for Whitehead's system. The concepts of prehension and its relation to causation as well as Whitehead's definition of creativity are also investigated. After surveying Whiteheadian metaphysics, Whitehead's concept of God as a challenge to traditional theology is surveyed. The survey of Whiteheadian theology includes an exploration of how Whitehead conceived God's task of ordering eternal objects and the prominence of aesthetic value in Whiteheadian theology.

The term "process theology" refers to the theological movement inspired primarily by Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947 CE) and secondarily by Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000 CE). Whitehead devoted most of his professional life to mathematics and natural philosophy. However, after an invitation to teach in the Philosophy Department at Harvard University in 1924 CE, he shifted his attention to metaphysical philosophy. Whitehead coauthored *Principia Mathematica* (1913 CE) with Bertrand Russell, but did not begin teaching and writing on process and metaphysics until his move to Harvard. Whitehead's metaphysical development was influenced in part by the French philosopher Henri-Louis Bergson (1859-1941 CE).

Whitehead was conversant with the quantum mechanics that emerged in the 1920s and there exists an identifiable connection between process philosophy and the revolution in modern physics. Whitehead wrote his magnum opus, *Process and Reality* (1929), on the basis of his knowledge of relativity theory and quantum mechanics. Whitehead attempted to build a philosophy of science as a foundation for the physical sciences (Lawrence 1956: xiv-xvi). However, Whitehead's metaphysic was largely aesthetic, in that there was no end-state, only ongoing process. For Whitehead, the emergence of complexity has less to do with competing ends and more to do with a striving for increased feeling and qualitative perception. Whitehead also authored *Adventures in Ideas* (1933), *Modes of Thought* (1938), and *Science and the Modern World* (1956).

3.2.1 Metaphysical Interpretation of the Universe

In Whitehead's usage, "metaphysics" was not an attempt to describe things beyond the possibility of experience but to explain the coherence of all experiences (Whitehead 1929:61). Whitehead's shift from the philosophy of nature to metaphysics meant the inclusion of the human subject and thus, human perception (Griffin 1999). Whitehead's metaphysical interpretation of the universe was built largely on speculative metaphysics, but affirmed and embraced interaction with science. Whitehead (1933:197-198) contended that "science does not diminish the need for metaphysics... science only renders the metaphysical need more urgent". Thus, "no science can be more secure than the unconscious metaphysics which it tacitly presupposes". Science and metaphysics, for Whitehead, are complementary and mutually essential.

Inherent in Whitehead's philosophy was the notion of time. Whitehead asserted that all experiences were influenced by prior experiences, and thus influenced all future experiences. All moments of experience were described as interrelated with every other moment of experience that preceded it in time; "what is real in the transition of things, one to another" (Whitehead 1956:88). Whitehead saw experience as a complex unity of all that "ingressed" into a unit of experience. Classical physics and metaphysics insisted on a continuous, homogeneous, immutable substance, but Process-Relational philosophy conceives reality as a discontinuous "quanta" of energy that Whitehead called "creativity" (Whitehead 1929:31).

3.2.1.1 Actual Entities, Actual Occasions, and Eternal Objects

Whitehead rejected the atom of classical physics and named the most basic units of reality "actual entities". Actual entities were described by Whitehead as "the final real things" of which the world is comprised; moments of experience. Actual entities are defined by momentary events that are partially self-created and partially influenced by other actual entities. The loci of the interaction of finite actual entities were defined by Whitehead as "actual occasions". The entire universe, in Whitehead's metaphysic, is explained as interrelated processes of actual occasions with varying degrees of complexity (Whitehead 1929:136-137).

Whitehead proposed that all actual occasions are configured in loose “nexus” or more structured “societies”,⁴³ subordinate societies of actual occasions could be identified relative to the society in which they participate. The entire “extensive continuum” is seen as an unending series of actual occasions coming into being momentarily and “perishing”. Each actual entity or occasion is conceived as dipolar, having both physical and mental functions. Actual occasions are defined as events that immediately “become and perish” and thus instantaneously “pass from being into non-being” (Whitehead 1929:126,129).

Even though the existence of an actual occasion is understood as discontinuous and momentary, it was related to other actual occasions. Unlike the classical view, in which the basic elements of reality were understood as externally related units of matter, Whitehead’s actual occasions are internally related.⁴⁴ In place of the mechanical understanding of the universe proposed by classical physics, Whitehead proposed an organic universe that was thoroughly interdependent (Viney 2008:14). The atom was thus seen as a society of actual occasions, an interrelated system, with subordinate societies of its own. Whitehead contended that his own metaphysical conceptions “agree absolutely with the general principles according to which the notions of modern physics are framed” (Whitehead 1929:177). According to Whiteheadian metaphysics, even the smallest subatomic particles are societies of actual occasions (Whitehead 1929:114). The association of actual entities and actual occasions defines the “relational” aspect of Process-Relational philosophy and theology.

Eternal objects were defined by Whitehead as the abstract possibilities of the

⁴³ Empty space is an example of a loose nexus; the body of a living animal is an example of a structured society.

⁴⁴ In the classical understanding of external relations, if two entities are externally related they can stand independently of one another and affect no change on the “being” of one another. If two entities are internally related, as Whitehead suggested, then both entities affect change on one another and cannot exist without one another. An example of internal relation is the human body and its organic cells; the body cannot exist without blood cells and blood cells cannot exist without the body.

universe. Actual entities maintain their distinctness from one another according to the way in which such possibilities are realized. Eternal objects are conceived as unchanging qualities such as colors, numbers, logical and spatial relations in which all actual occasions “participate” to order and form the universe (Whitehead 1956:68-69, 144). Unlike Platonic forms, Whitehead did not give eternal objects distinct ontological status; eternal objects are seen as “real” only insofar as actual occasions exist in which they can be expressed (Whitehead 1929:32). While Whitehead’s eternal objects were not defined as the genuine mode of existence in actual entities, they were described as maintaining reference to other eternal objects (Whitehead 1956:144,150,155). Whitehead did not suggest that eternal objects emerge from nature, as do actual entities (Whitehead 1929:367). Rather, eternal objects were proposed as mere possibilities available for actualization. Whitehead defined eternal objects as “pure potential for the specific determination of fact” (Whitehead 1929:70,392). According to Whitehead, eternal objects must exist within a unique actual entity. It was according to this notion that Whitehead proposed his philosophical concept of God (Whitehead 1929:44-46).

3.2.1.2 Prehension

Whitehead’s concept of prehension was critical to his process metaphysic and the interaction between eternal objects and actual occasions. Prehension was described by Whitehead as “a process of “feeling the many data so as to absorb them into the unity of one individual satisfaction” (Whitehead 1929:65). Relatedness between objects was seen as requisite for prehension to occur. Whitehead maintained that “prehensions are the concrete facts of relatedness” (Whitehead 1929:22). Whitehead asserted that prehensive function requires that actual entities feel or “prehend” the physical reality of other actual entities with the physical pole and prehend the “eternal objects” (by which actual entities have conceptual definiteness) with the mental pole. Whitehead used the term “prehend” to refer to the “feeling or grasping” of the physical and conceptual data of actual entities. Unlike external relations defined by naturalistic philosophy, actual entities were conceived as internally related by “prehending” each other in

Whitehead's metaphysic. Actual entities are not isolated or independent in Whitehead's system, but present in other actual entities as interrelated moments of an ongoing process. Prehension was not defined by Whitehead as a conscious or intelligent act (except in sentient creatures). Rather, the dipolar structure and the prehensive function exists in some degree in every actual entity, regardless of the simplicity or complexity of its level of existence.

Whitehead proposed that prehensions could be either physical or conceptual. Physical prehensions were said to relate the emerging entity to the actual occasions of the immediate past that are within its scope and enable it to "perceive" or "experience" them. Conceptual prehensions were described as "feelings" or "perceptions" of eternal objects relevant to the emerging occasion of experience (Whitehead 1929:35,65,366). Whitehead asserted that every actual occasion in reality physically and conceptually "prehends" throughout its own unique and processive synthesis of "becoming". Thus Whitehead concluded that occasions that prehend more physically tend to perpetuate past occasions while occasions that prehend more conceptually are more apt to experience novelty. Further, in Whitehead's system, occasions more determined by the past experience less novelty and thus ensure a stable universe (Mesle 1993:48). Eternal objects and past actual entities were described as the elements out of which new entities "become". Prehension suggests that the relatedness of eternal objects and actual entities in emerging actual entities are determinative because relatedness constitutes the entire data available to that entity in its process of becoming. Thus, Whitehead maintained that positive and negative prehension were possible (Whitehead 1929:366). Negative prehension was as important to Whitehead as positive prehension in the "becoming" process because what was excluded is as important to becoming as what is included (Whitehead 1929:66). Whitehead thus proposed that in each new occasion of experience, prehension permits an emerging entity to perceive both actual entities (past occasions of experience) eternal objects (pure possibilities) as it "becomes".

3.2.1.3 Prehension and Causation

Whitehead asserted that every actual occasion has its own efficient cause (a cause from its relations) and its own unique final cause (a cause of its own origin). Whitehead conceived the final cause as the actual occasion's "subjective aim" which led to its "satisfaction," a unique act of appropriation of data prehended from of its relations. By conceiving of efficient causation as an actual incarnation of the cause in the effect, Whitehead proposed an integration of efficient and final causation. Efficient causation was no longer conceived as an isolated and externally related series of events. Rather, each event had both a holistic efficient cause as well as a final cause (Viney 2008:20, 32).

Occasions of experience and eternal objects were said to be linked to one another to form a unique series of occasions called a nexus. The nexus is the means by which Whitehead explained all of space and time; he defined each nexus as interrelated and thus perceived in terms of a broader whole. Therefore reality was defined by Whitehead as an interwoven network of nexuses. Causes of events in the universe were, according to Whitehead, due to the processive nature of reality and the interrelatedness of all things. Not unlike the integration of being and becoming, efficient and final causes were inextricably linked in Whitehead's metaphysic.

3.2.1.4 Creativity

Creativity was one of Whitehead's universal concepts: every actual entity, he suggested, has a measure of freedom expressed in an individual "subjective aim" (Viney 2008:24). Whitehead proposed a self-creative process by which actual entities realize their subjective aims by unifying prehensions of the past and contributing novelty, a creative contribution to the overall process of the universe. In Whitehead's system, actual entities realize their own subjective aims, attain "satisfaction", and thereafter cease to exist as an experiencing subject, becoming instead the object or datum of the prehensions of subsequent actual entities (Whitehead 1929:130,134). The existence of actual entities is completed instantaneously. Therefore, the Process-Relational metaphysic of Whitehead is realized in terms of a succession of organically related moments of experience

(Whitehead 1929:209,334).

In rejecting substance metaphysics, Whitehead proposed a succession of actual occasions with common characteristics. Change is explained by the creative contribution of each occasion in the succession, and endurance was explained by common qualities inherited from antecedent occasions. The succession of experiences in the creative process was used by Whitehead to explain the otherwise contrary states of flux and stability. Creativity, through the process of prehension and interaction of actual occasions and eternal objects, framed the fundamental principle of Whitehead's metaphysic: "the many become one and are increased by one" (Whitehead 1929:32). Creativity, for Whitehead, is the "ground of novelty" (Whitehead 1929:31-32).

3.2.2 Challenge to Traditional Conceptions of God

Whitehead did not explicitly reference the traditional arguments for the existence of God, primarily because he maintained that to invoke God without first laying out a coherent and comprehensive cosmology was nothing more than a "discourse in abstractions". The publication of Whitehead's Lowell Lectures in *Science and the Modern World* (1925) contained an affirmation of God as the "principle of limitation".⁴⁵ In *Religion in the Making* (1926) and in *Process and Reality* (1929), Whitehead's impersonal "principle of limitation" was expanded to propose an actuality responsive to and engaged in the world. Whitehead (1979:521) maintained that "God is not to be treated as an exception to all metaphysical principles, invoked to save their collapse. [God] is their chief exemplification". Whitehead contended that if metaphysics describes general concepts or principles by which all particulars are explained, and if God is the chief exemplification of such principles, then theistic language is eminently meaningful and the basis for the meaningfulness of everything else (Viney 2008:9). Whitehead's theological

⁴⁵ "The principle of limitation" would come to be Whitehead's concept of "concrecence".

method follows a *via eminentia* (Hartshorne 1948:37); he used theological language concerning divinity univocally throughout his system.⁴⁶ But since Whitehead's God assumed a distinct role in the universe (Viney 2008:32), the metaphysical qualities of God could be expressed in an eminent manner.

3.2.2.1 Whitehead's Dipolar Theism

There is no beginning to creation in Whitehead's theology; God and the universe are eternally co-creative. Whitehead explored the concept of "cosmic epochs", similar to an oscillating "big bang" cosmogony, wherein universes are perpetually brought in and out of existence. Process-Relational creation is out of chaos, not *creatio ex nihilo* because God and the universe are seen as co-eternal (Mesle 1993:50). God, as conceived by Whitehead, is an everlasting actual entity;⁴⁷ thus, like all other actual entities, God is "dipolar" (Whitehead 1929:28,37). Whitehead suggested that God has "mental" pole and a "physical" pole. The primordial nature of God contains the eternal objects, pure possibilities, which allow for order and structure in the universe (Viney 2008:1). The primordial nature was nominated by Whitehead as God's "mental pole" and the consequent nature was nominated as God's "physical" pole (Whitehead 1929:32,44,70,73,513).

Whitehead suggested that in God's consequent nature, the completed actuality of each occasion in the universe is "felt" by God. Dipolar theism, as proposed by Whitehead, thus challenges traditional theistic dogma: the God of orthodoxy is conceived as externally related to God's creation. Thus nothing that happens in the universe can affect God's being and God is complete in Godself. In contrast, the dipolar God proposed by Whitehead, by virtue of the consequent nature, participates fully and completely in the actuality of the universe.

Whitehead's God is described as transcendent, but not in the same way

⁴⁶ Hartshorne (1948) stated that theology "is literal or it is a scandal, neither poetry nor science, neither well-reasoned nor honestly dispensing with reasoning".

⁴⁷ God cannot be an actual occasion because actual occasions are satisfied and perish.

transcendence was envisioned by classical theism. Whitehead proposed that the primordial nature of God transcends the world in the same way that mind transcends the body. In the consequent nature of God, however, Whitehead suggested a pervasive immanence wherein the universe was essentially conceived as the “body of God”. God is seen as present in all actual entities via the ingression of eternal objects.

Whitehead also suggested as “superjective” nature of God, the way in which God’s synthesis becomes a sense-datum for other actual entities. Whitehead asserted that it is by means of God’s superjective nature that God is prehended or felt by other existing actual entities (Whitehead 1929:135).⁴⁸

3.2.2.2 God, Prehension, and the Ordering of Eternal Objects

For Whitehead, the cosmic process would not be an orderly, creative process without God; in fact, it would be chaotic. Whitehead maintained that God is the source of “pure possibilities” as well as the agent that orders and places eternal objects in specific relationship to ensure form and structure for the universe (Whitehead 1929:48, 64). Whitehead’s definition of God appeared in *Process and Reality* as the “final factor required to make the system conform to observed experience and provide an explanation for its stable directionality” (Bowman 2006:12).

God was to Whitehead the “unlimited conceptual realization of the absolutely wealth of potentiality” (Whitehead 1929:521). Thus, Whitehead asserted that God passively prehends every actual occasion into God’s consequent nature⁴⁹ so that it becomes objectively immortal (Viney 2008:10). In arguing for the existence of God, Whitehead contended that without eternal objects there would be no definite rational possibilities or values to be actualized; only that which is actual affects

⁴⁸ I will deal more exclusively with the superjective nature in the chapter on Process-Relational *concurus*.

⁴⁹ Or as some Process-Relational theists say, “the memory of God”.

actual entities (Whitehead 1929:169,392). Therefore Whitehead reasoned that there must be some actual entity which grasps and values all of the eternal objects and can act as the universal agent and transcendent source of order and value in the world. Whitehead concluded that God “does not create eternal objects; for [God’s] nature requires them in the same way they require [God]” (Whitehead 1929:392). God then, according to Whitehead, accepts entities into the divine life as objects of perfect prehension and gives them “objective immortality”⁵⁰ in the consequent nature of God (Viney 2008:10). Moreover, God was said to reciprocate to the world the data of the objectified entities that are prehended so that the cosmic process continues and is enriched by the past. Therefore the consequent nature of God was conceived as continually in process, growing and experiencing reality with the rest of the universe, saving the universe as it “passes into the immediacy of [God’s] own existence” (Whitehead 1929:169).

For Whitehead, God was not conceived as a supernatural being beyond space and time that is distant and impassively absolute or ontologically distinct from the world. Whitehead’s philosophy is a metaphysic of real individuals that precluded the dissolution of true individuality found in pantheistic systems (Viney 2008:16). Whitehead nominated God as the “supreme actual entity” who exhibits all the functions of all other actual entities. Thus, Whitehead maintained that God perfectly prehends all entities in the universe and is prehended in part by them. God was said to influence the subjective aims of actual entities by supplying each one with an ideal “initial aim” by virtue of God’s primordial nature in which all the eternal objects are perceived and valued relevant to the actual world (Viney 2008:11). God, by virtue of the primordial nature, acts as the “principle of limitation” or “concrecence” (Whitehead 1978:211), enabling the universe to become concretely determinate by aiming at certain values within the divine limits

⁵⁰ No actual entity has subjective immortality except God; finite living beings continue subjectively only by virtue of a continuing succession of actual occasions.

of freedom. Thus by prehending and being prehended, the God of Whitehead's theology interacts with every entity, in every momentary event in the succession of occasions that constitute reality.

3.2.2.3 Whitehead's Aesthetic Value

According to Whitehead, God is radically immanent in the world process itself, leading it on toward greater value and aesthetic intensity by "sympathetic persuasion" (Viney 2008:18) rather than forceful coercion. Although the primordial nature of God was said to transcend the world, as an actual entity God includes the world consequently within Godself (suffering and growing with it) through the creativity which God and the world mutually possess. Because Whitehead argued that free will is inherent to the nature of the universe, Whitehead's God was not presented as a powerful master that commands or coerces other entities. Rather, the God of Whitehead's theology guides other actual entities toward higher forms of experience with greater intensity of feeling and joy (Viney 2008:36). God participates in the evolution of the universe by offering pure possibilities that may be accepted or rejected. Whitehead asserted that in God "nothing is to be lost but is to be saved in its relation to the whole" (Whitehead 1929:518).

3.3 Hartshorne's Process-Relational Theology

This section proceeds from a survey of Whitehead's literature to that of his successor, Charles Hartshorne. Hartshorne's neoclassical theology was a modification of Whitehead's theology. The contributions to Process-Relational theology made by Hartshorne are documented according to the literature. Further, the development of Christian Process-Relational theology including the work of John B. Cobb, Jr., David Ray Griffin, Norman Pittinger, Schubert Ogden, and others is explored. The formulation and consequences of a Christian process theology are considered in this section, including the Process Christologies of Cobb and Pittinger.

Whitehead's philosophy and theology were marginalized for the first part of the twentieth century and did not receive wide reception in the United States, Britain,

or internationally. Whitehead's philosophy peaked in popularity with the publication of *Process and Reality* in 1929 and only a few thinkers used Whitehead as a source for theological thought before the 1950s; the majority of theologians during that time were preoccupied with the popularization of neo-orthodoxy.⁵¹ However, the metaphysical and theological concepts of Whitehead were reengaged by the philosopher Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000) in the mid-twentieth century. Hartshorne "developed the theological implications of Whitehead's thought and acted as the catalyst for the process theology movement" (Diehl:882). Hartshorne emphasized the ontological argument for the existence of God, but not to the exclusion of the other arguments (Hartshorne 1962, 1965). Like Whitehead, Hartshorne was interested in metaphysics as the general principles by which all other aspects of reality, and thereby God, could be explained. For Hartshorne, metaphysics dealt with what is externally necessary, "a priori statements about existence", statements that remain necessarily true of any state of affairs regardless of the circumstances (Hartshorne 1948:31). Nevertheless, Hartshorne maintained that none of his arguments revealed anything "concrete" about God (Viney 1985:46).

Whitehead and Hartshorne were philosophical and theological innovators. Hartshorne appropriated the Whiteheadian metaphysical system and with modification, defended it as the most coherent and viable alternative between atheism and pantheism. Hartshorne agreed with Whitehead on the primacy of "becoming" and focused more intensely on the category of feeling as a quality of every entity than did Whitehead. Like Whitehead, and perhaps more so, Hartshorne emphasized aesthetic value as a primary to process philosophy and process theism. Cobb and Griffin (1979:8-9) reported Hartshorne as saying:

The most universal value is aesthetic value – not moral nor intellectual, and what I mean by that is that every animal is sensitive to

⁵¹ The Neorthodoxy of Barth, Tillich, and others tended to reject natural theology and instead compartmentalize theology and science.

aesthetic values and disvalues, but is not sensitive to moral values and disvalues or to intellectual values and disvalues. Aesthetic values are universal; they apply to all life – and they apply to God. God enjoys the beauty of the world – I agree one hundred per cent with Whitehead on that. The value of the world is its beauty for God.

Hartshorne and Whitehead differed significantly from the classical rationalists in that they rejected the traditional divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and immutability. Both thinkers rejected the Newtonian worldview, especially mechanistic materialism, and Whitehead in particular incorporated modern physics into his speculative framework (Viney 2008:22). In terms of relationality, Hartshorne and Whitehead also rejected the idea of the self as a self-contained, autonomous subject; nothing was said to exist except by “participation”.

3.3.1 Neoclassical Theism: A Relational Theology

Hartshorne developed a dipolar view of God somewhat distinct from Whitehead. Rejecting Whitehead’s notion of eternal objects, Hartshorne called the mental pole of God the “abstract nature” of God: the eternal character of God. The consequent nature Hartshorne deemed the “concrete nature” of God: God in actual existence in any given concrete state, with the present wealth of the accumulated values of the world. The attributes of the abstract nature of God were conceived by Hartshorne as the divine qualities that are eternally and necessarily true of God regardless of particular circumstances; whereas the qualities of God’s concrete nature were conceived as those particulars of God’s being gained by interaction with the world (Viney 2008:10). God, in concrete actuality, was described by Hartshorne as a “living person” in process, consisting of an everlasting succession of divine events or occasions (Hartshorne 1967:287). In so describing divine attributes, Hartshorne departed from Whitehead’s theology concerning the nature of God. Thus, Whitehead regarded God as a single everlasting actual entity while Hartshorne rejected that notion in favor of a society of actual actual entities (Hartshorne 1962:64-67).

Having proposed a *panentheistic* view of God, Hartshorne was a central protagonist in the twentieth century reassertion of the ontological argument.⁵² Hartshorne admired the medieval arguments of Anselm for the existence of God and affirmed that the idea of “perfection” as fundamental to theistic proofs (Viney 2008:35). However, Hartshorne argued that Anselm’s rationale lacked coherence because it depended on a classical theistic view of perfection. Hartshorne (1948:54) asserted that Anselm’s God provided everything except “the right to believe in one who, with infinitely subtle and appropriate sensitivity, rejoices in all our joys and sorrows in all our sorrows”. The “neoclassical” view of perfection, Hartshorne contended, overcame the objection of modern philosophers that perfection could not be consistently defined. Hartshorne’s argument was that perfection or “most perfect being” by definition either exists necessarily or is necessarily nonexistent. Since only that which is self-contradictory is necessarily nonexistent, then perfect being, if it is self-consistent, is in reality necessarily existent (Viney 2008:36-37). In other words, self-consistency must necessarily exist because it is not self-contradictory.

Hartshorne contended that God’s perfection should not be seen exclusively in terms of “absoluteness, independence, infinity, and immutability in contrast to the relatively, contingency, dependence, finitude, and changeability” of the rest of the universe (Viney 2008:8). For Hartshorne, claims of perfection were the principal mistakes of classical theism, resulting in theological problems such as “the contradiction of God’s necessary knowledge of a contingent world, God’s timeless act of creating and governing a temporal world, and God’s love for humanity which supposedly involved God in history yet in no way conceived God as relative to or dependent on humanity” (Hartshorne 1967:12, Viney 2008:8). Hartshorne contended that if the temporal process and creativity are ultimately real, then God must be in process and dependent upon the free decisions of other

⁵² Hartshorne asserted the ontological argument in *Man’s Vision of God* (1941).

entities. God is, in Hartshorne's view, "both finite and infinite, each in suitable and clearly distinguishable respects" (Hartshorne 1967:28).

In Hartshorne's argument, God is necessary according to God's abstract nature but contingent according to God's concrete nature. Thus, God is independent in the abstract nature but dependent in the concrete nature. God is, in Hartshorne's argument, independent in the sense that nothing can threaten God's existence, but dependent in that the actions of other entities affects God's response, feelings, and ultimately the content of the divine life (Viney 2008:36). The dependent aspect of God's concrete nature, according to Hartshorne, established the basis for a social-relational view of God. Thus, God was conceived as thoroughly processive and thoroughly relational.⁵³

In opposition to classical theism,⁵⁴ Hartshorne developed what he called "neoclassical theism" in which he defined divine perfection as "unsurpassable in social relatedness". Similarly, Mesle (1993:8) declared God "the supremely related One, sharing the experience of every creature, and being experienced by every creature". Hartshorne (1948:129) contended that God is the "supreme relativist" whose absoluteness consists of the "exhaustive way in which [God] revitalizes" God's relation to all factors in the concrete actual world". If God is perfect love, Hartshorne argued, God perfectly feels and has total sympathetic understanding of every creature and thus responds appropriately to every creature in every event. In Hartshorne's neoclassical theistic formulation, God was conceived as supremely absolute in God's abstract nature but supremely relative in God's concrete nature. Therefore, Hartshorne contended that God alone can surpass Godself in relatedness by growing in relatedness to the world, in knowledge of actual events, and in the experience of the values created by the

⁵³ Hence the term, "Process-Relational" theology.

⁵⁴ By "classical theism" Hartshorne meant Western monotheism that envisaged God as omnipotent, immutable, omniscient, and impassible. Classical theism is largely attributed to Thomas Aquinas.

world (Viney 2008:6). Hartshorne called this principle the “non-invidiousness of the metaphysical contraries” or “dual transcendence”, which was the basis for his dipolar theism (Hartshorne 1970:268). For Hartshorne, God was not conceived as foreknowing future contingent events, and so the knowledge of God, which consists only of that which can be known, expands with the processive advancement of the world (Hartshorne 1948:13-14). Thus Hartshorne described God as the “modally all-inclusive or nonfragmentary Being, surpassable only by [Godself]” (Hartshorne 1967:28). Hartshorne defined this “self-surpassing” attribute “surrelativism” and thereby nominated God the “self-surpassing surpasser of all” (Hartshorne 1948:20).

Hartshorne understood God as “total social awareness”. Hartshorne’s social view of God depended on a clear definition of immanence and transcendence. In Hartshorne’s neoclassical theism, the consequent (concrete) nature of God is always immanent: the universe is essentially “the body of God” (Hartshorne 1964:185). Edwards (1979:203) expressed the neoclassical understanding of immanence and transcendence of Hartshorne as follows:

Hartshorne conjectures that we human beings are related to God in something like the way the cells of our bodies are related to us. Our cells are themselves localized units of feeling with some measure of autonomy. We cannot willfully control their actions in most cases, and they cannot willfully control our actions. But the whole and the parts do interact and influence one another. As the localized cells of my body are injured and suffer, I suffer, and I enjoy their wellbeing... We are all members of the body of God, autonomous parts of that divine whole in whom we live and move and have our being.

Following the influence of Whitehead, the neoclassical theists declared the neoclassical God the “great companion: a fellow sufferer who understands, absorbing the world’s sins and sufferings and who guides the world, not by violence or blind decree, but rather by love” (Cobb 2006:36). In Hartshorne’s view, God’s “sensitive responsiveness surpasses that of all other individuals, actual or possible” (Hartshorne 1953:6). Hartshorne’s theological expansion of Whitehead’s work laid the foundation for Christian theologians to appropriate and integrate concepts from Process-Relational theology.

3.4 Cobb and the Christian Process Theologians

After 1960 CE, as the influence of neo-orthodoxy waned, a number of theologians turned to Whitehead and Hartshorne as philosophical sources for a contemporary expression of Christian faith. Theologians at the United Methodist affiliated Claremont School of Theology (Claremont, CA) established the Center for Process Studies in 1973 CE and launched the *Journal of Process Studies* with the intent of expanding the philosophical and theological thought of Whitehead and Hartshorne into Christian theology. Works such as John B. Cobb's *A Christian Natural Theology* (1965) and *Christ in a Pluralistic Age* (1975), Lewis S. Ford's *The Lure of God: A Biblical Background for Process Theism* (1978), David R. Griffin's *God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy* (1976), *God and Religion in a Postmodern World* (1989), and *Evil Revisited* (1991) were influential works in shaping the Christian process theology movement in the late twentieth century. Unlike Whitehead and Hartshorne, whose natural theologies excluded appeal to special revelation, the latter process theologians were confessing Christians in the tradition of liberal Protestant theology.⁵⁵ Cobb and Griffin (1976:96) described their vision for a Christian process theology thus: "We judge that Christian meaning can best be made alive today through a truly contemporary vision that is at the same time truly Christian". Therefore, the Christian Process-Relational theists sought to utilize process philosophy to recreate the Christian message in a contemporary, scientifically sensitive, and metaphysically comprehensive way.

Aligning with Hartshorne, Christian theologians such as Cobb, Griffin, and Suchokki agreed that Whitehead was incorrect by describing God as a single, everlasting actual entity. Cobb and others were persuaded that Whitehead's doctrine of God could find coherence only by making God a "personal society" of actual occasions. As Whitehead conceived "temporal perishing" in the world,

⁵⁵ It should be noted that there are many other process theologians that followed Whitehead and Hartshorne in many other traditions including the Jewish and Buddhist traditions. However, for purposes of this research project, I will focus only on Christian theologians.

Christian process theologians proposed the same activity in God's nature. Beginning with the doctrine of God, such theologians as Cobb, Ogden, and Pittenger sought to demonstrate that the Process-Relational view of God was more compatible with the biblical view of God⁵⁶ than the traditional Christian view of classical theism. Like Hartshorne, the Christian process theologians contented that the monopolar conception of God as timeless, immutable, impassible, and in every sense independent was more Hellenistic⁵⁷ than biblical (Viney 2008:8). Ogden (1967) argued that Hartshorne's neoclassical theism expressed the relevance of Christian faith to secular society. Cobb (1965) concluded that Whiteheadian process philosophy was a viable basis for Christian natural theology. Williams (1985) analyzed the biblical, Christian theme of love and argued that Whitehead's metaphysics was useful for explaining the means of God's love outside of traditional theological constructs. Further, Cobb (1969:80) explained the Christian Process-Relational perspective of God and the universe as such:

... in a sense, we are all parts of God. But we are not parts of God in the sense that God is simply the sum total of the parts or that the parts are lacking in independence and self-determination.... the world does not exist outside God or apart from God, but the world is not God or simply part of God.

Whitehead emphasized the importance of the historical Jesus of Nazareth. Whitehead maintained that the essence of the teaching of Jesus was that God's power is not coercive, but persuasive, and that the reality of divine power is revealed in the "tenderness and subtleties of creative and responsive love". The message of Jesus, in Whitehead's view, focused on the "tender elements in the world, which slowly and in quietness operate by love" (Whitehead 1929:520). Whitehead's sensitivity to Christian ideals opened the door for a creative synthesis between process philosophy and Christology.

⁵⁶ That is, God's interaction with history as dynamic rather than static in the biblical accounts.

⁵⁷ I emphasize the word "pre-Socratic", as I have demonstrated that Heraclitus in particular contributed to Whitehead's philosophy.

Process theologians concentrated on Christology in the 1970s. Beginning in 1959, Norman Pittinger (1906-1997) authored several works integrating the process view with Christianity. Christian Whiteheadians maintained that traditional formulations of Christian theology ultimately denied the full humanity and historicity of Jesus. Whitehead's concept of "spatial inclusion" (that all actual occasions "ingress" all other actual occasions in their becoming, including the actual occasions of God) permitted a more coherent conceptualization of "incarnation". It was argued that Jesus was not unique in that God was "incarnate in him" or that he was God embodied in flesh. According to Christian Whiteheadians, God was ontologically present in Jesus in the same way that God is present in all creatures.⁵⁸ However, Jesus sustained a unique relationship to God that made the divine incarnation in his "becoming" a special case (Pittinger 1970:7). The initial aims of God in the society of actual occasions known as Jesus of Nazareth were fulfilled to satisfaction.

For Pittinger the uniqueness of Christ was seen in the way he actualized the divine aim for his life. Pittinger argued that sin is "deviation of aim", the tendency of humanity to deviate from the initial aim of God by means of a subjective aim. Christ actualized the ideal aim of God in his own subjective aims with such intensity that he became the supreme human embodiment of "love-in-action" (Pittinger 1959:149). Pittinger did not affirm an eternally preexistent person to define the divinity of Christ, but referred to Jesus as a universal example of God's creative love at work in the world (Pittinger 1959:172). Further, David Ray Griffin suggested that Jesus actualized God's decisive revelation; God's eternal character and purpose were exemplified in Jesus Christ as a universal vision for reality.

Process-Relational Christology was essential to the development of a Process-

⁵⁸ This argument follows the panentheistic view that "all things are in God" rather than the pantheist view that "God is in all things". The two views should not be confused in Process-Relational Christology.

Relational theology of love. Cobb and Griffin (1976:35) expanded Whitehead's conviction concerning Jesus by arguing that "if we truly love others, we do not seek to control them". Whiteheadian Christians, especially Cobb, applied basic insights about Jesus to the doctrine of God. Accordingly, the divinity of Jesus is found in the "creative love of God" (Cobb & Griffin 1976:95). Christ as Logos was one of Cobb's major contributions to twentieth century Christian theology. Cobb's "Logos Christology" was a significant development in Christian Process-Relational theology. According to Cobb (1975), the "Logos" could be conceived as the primordial nature of God present (incarnate) in all things as the initial aims for creatures. For Cobb, Jesus was the fullest incarnation of the Logos because in him there was no tension between the divine initial aim and his own self-purposes or subjective aims of the past (Cobb & Griffin 1976:98). Jesus prehended God so accurately that God's immanence was "co-constitutive" in the selfhood of Jesus (Cobb & Griffin 1976:99-100). Thus, Cobb suggested that Jesus was unique among other entities, not merely by degree but in kind, in his "structure of existence". Further, Cobb asserted that "Christ is most fully present in human beings when they are most fully open to that presence" (Cobb & Griffin 1976:99). Lewis S. Ford emphasized the resurrection of Christ as the basis for a Process-Relational Christology. According to Ford, the resurrection was an encounter with a "nonperceptual reality made perceptual by hallucinatory means". Thus the resurrection was for Ford a spiritual event that perpetuates a new emergent reality, the "body of Christ", by which humanity may be transformed into a new organic unity (Whitehead 1978:21). Further, Ford suggested a process view of the Trinity. Ford contended that the Father as the transcendent unity of God, who by a creative "nontemporal act" generates the Logos (the primordial nature) as the eternal expression of divine wisdom and valuation, and the Spirit as the consequent nature in the sense of the immanent being and providential power of God.

Christian Process-Relational theology gained influence in the intellectual world of seminaries and graduate schools but did not gain wide acceptance among laity or adherents of mainline Protestant denominations. Nevertheless, some theologians have argued that Christian Process-Relational theology offers a viable vision of

God's unconditional grace and acceptance, compatible with Christian tradition that also interfaced well with science and philosophy.

3.5 Emergence of Open-Evangelical Theology

This section includes a brief survey of the rise and development of Open-Evangelical theology, a theological movement within Evangelicalism that borrowed some ideas from Process-Relational theology but remained relatively conservative. The survey of Open-Evangelical theology is necessary insofar as it represents at the same time a bridge and impasse for dialog between Process-Relational and Evangelical theologians. The dialog that occurred between Process-Relational theists and Open-Evangelical theists demonstrates a positive shift toward cooperation and mutual enrichment that is relevant to the research question of this project. The section concludes with an overview of the significant differences between Process-Relational and Open-Evangelical theology.

Open theism, also known as Free-Will theism, is a theological movement that developed in the late twentieth century within evangelical and post-evangelical Protestant Christianity. Like Process-Relational theology, Open-Evangelical theology shares a common Arminian-Wesleyan connection.⁵⁹ Contemporary evangelical theologians who espouse the open view of God include: Richard Rice, Thomas Jay Oord (a process theist), Clark Pinnock, John E. Sanders, and David Basinger. Clark Pinnock is most credited with directly engaging the evangelical world with the publication of *The Openness of God* in 1994.

3.5.1 Overview of Open-Evangelical Theology

Open-Evangelical theists largely regard aspects of the classical, orthodox-evangelical conceptions of the doctrine of God as an historical synthesis of Greek philosophy and Christian theology. In particular, the Augustinian-Calvinistic perspectives on divine sovereignty and omnipotence are identified as heavily

⁵⁹ See the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38.2 (Fall 2003): pp. 69-102.

influenced by Hellenism. Several ideas within classical theism (a designation which is not to be taken as inclusive of all of orthodox theism) affirm that God is immutable, impassible, and eternal (timeless).⁶⁰ Proponents of classical theism maintain that God fully determines the future. Thus, according to classical theists, humanity does not have libertarian free will, or, if necessarily free in part, only insofar as that freedom remains compatible with God's determining actions. The thought of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609 CE), John Wesley (1703-1791 CE), and Ellen G. White (1827-1915 CE) contributed to the development of classical free-will theism as an alternative to Calvinism. Classic Arminians such as Wesley and White maintained that God knows the past, present and future with equal completeness but that God does not determine everything that occurs because God gives human beings genuine freedom to choose and act.

Open-Evangelical theists argue that the belief in the meticulous sovereignty of God is not biblical but instead influenced by Hellenistic philosophical ideas of divine perfection. The Greek philosophers viewed God as an immovable, detached, all-controlling force. This view, Open-Evangelical theists argue, influenced later Christian thought. Open-Evangelical theists assert that the God of the prophets who grieved over Israel and the God of Jesus of Nazareth demonstrated that God is intimately involved in God's creation and that God has a synergetic relationship with God's creatures. In contrast, Open-Evangelical theists accuse their classical theist counterparts of holding to a detached view of God as the "unmoved mover".

Open-Evangelical theism is a foundational theology within broader evangelicalism that attempts to explain the practical relationship between the free will of humanity and the sovereignty of God. Based on traditional Arminian

⁶⁰ God is an absolute unity, timeless, motionless, immutable, and impassive. This notion of God was expressed by St. Anselm in his declaration of God: "Thou art compassionate in terms of our experience and not compassionate in terms of thy being (Anselm, *Proslogium*, VII)." The God of classical theism is externally related to creation, because nothing which happens in the universe can affect God's being – God is complete in Godself.

theology, open theism elaborates the idea of the free will of human agency. Open-Evangelical theology primarily denies the classical doctrine of omniscience⁶¹ and suggests instead that the future is “open” and could be determined by God and humankind in cooperation. Thus for Open-Evangelical theists, the future is conceived as unknowable, even to God. Open-Evangelical theists describe the divine attribute of omniscience as God’s ability to “know all that is knowable”, which does not include the unknowable, undetermined future. Such a view of omniscience is not unlike that of Charles Hartshorne.

Open-Evangelical theist Clark Pinnock (1994:103-104) describes the Open-Evangelical view of human freedom as follows:

God rules in such a way as to uphold the created structures and, because he gives liberty to his creatures, is happy to accept the future as open, not closed, and a relationship with the world that is dynamic, not static... We see the universe as a context in which there are real choices, alternatives and surprises. God's openness means that God is open to the changing realities of history, that God cares about us and lets what we do impact him.

Open-Evangelical theists attempt to resolve some apparent inconsistencies in the classical theology of God such as evil, sin, and agency.⁶² For Open-Evangelical theists, prayer has real value, because humankind can influence God’s decisions in an undetermined future. Open-Evangelical theists maintain that tension between love and power, or between persuasive and coercive power, support the conclusion that the fulfillment of God’s goals for humanity generally require the cooperation of human agents. God’s plans are not regarded as that which God unilaterally brings about (Pinnock 1994:44), but cooperative acts that involve both

⁶¹ Insomuch as the future is not fixed, but flexible and yet undetermined. Open theists maintain that God remains thoroughly omniscient, (that is, God knows all there is to be known), but God does not *determine* future events because God cannot possibly know them in full.

⁶² These “inconsistencies” are described at length by Pinnock and Basinger and establish their practical formulation of Open theism as a response to experiential contradictions rather than theological paradoxes or rational fallacies.

divine and human agency. Open-Evangelical theologian Richard Rice argued that God “acts to bring things about unilaterally, as it were, some things God wants done... so [God] does them. At other times, however, God interacts with creaturely agents in pursuing [God’s] goals”. According to this position, human beings are conceived as “variously receptive and resistant” to the influence of God (Pinnock 1994:37). Thus, humans can act according to God’s will as a result of divine influence.

3.5.2 Differences Between Open-Evangelical and Process-Relational Theologies

On the issue of omniscience and an undetermined future, Open-Evangelical theists share many of the beliefs of Process-Relational theists, but a primary point of impasse is the issue of omnipotence, which Open-Evangelicals retain. Open-Evangelical theists concur with process theists that God cannot determine creaturely decisions without deprivation of the freedom of the creatures. Open-Evangelical theists like William Hasker and John Sanders spoke of God as “a risk-taker”, but unlike Process-Relational theists, insisted that God could still perform miracles (in the biblical sense⁶³) and guarantee the ultimate triumph of good over evil (Pinnock 1994:151; Sanders 1998). Open-Evangelical theists maintain that their theology bridges contemporary Process-Relational theology on the one hand and traditional-classical theism on the other. Not unlike Process-Relational theology, Open-Evangelical theology maintains that human beings have enough freedom to partly determine the future. Like classical theism, however, Open-Evangelical theology holds that human freedom is not inherent; rather, it is a contingent gift from God. Although Open-Evangelical theists and Process-Relational theists both assert that God acts in various ways that are appropriate to specific situations, Open-Evangelical theists affirmed the idea of God’s “unilateral

⁶³ Here Evangelicals insist that “the biblical sense” necessarily means supernatural interventionism.

action” and “intervention”.

The God of Open-Evangelical theology is conceived as utilizing both persuasive power and coercive power (Pinnock 1994:40). According to Open-Evangelical theists, persuasive power is inherently preferable as God’s most usual way of dealing with human beings; only persuasion leaves the freedom and integrity of the human subject intact and only persuasion is able to elicit a genuinely free and personal response from the human subjects (Pinnock 1994:4). Pinnock (1994) asserts that Open-Evangelical theists should not “define omnipotence as power to determine everything” but maintains that God’s is “the power to exist and the power to control things” (Pinnock 1994:113). Pinnock accuses Process-Relational theists of an “overreaction against almightiness” thereby reducing the power of God to persuasion alone (Pinnock 1994:116). However, Mesle (1993:22), a Process-Relational theist, argues that any argument that God could prevent suffering but allows it is inadequate.

According to Basinger (1996), Open-Evangelicals affirm that God can and does “unilaterally intervene on occasion” and thus do not agree that humanity bears quite as much responsibility for what occurs in the universe as Process-Relational theists assert. Basinger states that the Open-Evangelical model allows for God to maintain a broad plan that could not be thwarted by human action. Further, Basinger believes that the Open-Evangelical model ensures the ultimate survival of the human race, dependent not on human actions, but on the prerogative of God. Similarly, Rice (1980:188) argues that the generality of the metaphysical description of God in Process-Relational theology imposes unnecessary limits upon God’s action.

However, Open-Evangelical theist Thomas Jay Oord attempted to integrate Process-Relational theology with Open-Evangelical and Wesleyan theologies. Oord argues that it was part of God’s relational essence to provide freedom to others. Therefore God could not withdraw or override the freedom of others; an inability that is not imposed by outside forces or conditions.

3.6 Wesleyan Connections with Process-Relational Theology

A natural attraction to Process-Relational theology exists among Wesleyan theologians because of the synergistic nature of the Wesleyan perspective of the God-world relationship (Cobb 2003:98). *The Nature and Thy Name is Love* (2006), edited by Brian P. Stone and Thomas J. Oord is a thorough compilation of the points of contact between Wesleyan theology and Process-Relational thought. The representative essays in the volume trace the history of process-related concepts within diverse Wesleyan movements and explore the viability of a Process-Wesleyan convergence within contemporary theological dialogue.

3.7 The God of Process-Relational Theology

This section includes a presentation of a broad overview of the Process-Relational conception of God and God's nature. A review of the doctrine of God in Process-Relational theological literature is relevant to the research question and ensures a proper summary of historical developments in the Process-Relational theological movements. This section includes an exploration and documentation the themes of Creativity, Will, Knowledge, Mutability, and Teleology in relation to the doctrine of God in Process-Relational theology in order to present an overview of God that serves to inform and establish subsequent chapters.

In the tradition of natural theology, Process-Relational theists emphasize God's general revelation in nature. General revelation includes both the order and form of external nature as well as inner nature, such as consciousness. Process-Relational theists argue that the traditional Christian God of classical theism failed to satisfy certain fundamental theological problems, particularly the problems of evil and human freedom (Cobb 2003:31). Process-Relational theists, from Whitehead to Hartshorne to Cobb and the Christian Process theologians, argued that the Process-Relational solution is more intellectually viable, more compatible with science, and more biblically tenable (Griffin 1991:67-68). The God of classical theism, according to Process-Relational theists, is "God for us", in an autocratic way, but fails to be God "God with us". Process-Relational theists

maintain the notion that “God who is for us, is for us to be for God” is truly *Emmanuel*, God with humanity in the stream of history, working not only through human beings but with human beings to creatively advance the desired will of God (Cobb 2003:32).

3.7.1 The creativity of the God of Process-Relational Theology

In process metaphysics, the universe has no beginning; God and the universe are eternally co-creative. Whitehead suggested the theory of “cosmic epochs” that is compatible with an oscillating “big bang” cosmogony. God’s creative role in process cosmology is creation out of chaos, not creation *ex-nihilo*; interdependence exists between God and the universe. Whitehead contended that God was to be conceived “as originated by conceptual experience with [God’s] process of completion motivated by consequent, physical experience initially derived from the temporal world” (Whitehead 1929:67). God, as described in Process-Relational theology, shares the risk of faith: a set of values and a vision of the future intrinsically worth enacting, is thereby described by Process-Relational theists as truly deserving of worship.

3.7.2 The Will of the God of Process-Relational Theology

Although Whiteheadian Christians maintain a moral will in God, the God of Process-Relational theology may be described in “transmoral” terms. Cobb and Griffin (1976:8-9) declare: “God as Cosmic Moralist ... God as the Unchanging and Passionless Absolute ... God as Controlling Power ... God as Sanctioner of the Status Quo ... God as Male ... Process theology denies the existence of this God”. The God of Process-Relational theology demonstrates solidarity with creatures by nurturing the development of significant and meaningful freewill decision-making. The freewill that God nurtures in the creatures is that which they alone exercise without coercion or force. Process-Relational theists maintain that the immanent persuasive God they describe produces true faith and true trust from human persons. Cobb (1965:53) wrote that the “obvious point is that, since God is not in complete control of the events of the world, the occurrence of genuine evil is not incompatible with God’s beneficence toward all his creatures”.

3.7.2 The Knowledge of the God of Process-Relational Theology

The Process-Relational God is omniscient but not omnipresent. Cobb (2003:31) argues that classical theology has had to “deny the reality of time for God” in order to reconcile its theological dogma. The process God knows all there is to know but will not know the future until it is actualized. Process-Relational theologian Lewis S. Ford explained that God “knows all there is to know, but if the future is genuinely open ended, awaiting contingent, creaturely actualization, it is not yet ‘there’ to be known. God knows all actualities as actual and all possibilities as possible, but to ‘know’ a future possibility as if it were already actual would be to know something which is not the case and this would be to know it falsely” (Ford 1972:208). The consequent nature of the God of Process-Relational must participate in every event that occurs in the universe. In Process-Relational theology, God’s knowledge is of temporal events, an eminent knowledge based on a universal comprehension of every event in the universe. In other words, God does not know the future (Hartshorne 1947:24). For Process-Relational theologians, God is only regarded as omniscient insofar as God knows all that can be known.

3.7.3 The Mutability of the God of Process-Relational Theology

In renouncing the concept of unchanging substance, Process-Relational theists avoid the concept of divine immutability intrinsic to substance metaphysics. The Process-Relational God is conceived as dynamic and ever changing, taking in new experiences as the universe grows and develops in what John Cobb called “creative transformation” (Cobb 2003:50). Pike (1970:180-187) argues that biblical language affirms a “temporal” view of God who can “responsively interact with human needs”. The dipolarity of God conceptualized by Process-Relational theists provides for a dynamic, changing aspect of God, Whitehead’s “consequent nature”, and a formal, unchanging aspect of God, Whitehead’s “primordial nature”, (Whitehead 1929:523). As the “mind” of God, the primordial nature is described by Process-Relational theists as containing the formal principles (“eternal objects”) which allow for order and structure in the universe. The consequent nature of the Process-Relational God is described as accepting all

events in the universe unconditionally. Process-Relational theists diverged from classical theists by describing God as an internal agent subject to the same cosmic experience as all other actual occasions. The God of Process-Relational theology is conceived as limited in power and able to suffer,⁶⁴ symbolized by the cross (Pittinger 1959:149). Whitehead insisted that God “is the great companion, the fellow sufferer who understands” (Whitehead 1929:532). God’s change and development are considered by Process-Relational theists as contingent on the development of the universe (Cobb 2003:32-33). Whitehead wrote that God’s “derivative nature is consequent upon the creative advance of the world” (Whitehead 1929:66). Similarly, Mesle (1993:29) contends that “if God cannot suffer, then God cannot love”. That is, God does not love without passions, as classical theology contended, but God loves responsively because God and the world are intimately and intrinsically related (Mesle 1993:30).

3.7.4 Teleology and the God of Process-Relational Theology

Process-Relational theists do not claim absolute assurance that good will ultimately triumph over evil. Process-Relational theists admit their system cannot provide ultimate confidence in a teleological victory of good. The described goal of the Process-Relational God is to achieve beauty in the universe, not justice. The God of classical theism was understood as the ground of ethical order, but the Process-Relational God is conceived as the ground of “novelty, creative transformation, contrast, harmony, and the intensification of enjoyment” (Gier 1994). In Process-Relational terms, enjoyment is not defined as hedonism, but the general process of self-determination. Thus in the Process-Relational understanding of time and reality, “no ultimate triumph over evil is possible for God. Evil can never be completely conquered or destroyed” (Nash 1964:20). Further, Cobb (2003:26) argues that as God works in occasions of experience,

⁶⁴ “Patripassianism” (“father suffering”) was condemned by the early Church. Arguments against the suffering of God were rooted in Christian theology’s traditional understanding of God’s power. See Mesle 1993:26

God lures them toward the “fullest possible realization of value in itself and in its contribution to others”. Realization of value, therefore, is the goal for the God of Process-Relational theology, not the exercise of cosmic justice.

3.8 Operational Process-Relational Theology

This section includes a brief overview of operational theology among Process-Relational adherents. The presentation of operationalized theology from a Process-Relational perspective is necessary to demonstrate that Process-Relational theology matured past speculative philosophy to become functional in both the church and society. The themes of creative transformation, the embrace of change, as well as the centrality of pan-experientialism to Process-Relational theology are explored. The means by which Process-Relational adherents respond to problems and concerns in the world are ultimately shaped by their worldview, which comprises an understanding of reality, experiences, and conceptions of God. Process-Relational theists contended that “those with power in society will shape God in their own image” (Mesle 1993:72). Thus a reformulation of how God works in the world and how persons are called to work with God is synthesized in this section through a review of the relevant literature.

Process-Relational theology experienced a resurgence of popularity in the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries, appropriated mostly by contextual theologians. The *Handbook of Process Theology* (2006) by Jay B. McDaniel and Donna Bowman, includes contributed chapters from a multitude of perspectives, from feminist to ecological theologians, all with a common affirmation of and interest in the advancement of Process-Relational theology. Even in the pluralistic, post-modern society, Bowman (2006:11) argued that human beings are not “immune to the tendency to enlarge and empower their God to the greatest possible extent”. According to the handbook, it is the task of Process-Relational theists to respond to the needs of the culture with a Process-Relational conception of God at work in the world. The response to such a need, Process-Relational theists argue, must be through gentle influence. Mesle (1993:14) argued that “Christianity is a religion built around a system of sacrificial love, not of coercive power”. In the tradition of Whitehead, Process-Relational theists seek to “identify

God's function in the matrix of reality and to limit its descriptions of God to what is justified by that function" (Bowman 2006:11). Thus, in the Process-Relational tradition, theology is "operationalized" when people engage in "creative transformation" through persuasive love that leads to positive social change.

Whitehead argued that "the pure conservative is fighting against the essence of the universe" (Whitehead 1933:221), which he, along with other Process-Relational theists, see as processive and transformative. Whiteheadian Christians argue that the static moralism of conservative Christianity is inherently counter to the spirit of Christ, which they view in metaphysical terms as the primordial nature of God. The primordial nature, according to Process-Relational theists, is an "eternal urge to new creation, novelty, and intensity of life and value" (Geier 1994). The Process-Relational view of God challenges its adherents to meet new configurations of events with tolerance, openness, and sensitivity. Issues such as homosexuality, poverty, and feminism take on new value when informed by Process-Relational thought. Thus Process-Relational theology is most operationalized in response to social needs and concerns. The idea of a divine call of God toward an ideal initial aim informs the operational response of Process-Relational theists. Cobb (2003:89) argued that "the divine call would expand our horizons still further, but social expectations and pressures would work against a full response". Although tradition and status-quo may inhibit creative transformation toward novelty and new possibilities, Process-Relational theology inspires its adherents to strive toward increased value and positive change.

Further, Process-Relational philosophers and theologians advocate a form of panexperientialism, which proposes that the most basic constituents of the universe possess primordial forms of "mind" or "experience". Panexperientialism, in the context of Process-Relational thought, entails a firm rejection of dualism. Process-Relational theists do not maintain that there are two fundamentally different kinds of reality, one material and the other mental; rather, they assert ontological continuity. Human beings, according to Process-Relational naturalists, "share in the depths of experience" of the whole universe (Mesle 1993:130). Panexperientialists argue that all entities in the universe have a

subjective frame of reference, from the smallest subatomic particle or wave to a sentient human being. Process-Relational philosophers and theologians affirm only a reality that is considered both “material” and “mental” regardless of the entity in question. However, such universal psychicalism does not imply consciousness as experienced by human beings. Nevertheless, Hartshorne emphasized more than Whitehead the category of “feeling” as a quality of every entity in the universe, which he described as “panpsychism”. Panexperientialism directly affects how Process-Relational theists interact with the world and thus, how their theology is operationalized. Because the idea that all entities have some measure of experience, the ways in which Process-Relational theists engage the world takes this fact into account, from the smallest particle to the earth’s entire ecosystem. The importance of experience shapes the Process-Relational view of reality and thus, the practice of religion.

Finally, Process-Relational theists recognize that their vision for creative love and transformation requires intentional effort. The “Christ as the Logos”, according to Cobb, challenges humanity to engage the problems of contemporary life fully. The Christ of Process-Relational theology is regarded as the consequent nature of God wherein total forgiveness and receptivity is found as “responsive love”. Process-Theists maintain that the consequent nature of God must objectify and immortalize every actuality, no matter how poorly it has achieved the ideals of the initial aim and the basic challenges of God. The passive acceptance of God becomes central to how Process-Relational theists react to cultural and ecclesial concerns. Process-Relational theists argue that although God passively accepts the conditions of the world, God also calls the world to new possibilities. Melse (1993:79) asserted that:

The world is not the way God wants it to be. Unjust social structures *do not* reflect God’s vision for us. Poverty, hunger, and violence are not trials intentionally put into the world by God for our education. They are evils against which God is struggling and against which God calls us to struggle.

Cobb (2003:105) argued that “as we live in more harmony with God’s purposes, we will act or pray as we are led, believing that what we do matters to others and

to God as well as ourselves”. Process-Relational theology envisions God as at work in the world, but “most effectively, and most quickly” through human agents (Mesle 1993:79). Therefore, when Process-Relational theology is operationalized, it takes into account the value of change and transformation and the mutual dependence and relationality of all things, including human beings, God, and the whole universe. Far from its origins of speculative metaphysics, Process-Relational theology, when operationalized, offers proactive solutions to social and ecclesial problems contemporary to a rapidly changing world.



CHAPTER 4: An Historical Survey of *Concursus*

4.1 Introduction

This chapter includes a survey of five major areas related to theories of *conkursus* in the history of Western philosophy and theology. First, philosophical perspectives on free will and determinism, including a brief discussion of theories of causation are surveyed. Second, theological perspectives on free will and determinism, including Calvinist, Arminian, and Wesleyan views are surveyed. Third, historical perspectives on the divine-human relationship, focusing on neo-orthodox and liberal views concerning the God's relation to the world are briefly explored. Fourth, various views on *conkursus*, the concurrence of God with the will and actions of human being are surveyed and documented. The survey of *conkursus* includes various views from Augustine and Aquinas to Kant and modern theologians. Finally, a broad survey of Christian pneumatology is conducted in order to formulate a basis for which God's relation to the world can be framed for the purposes of this doctoral thesis. The final section serves as a bridge to the next two chapters where *conkursus* is examined from both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theological perspectives.

4.2 Philosophical Perspectives on Free Will and Determinism

This survey includes a broad survey of theories of causation and the philosophical debate on free will versus determinism. In the survey on causation five theories of causation are explored: first, necessitation, where causes must produce effects, second, constant conjunction, where causes appear to produce effects, third, the counterfactual theory, where causes are the factors that produce effects, fourth, the idea that causation is irrelevant to modern science, and fifth, the way in which causation is relevant to the notion of *conkursus*. In the survey of philosophical perspectives on free will versus determinism, three primary theories are surveyed: first, determinism, which states that all effects are produced by prior causes, second, libertarianism, which states that free agents can produce causes independently of other causes, and third, compatibilism, which seeks to reconcile

free will and deterministic causation. In broad philosophical terms, when *concursum* occurs, each cause must compensate for what the other coordinating cause failed to produce. The effect is dependent on both causes coordinating and working in cooperation with one another. The possible mechanisms by which such concurrence actually occurs are surveyed in the following subsections.

4.2.1 A Brief Survey of Theories of Causation

An adequate survey of *concursum* would be incomplete without a thorough survey of causation, that which David Hume (1711 -1776 CE) called the “cement of the universe”. Cause has been defined in Western philosophy as an event that brings about the effect, not merely an event that happens before an effect. Causation has been conceived in purely physical terms, as force acting on entities; however, the transfer of energy has been regarded as only an example of causation and does not constitute its essence. Historically the idea of causation has had wider application beyond the physical world.

Aristotle defined four types of causes: material cause, formal cause, efficient cause, and final cause. Material causes were defined by Aristotle as substances which comprise something else (fundamental units of reality). Formal causes, according to Aristotle, are the forms or commonly held ideas of what objects in reality should be. Aristotle defined efficient causes as the mechanical reason for events in reality. Final causes, according to Aristotle, are the teleological ends to which all other causes point; the final cause is the attainment of the goal driving events that ultimately comprise their existence. There is a distinction between an efficient and a final cause. An efficient cause is the means by which an effect is produced while a final cause is that for which sake an effect is produced; final causes are teleological goals (Moreland 1994:9). Expounding on Aristotelian notions of causation, philosophers have argued for a sufficient cause, a complete causal mechanism in which all subordinate causes “sufficiently” lead to a particular effect. Further, a proximate cause was defined as an active efficient cause that leads to an effect without intervention from any external cause. These notions of causation have been utilized by philosophers for centuries in an attempt

to explain phenomenon in the physical world, the human will, and the activity of God.

4.2.1.1 Causes Must Produce Effects: Necessitation

The concept of necessitation states that if the cause happened, the effect must follow; that is, particular causes must produce certain effects. According to necessitation, freedom of voluntary action is negated by the subjection of all phenomena, both material and immaterial, to inevitable causation; that is, causes inevitably necessitate certain effects. Thomas Aquinas proposed the notion of “instrumental causes” as a form of necessitation that passively receive causation; the real cause in a series of events is always the first cause because other causes are secondary and merely pass on causation to other causes in the chain of events. In *Summa contra Gentiles I*, Chapter 8, Aquinas asserted that:

In an ordered series of movers and things moved [to move is to change in some way], it is necessarily the fact that, when the first mover is removed or ceases to move, no other mover will move [another] or be [itself] moved. For the first mover is the cause of motion for all the others. But, if there are movers and things moved following an order to infinity there will be no first mover, but all would be as intermediate movers ... [Now] that which moves [another] as an instrumental cause cannot [so] move unless there be a principal moving cause [a first cause, an unmoved mover].

Aquinas’ perspective has been utilized within a wide variety of theological traditions as a means by which to articulate various theories of causation from a theological perspective. Such theories typically identify God as the “first, unmoved mover”, in which case all causes proceeding from such a first cause necessarily produce certain effects. However, necessitation, from both physical and theological perspectives, is not the only theory of causation in Western philosophy.

4.2.1.2 Causes Appear to Produce Effects: Constant Conjunction

The causal theory of necessitation has been widely challenged in Western philosophy. Causal relations which are assumed simply because one even followed another have been regarded as a fallacy in logic known as *post hoc ergo*

propter hoc.⁶⁵ Hume rejected the idea of the “natural necessity” concept of causation; arguing instead that an apparent natural link between cause and effect is due simply to expectation induced by human experience. That is, Hume asserted that past human experiences produce an expectation for some kind of effect from particular causes (Hume 1993:41). Instead, Hume asserted a theory that apparent causes and effects are “constantly conjoined”;⁶⁶ constant conjunction was in Hume’s view the essence of causation. Hume wrote that “all events seem entirely loose and separate”; “one event follows another but we never observe any tie between them.” Thus, Hume concluded that causation is simply the notion that similar things follow one another; causation is a phenomenon that perceptually occurs, and does not merely physically occur. Hume (1993) stated:

It appears that, in single instances of the operation of bodies, we never can, by our utmost scrutiny, discover anything but one event following another; without being able to comprehend any power by which cause operates ... they seem conjoined, but never connected.

According to Hume’s argument of constant conjunction, the causation perceived by human beings is not how reality actually functions. Rather, it is how human beings perceive reality to function. Human beings, mediating understanding through limited sensory perception, cannot, according to Hume, perceive the underlying mechanisms of causation. Therefore, Hume argued, humans expect an effect to follow a cause because causes and effects appear to “constantly conjoined” in the limited human understanding of the physical world. In other words, effects are merely illusions that lack real evidence that causation actually occurs in a sequence of events. The implications of Hume’s view for human agency are noticeable.

4.2.2.3 Causes are the Factors that produces Effects: Counterfactual Theory

⁶⁵ Translation: after this, therefore, because of this. This fallacy in logic occurs when attributing the wrong cause to a particular effect.

⁶⁶ Hume used the term “constant connexion”.

Hume's view has been rejected on the grounds that the correlation suggested by the theory of constant conjunction is mere correlation and not a direct sign of causation; thus, constant conjunction cannot be all there is to causation. Modern philosophers have asserted that cause is "the thing that makes the difference" via the counterfactual theory of causation. The counterfactual theory was an attempt to determine the cause of a certain effect by assessing the effect of the circumstances surrounding certain causes had been different; that is, according to causes contrary to actual fact. In this manner, the counterfactual theory of causation indicates that potential causes that produce a certain effect should be analyzed until a particular cause is identified. However, since two different causes may produce the same effect, the counterfactual theory was regarded as containing a logical fallacy: merely analyzing an effect does not guarantee that a single cause can be isolated and identified.

4.2.2.4 Causation is Irrelevant to Modern Science: Russell's View

Bertrand Russell (1872 – 1970 CE) asserted that science no longer employs the notion of cause; rather, Russell contended, physical science is constructed via equations, none of which employ the word "cause". Russell (1959:180) asserted:

The reason why physics has ceased to look for cause is that, in fact, there are no such things. The law of causality, I believe... is a relic of a bygone age, surviving like the monarchy only because it is erroneously supposed to do no harm" (Russell, "On the notion of cause).

Causation, according to Russell, was an irrelevant notion in modern science. All physical laws and phenomenon could be explained in mathematical terms and did not require a theory of causation to explain them. Physical laws, according to Russell, should be regarded as fundamental and leave no room for a theory of causation.

4.2.2.5 Causation and Concurus: Perspectives from Kant

In philosophical terms, Kant described *concurus* as "causality with more than one cause". When causes concur, they must be coordinated with one another, not

subordinated to one another. If causes are individually linked in a “series”, then each individual cause is sufficient to explain the cause of the next effect even if they share the commonality of a first cause. Where there is only a single cause (*causa solitaria*), there is no *concursum*. In the case of *concursum*, the effect is a unity of the causes. Kant described united causes as *concausae* (cooperating causes). Several causes may unite to produce a certain effect when several *concausae* concur. In this case, none of the individual cooperating causes is sufficient to produce the effect. There is no *concursum* in a causally linked chain of events. Without cooperation, causes working simultaneously would not be, in Kant's terms, *complimentum ad sufficientiam* (cooperation to the point of sufficiency). In order for *concursum* to meet Kant's definition, *concausae* must be fully complimentary or coordinated; one cause cannot be subordinated to the other. If one cause is subordinated to another, a series of causes may be constituted, but each individual cause is distinct in itself as the precursor to the next effect. Causes remain isolated even if they share common ground in the first cause in the series. Each cause is a *causa solitaria* and true *concursum* does not exist (Kant in Wood 2001:434-435). In order for *concursum* to occur, the causes must be united and coordinated wherein one cause compensates for what the other cause lacks in achieving the final effect. The effect is produced only when the causes work simultaneously with one another (Kant in Wood 2001:434).

4.2.3 Philosophical Perspectives on Free Will and Determinism

4.2.3.1 Determinism

In philosophical terms, “determinism” has historically referred to the notion that all substances and events in the universe are dependent upon and conditioned by antecedent causes. Determinism is an impossible notion without a theory of causation. Traditionally, there have been two approaches to determinism: “soft” determinism, which eliminates the ultimate cause (or primary cause) from the immediate cause of events or substances, and “hard” determinism, which describes every event or substance as directly caused by natural laws (Kane 2002:21-22).

Determinists assert that “freedom” does not exist in any actual or conceivable form. According to determinists, for every event that occurs, there are conditions by which nothing else could have happened. That is, every event is caused or necessitated by prior factors such that given these prior factors, the event must occur precisely as it did (Moreland 1994:7). Even mental processes, such as choices, require some form of causal explanation to fit into the determinist system. Determinists assert that even if an argument is made that human choices and decisions are due to factors inherent to human nature, there must therefore be a concession to some sort of causal or deterministic explanation for human choices.

Determinists argue that the kind of pattern of regular sequence or “constant conjunction” proposed by David Hume’s account of causality is identifiable in human volition. Even if the force that constitutes human choice is unobservable (and, as Hume noted, the force that makes physical actions occur is also unobservable), patterns of constant conjunction between voluntary decisions and other events determine the future course of human action. In this way, determinists attempt to apply Hume’s theories of causation to what they consider to be the “perceived phenomenon” of human will.

While most deterministic theories are rooted in scientific evidence of causal relations, the emergence of quantum physics and the Heisenberg principle disrupted the deterministic explanations for all of reality by suggesting that the “uncertainty principle” is an element of indeterminacy in nature. Research in quantum physics indicates a degree of freedom of action at the most basic level of physical existence. By analogy, it was argued, if such indeterminacy exists on the most basic levels, it must also exist on higher levels, such as in human beings. However, determinists responded by noting that simply because all of the determining factors of the physical world are yet undiscovered, it does not immediately imply that human volitions are free. Indeterminacy on the lowest level of physical action does not demonstrate that free will is necessarily involved.

In the twentieth century, deterministic philosophers gained ground. For example, Searle (1984:98) contended that “our conception of physical reality simply does not allow for radical freedom”. Determinists maintain that there is overwhelming

evidence, both metaphysically and physically, that the actions of human beings are completely determined. On the other hand, libertarians, those who affirm free will, argue that the presuppositions that are employed in moral life demand that some degree of free agency must be accepted at the human level.

4.3.2.2 Libertarianism

In philosophical terms, “freedom” has been defined as the autonomy or self-determination of rational beings. The notion of “free will” has historically been that of ascribing some autonomy to an agent insofar as the agent’s actions can be described as self-generated or self-caused rather than determined by some external cause. Philosophers who reject strict determinism affirm genuine human free will and moral responsibility as “natural freedom of self-determination”. The metaphysical problem of free will consists of the question of how limitations on human freedom could remain consistent with human experience.

According to libertarians, determinism is incompatible with free will (Moreland 1994:7). Libertarians assert that “freedom for responsible action is not compatible with determinism” and real freedom requires control over actions. In other words, the agent must be the absolute originator of actions and exercise its own causal powers and will to choose one alternative over another (Moreland 1994:7). Libertarians agree that determinism may be an accurate way to account for normal events in the natural world, but the free acts of human beings should be regarded as those of genuine agents who act as first causes by exercising their own power for a particular reason: this was identified as the “non-causal theory of agency” (Moreland 1994:10).

The debate concerning free will has been focused primarily on the human element of the universe; that is, humanity’s apparent awareness of the reality of its own freedom. Metaphysicians and philosophers have been concerned with the problem of whether, according to the available evidence, human beings can be said to be free agents, or whether human activities and thoughts are determined completely by a multitude of factors. Kellman (1994:5) asserted that advances in quantum mechanics are compatible with “a role for mind as agent in determining some

actions”. However, the type of spontaneous action in the quantum world does not provide sufficient justification for the type of free will asserted by libertarians and experienced by sentient human creatures (Moreland 1994:11).

Even though human beings are able to choose their actions, it has been argued by libertarians that the framework in which choices are determined may be entirely beyond human control. For libertarians, only if agents are first causes, “unmoved movers”, does the control necessary for freedom truly exist. In other words, an agent must be the absolute, originating source of its own actions to be in control (Moreland 1994:9). Further, such control must be dualistic, consisting of an ability to act or refrain from acting. The “rationality condition” is an assertion that required that an agent have a personal reason for acting before the act could count as a free one (Moreland 1994:9); however, according to this view, not all actions are free.

Libertarians contend that determinism does not account for the experiences and attitudes of daily life that would be perceived as meaningless unless human beings were free agents. There is, libertarians argue, an inherent awareness of individual freedom. In response, determinists argue that even if such common experience exists, it does not rule out the possibility that the experience itself was causally determined.

4.2.3.3 Compatibilism

According to compatibilists, freedom and determinism are compatible with each other. Thus, the truth of determinism does not eliminate the possibility of freedom (Kane 2002:5). Compatibilists argue that agents are free to will whatever they desire though their desires themselves are determined. Freedom, in the compatibilist view, is the will to act on the strongest preference (Moreland 1994:8). In compatibilism, according to Moreland, there is no “causal gap just prior to and after the act of a substantial first mover who contributes causal power into the natural causal fabric”. Therefore, the libertarian view that a positive or negative choice is possible in the moment of action is based on the hypothetical assumption that a desire for the opposite action was also present. In the

compatibilist view, there must be a realistic potential for choice (Moreland 1994:8). Compatibilists, therefore, argue that an act is free only if it is under the agent's own control. Appealing to the "causal theory of action", compatibilists argue that an agent is in control of an act insofar as the act is "caused in the right way by prior acts of the agent" itself (Moreland 1994:9).

Moreland (1994) asserted that "persons are agents and, as such, in free acts they either cause their acts for the sake of reasons (called agent causation) or their acts are simply uncaused events which they spontaneously do by exercising their powers for the sake of reasons (called a non-causal theory of agency)" (Moreland 1994:10). Compatibilists assert that a belief-state in the agent is the efficient cause for action. Libertarians, on the other hand, argue that beliefs are matters of volition that ultimately cause action and therefore should be classified as final causes (Moreland 1994:10).

However, Kane (2002) argued that compatibilism is a weak alternative to the free will versus determinism debate because it only provides a "theory of action (being able to do what we will) but not a theory of freedom of will (being able to will what we will)" (Kane 2002:7). While compatibilists sought to reconcile free will with determinism, it has not been a satisfactory solution. Kane analyzed the option of "indeterminism", which falls outside of traditional definitions of determinism, libertarianism, and compatibilism. The theory states that volitional decisions exist independent of antecedent physiological and psychological causation. Further, Kane noted that indeterminism reigns "supreme at the subatomic level of quantum mechanics" in the absence of any generally accepted argument for an alternative option to describe free will (Kane 2002:87).

4.2.3 Summary

This section included a survey of theories of causation and philosophical perspectives on free will versus determinism. Philosophical notions of free will remain largely incompatible with determinism, despite the attempts of compatibilists to reconcile them. While quantum physics offers some concept of indeterminacy yet to be explained scientifically, it does not provide a

comprehensive formula for freedom of will and action in sentient creatures.

4.3 Theological Perspectives on Free Will and Determinism

This section proceeds from the survey of philosophical theories of causation, free will, and determinism above towards a survey of theological perspectives on free will and determinism, wherein God is introduced as an agent acting in either causal chains of events or as an external cause that intervenes in the natural events of the physical world. This section includes a survey of theological determinism in light of the Calvinistic and Reformed traditions, including a brief survey of the doctrine of divine providence and theological occasionalism. Free will theism is surveyed in light of the Arminian tradition. Finally, theological compatibilism is surveyed in light of Wesleyan theology, in particular Wesley's doctrine of prevenient grace.

Perhaps more than within philosophical debates, conflicts over determinism and free will arose largely within the context of theological controversies. In varying religious traditions, a form of divine determinism is advocated, claiming that God is the sole causal agent in the universe and thereby determines all actions, both human and natural. Theological determinists hold that because God is all-powerful (omnipotent) and all-knowing (omniscient), God must be able to control everything that occurs in the universe and know beforehand (omniprescience) when it will occur. Theological determinists argue that if any event exists outside of the knowledge or control of God, such an event would impose limitations on God's divine power. Thus, theological determinists assert that everything that human beings do in the world is predestined and predetermined by God's prior knowledge and prior decisions.

The debate between theological free will libertarians and predestinarian determinists has historically centered on the theological views of Arminianism versus Calvinism. The debate between Calvinism and Arminianism, however, has gone beyond that of predestination and free will (Olson 2006:97). The divisions that persist between Calvinism and Arminianism exist primarily in differing

“perspectives about God’s identity in revelation” (Olson 2006:74). Nevertheless, there are certain claims upon which classical Calvinism and classical Arminianism “simply disagree and no bridge between them” can be constructed (Olson 2006:68).

The controversy over free will versus predestination was not as pronounced in the Eastern Church as it was in the Western Church from the time of Augustine onward, insofar as the Pelagian controversy (over grace as meritorious based on free will) is not raised. In the Eastern tradition, the issue of grace is regarded as a matter of cooperation and synergy of human and divine wills, not a question of merit (Lossky 1997:196).

4.3.1 Theological Determinism and the Doctrine of Divine Providence

Theological determinism, or the “doctrine of divine providence”,⁶⁷ comprises the notion that every event or substance in the universe is guided entirely by God or the law of God. Divine providence is defined as the means by and through which God governs all things in the universe; that is, the sovereignty, superintendence, or agency of God over events in the universe and throughout human history. The doctrine of divine providence states that God is in complete control of all things. Further, according to divine providence, God governs the affairs of humanity and works through the natural order, and thus the laws of nature are evidence of God at work in the universe. The laws of nature have no inherent power and do not function independently; God established the laws to govern the physical world. Generally, those who ascribed to theological determinism have aligned themselves with the Calvinist tradition of Christian theology.

The American theological determinist Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758 CE) argued

⁶⁷ The word “providence” is derived from the Latin *providere*, that is “foresight, prudence”, from *pro* (“ahead”) and *videre* “to see”. The original meaning of *providere* meant “to take precautionary measures”.

that any attempt to fit free will into a system of determinism⁶⁸ was a “spurious” notion. Although human beings perceive to be choosing freely and may engage in elaborate deliberations about choices to make, Edwards argued, the ultimate decision is fixed because God already knows what the decision will be in the future. Thus, human choice is merely another aspect of existence controlled by God that is foreseen and therefore foreordained.

The Reformed tradition, codified for example in the Westminster Confession of Faith, emphasizes the depravity and dependence of humanity contrary to the complete sovereignty of God. In Reformed orthodoxy divine providence⁶⁹ is defined as the merciful predetermination of God toward the elect; not only salvation, but all things in the universe are ordered and determined by God. Theologians who ascribe to divine providence, primarily in the Reformed tradition, believe that human beings are not free to choose or act apart from the will of God. Every human choice, it is argued, is implicitly in full unity with the will of God. Therefore, God controls human choices and actions yet does not violate human responsibility as free moral agents nor negate the reality of human decision-making. The Westminster Confession of Faith (3.1) explains the doctrine of divine providence thus:

God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of [God’s] own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

Those who ascribe to the doctrine of divine providence claim that the primary

⁶⁸ This is the theological notion that God is the ultimate cause of whatever occurs and that God has foreknowledge of whatever occurs but that human beings are still in some way able to choose freely.

⁶⁹ It should be noted that such notions were prevalent in reformed orthodoxy (17-19th century). Whether Calvin himself would adhere to such determinism is debatable. According to the doctrine of divine providence, nothing happens outside God’s will, but it does not necessarily imply that God determines everything.

means by which God accomplishes God's will is through secondary causes; thus, God works indirectly through secondary causes to accomplish a final, divine cause. Further, the Westminster Confession of Faith states:

Although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first Cause, all things come to pass immutably, and infallibly; yet, by the same providence, He orders them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently (Westminster Confession of Faith, 5.2).

Nevertheless, theologians who ascribe to divine providence make room for God to act apart from secondary causes and argue that God has the ability to supersede the natural order of events to accomplish the divine will: a "miracle" or a "supernatural event". In this manner, theological determinists attempt to understand the world from a top-down rather than a bottom-up perspective. That is, theological determinists attempt to understand how the action of God could be reconciled with an understanding of causation, whereas physical determinists attempt to understand how physical events cause one another.

4.3.1.1 Calvinism

Adherents of Calvinism, the movement ascribed to the French theologian John Calvin (1509-1564 CE), have historically affirmed the notions of the sovereignty of God. The doctrines of Calvinism are classically summarized in the acronym TULIP⁷⁰: total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. Calvinism emphasizes the depravity of humanity and the complete sovereignty⁷¹ of God (Thuesen 2009:5). Generally, Calvinists affirms the notion that God's plan for the world and every human soul is guided by the divine will, or "providence". According to Calvin, the idea that humanity has a free will and is able to make choices independently of that which

⁷⁰ Again, it should be noted that such dogmaticism is characterized primarily in the right-wing of Calvinist movements.

⁷¹ The term "sovereignty" for theological determinists, typically refers to God's omnipotence or all-powerfulness.

God has already determined was based on a limited understanding of the perfection of God and the delusion that the will of God can be circumvented. Typically, in Calvinist theology “providence” is also related to predestination, the idea that individual salvation is predetermined by God on behalf of the individual (Thuesen 2009:15). The relationship between providence and piety is developed by later Calvinists such as the English Puritans. Calvinism has been expressed in modern times within Reformed churches.

4.3.1.2 Theological Occasionalism

Philosophers have questioned how divine causal activity can be reconciled with the naturalistic determinism of creatures. The theory of occasionalism emerged from philosophical questions concerning the nature of causation that correlate with questions about the relations of divine and natural causality. Occasionalism is described as an affirmation of “the positive thesis that God is the only genuine cause” and “the negative thesis that no creaturely cause is a genuine cause but at most an occasional cause” (Lee 2008:1). Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715 CE), one of the most influential occasionalists in Western thought, “developed Occasionalism to its uttermost limit, approaching so near to Pantheism that he himself remarked that the difference between himself and Spinoza was that he taught that the universe was in God and that Spinoza said that God was in the universe” (Moore 1911:1). Moreover, concerning the theory of occasionalism, Moore (1911:1) asserted that:

If man [sic!] is composed of two absolutely distinct substances that have nothing in common, then the conclusion of the Occasionalists is logically necessary and there is no interaction between body and mind. What appears to be such must be due to the efficient causality of some external being. For Cartesianism led, on the one hand, to a Monistic Spiritualism and, on the other, to Materialism. In either case the very foundations of Occasionalism were undermined. In its attempt to solve the second difficulty, Occasionalism did not meet with any particular success. From its doctrine of the relation between body and soul it argued to what must be the relation between God and the creature in general. The superstructure could not stand without the foundation.

The theory of occasionalism is an attempt to address questions of causation, both

physical and divine, by proposing that God is the “one and only true cause”. God first causes one and then causes the other. Malebranche asserted that “there is only one true cause because there is only one true God ... the nature or power of each thing is nothing but the will of God ... all natural causes are not true causes but only occasional causes” (according to Pyle 2003:98).

4.3.2 Free Will Theism

Free will theism is the tradition within Christian theology that has historically affirmed that human agents are endowed by God with the ability and inclination to make decisions without coercion from God. Some free will theists argue that because God grants such freedom to creatures, consequently God can only know the present and past, but cannot know the conditional, yet to be determined future.⁷² Pinnock (1989) defined free will theism as the view that “honors God as so great, so absolute, that [God] can create free and responsible beings” (Pinnock 1989:87). Generally, those who ascribe to free will theism have aligned with the historically Arminian perspective within Christian theology.

Many theologians, especially the medieval Aristotelian theologians, were drawn to the idea that “human beings cannot but will that which they take to be an unqualified good” (O’Conner 2005:3). Other theologians have argued that while the human will may be drawn to good, it cannot be irresistibly drawn to choose good because the choice would not be freely given. That is, the –notion that humans must be “able to reject divine love: love of God that is not freely given – given in the face of a significant possibility of one’s having not done so” would be disingenuous because it would be inevitable, “it would find its ultimate and complete explanation in God” (O’Conner 2005:3). Murray (1993, 2002) argued that a good God chooses to make the divine existence and divine character less than certain for human beings for the sake of their freedom.

⁷² I will not elaborate on free will theism as “open theism” here; I will deal with it more fully in Chapter 6 under the auspices of “process-relational *concursum*”.

4.3.2.1 Arminianism

Arminianism, named after the Dutch pastor Jacob Arminius (1560-1609 CE), is an historical theological tradition that affirms the notion that human beings have the capacity to repent or desire to repent apart from God's specific, supernatural intervention or enabling process. Arminius defended "*synergism* (belief in human-divine cooperation in salvation) against *monergism* (belief that God is the all-determining reality in salvation which excludes human participation)" (Olson 2006:2). Calvinists argue that Arminianism is semi-Pelagian (Olson 2006:6). Olson defended Arminianism, arguing that it is not "devoted to free will out of any humanistic or Enlightenment motive or optimistic anthropology" (Olson 2006:96). John Wesley was perhaps the most influential advocate for Arminian soteriology. Wesley agreed to a large extent with Arminian theology, with the exception of Wesley's views on atonement, the possibility of apostasy, and Wesley's own doctrine of Christian perfection. In some instances, Wesleyan Arminianism was set in contrast with classical Arminianism because of Wesley's contributions to the formulation of the doctrine of prevenient grace.⁷³

4.3.3 Theological Compatibilism

Theological compatibilists seek to reconcile the sovereignty of God and human free will with moral responsibility by adopting a view of "circumstantial freedom of self-realization". Theological compatibilists are considered "soft" determinists. Theological compatibilism maintains that an act is said to be "free" if its direct cause is within the agent itself rather than being imposed on the agent by some external cause. Theological compatibilism assumes that the nature of the agent can be determined with regard to specific decisions, but since the agent is the one exercising the decision, it has some measure of freedom. However, the agent's

⁷³ For this reason, I dealt with prevenient grace under the section on theological compatibilism. However, it should be noted that the majority of Wesleyans view prevenient grace as a form of theological incompatibilism or free-will libertarianism.

nature ensures that the agent could not have chosen otherwise. Theologians who affirm the omni-determinance of God are typically compatibilists with respect to freedom and theological determinism (O’Conner 2005:3).

Finally, William Lane Craig (1991) articulated the notion of “middle knowledge”, an attempt to explain the relationships between God’s knowledge, God’s sovereignty, and human freedom in terms of God’s evaluation and selection of possible worlds and possible human choices. This view, however, is essentially compatibilist, but in the margins of Evangelical theology. Notwithstanding, the most common form of theological compatibilism is John Wesley’s doctrine of “prevenient grace”.

4.3.3.1 Wesleyanism and Prevenient Grace

Prevenient grace (also referred to as “prevenial grace”) is a theological concept embraced primarily by Arminian Christians who are influenced by the theology of John Wesley, and who are part of the Methodist movement. Wesley typically used the term “prevening grace”. The term “preceding grace” conveys a more modern conception. The notion of prevenient grace indicates some common ground between Arminianism and Calvinism (Olson 2006:36). John Wesley affirmed Arminian theology (Olson 2006:169), thus, in that sense, prevenient grace can be understood as a form of theological compatibilism.

Wesley’s doctrine of prevenient grace was influenced by Spanish theologian Alfred de Molina (1535-1600). Molina’s position was similar to that of Wesley. As Regnon summarized this, “it is up to God whether we find ourselves in a world in which we are predestined, but it is up to us whether we are predestined in the world in which we find ourselves” (Regnon 1890:30). Molina believed that grace was “a sort of divine assistance or power given to people to enable them to perform certain acts” (Pinnock 1989). For Molina, the “difference between sufficient grace and efficacious grace” is to be found “not in the quality or magnitude of the grace itself, but in the response of the human will to that grace” (Pinnock 1989 citing Molina, *Concordia* 3.40; 4.53.2.25:30).

Wesley argued that prevenient grace sustains human beings from birth and

prepares them for conversion to Christ. Moreover, Wesley also argued that “preparing grace is “free in all for all”. Prevenient grace, as Wesley defined it, is divine grace that precedes human decision, existing prior to and without reference to human initiative. Wesley considered prevenient grace to be the “first dawning” of God within the life of human beings. Wesley believed that prevenient grace allows human beings to engage their God-given free will to accept or reject the salvific offer of God. Whereas Augustine held that grace cannot be resisted, Wesleyan Arminians believe that it enables, but does not ensure, individual acceptance of the saving grace. Individual salvation depends on a “free response to God’s offer of salvation” (Grider 1984:279). Prevenient grace thus enables all humanity to respond to the grace of God without rendering such response inevitable.

According to the doctrine of prevenient grace, God solicits and excites the will of human beings in a way that permits a response of the human will that either assents to or dissents from the operation of grace (Pinnock 1989). Further, Wesley believed that prevenient grace assists in the alleviation of relative sin, that is, individual distance from relations with God, and thereby makes God more accessible regardless of the effects of original sin. However, such grace flows “universally and unconditionally” as an effect of the atonement. Prevenient grace, in the Wesleyan sense, enables an “unregenerate person to cooperate with God” because “inherited guilt and sin are cancelled” (Lews & Demarest 1996:187). Proponents of prevenient grace affirm the notion that it enables people “to repent and exercise faith toward God” with their “mind enlightened” and “will freed” (Lewis & Demarest 1996:187).

4.3.4 Summary

Not unlike the philosophical debates on free will versus determinism, theological questions concerning the freedom of human beings to act in accordance with God’s will persist. Debates between Calvinists and Arminians, theological determinists and free will theists remain unresolved. While John Wesley attempted a solution to the problem of free-will with his notion of prevenient

grace, his attempt was seen as an overemphasis on human volition to the theological determinists and an underemphasis on human responsibility to free will theists. The ways in which God and humanity interact, in light of both philosophical and scientific understanding of the natural world and theological conceptions of the divine character, remain difficult to explain in universally acceptable terms.

4.4 Historical Perspectives on the Divine-Human Relationship

Scottish anthropologist Sir James George Frazer (1994) proposed that humanity's religious experience can be reduced to three stages of development. In the first stage of religious thinking, humankind attempts to "manipulate nature through occult powers" such as magic. In the second stage of religious thinking humankind turns to "higher powers" for appeal and intervention. However, after both attempts fail, Frazer argued, humankind has no alternative remaining but to seek objective truth in the world through science and return to the self-reliance expressed in magic but applying it to rational methods of empirical observation. Frazer's theory has been utilized in the study of the sociology and anthropology of religion. Frazer's framework is useful in briefly contrasting the development of Western Christian theology from its early stages through modern times. In this section, the biblical accounts of the divine-human relationship are not extensively exegeted. Instead, the focus remains on a rudimentary overview of how attitudes toward such a relationship have shifted and changed in the West. Using Frazer's basic framework, the survey is divided into three sections: early perspectives wherein divine-human relations were largely considered to be miraculous, perspectives wherein divine-human relations were considered limited or existential, and post-modern perspectives wherein divine-human relations are considered implausible or scientifically untenable. The section provides historical background for the subsequent section, namely a survey of contemporary theories of divine action.

4.4.1 Divine-Human Relations are "Supernatural"

It was difficult for Aristotle and Aquinas to reason how divine intrusion in the world could produce effects on physical matter. For Aquinas, it was possible for God to “disrupt” the physical order only by violating the physical laws that were established by God at creation; this notion was absurd in relation to Enlightenment thinking. Luther and Calvin, in the Thomist tradition, established the notion that the interactivity of God and humankind presented in the biblical account was a matter of events past and that with faithful expectation, such interactivity would be restored at the end of time. The “dispensational” position was an attempt to define biblical experiences of divine contact as unnatural occurrences that run counter to the essential nature of the world (Kelsey 1972:30). While Neo-Thomists attempted to formulate the possibility that humankind can have some “glimpses of the reality of God” apart from natural processes, their conclusions were difficult to reconcile with the knowledge of modern science and the biblical accounts (Kelsey 1972:34-35).

4.4.2 Divine-Human Relations are Limited

The liberal and neo-orthodox theologians of the modern era, who were primarily of existentialist philosophical persuasions, argued that divine-human relations are limited. The idea that “mind might act directly on matter” or that a “spiritual (non-physical reality) might break through and change something” was largely unthinkable to modern philosophers and theologians in the Enlightenment tradition (Kelsey 1972:72). Thus, reason in tension with faith informed the theological development of the liberal tradition. Nineteenth century liberal theologians offered the best defense they could imagine in the face of mounting evidence of a closed and mechanistic universe: God must somehow work immanently within a causally determined natural framework. The attempted solution of liberalism for the reconciliation of the intellectual attitudes of the nineteenth century with the Christian religion “eliminated the possibility of a direct experiential encounter with divine reality” and thereby discarded any prospect of the divine breaking into natural processes (Kelsey 1972:29).

According to Paul Tillich (1951), God is the “ground of being” or “being itself”.

Tillich argued that every ontological being has power to be “in being itself” and thus participates in “the ground of being”. Tillich believed that humankind could know God, albeit in a limited way. Tillich adopted the notion of *analogia entis* (analogy of being), “that which is infinite is being itself and everything participates in being itself” (Tillich 1951:239). Thus, Tillich rejected the possibility of human beings knowing and saying anything meaningful about God. However, for Tillich, the *analogia entis* was a justification of the knowledge of God in a limited way: “God must be understood as being itself” (Tillich 1951:240). Tillich’s approach to the divine-human relationship was an existential approach, insofar as God could only be described symbolically by means of finite categories. Thus, Tillich concluded, if God is “being itself” this being must concern humanity ultimately. God, then, for Tillich, could only be known as humanity’s “ultimate concern”.

Karl Barth (1979), in the dispensational tradition of Luther and Calvin, elaborated an understanding of God’s role in the world with “dialectical subtlety”. Barth maintained that because of humanity’s “brokenness and sin”, God does not enter into ordinary human life. The human encounter with God was relegated by Barth to faith in the one great revelation of scripture.⁷⁴ For Barth, relation to God was not a matter of a divine-human encounter wherein two realities confront one another. Rather, Barth saw the divine-human relationship as unidirectional, an encounter whereby the Word of God instructs the mind of the creature regardless of any action on the creature’s behalf. Barth emphasized the “transcendence and otherness of God” (Kelsey 1972:31). He believed that in the rise of the liberal emphasis on divine immanence, “human beings were magnified at the expense of God – the God who is sovereign Other standing over and against humanity ... the

⁷⁴ According to Barth, the doctrine of scripture is the only proper analogy of the Trinity. Thus Barth made application of his “three-fold” perspective of the Word of God: revelation, scripture, and proclamation. According to Barth, only God can reveal Godself, and thus the divine Christ is the only revelation of God. The bible is not God, and thus cannot reveal God apart from God’s will to do so to a particular person at a particular moment.

free partner in a history which [Godself] inaugurated” (Barth 1979:48). Barth’s pneumatological conception of the divine-human relationship was conceived in the light of his reformed theological persuasion:

Everything that one believes, reflects and says about God the Father and the Son . . . would be demonstrated and clarified basically thorough the Holy Spirit, the *vinculum pacis* between Father and Son. The work of God on behalf of creatures for, in, and with humanity would be made clear in a theology which excludes all happenstance (Barth 1968:311).

Kelsey (1972) argued that, if humankind has no experience with a supernatural⁷⁵ reality, then “as far as men are concerned, God is dead” (Kelsey 1972:27). In a manner similar to dispensationalists but far more radical, Hamilton, Altizer, and Van Buren, proponents of “radical theology”, argued that God “broke into history” only once, in the Christ event, and subsequently, no longer lives. As Nietzsche asserted and the “death of God” theologians agreed, God may have lived once and may live again, but for modern humanity “God is dead”. Radical theologians believe that humankind must have had an experience of God at one point in history, but modern human experience seems devoid of such relations. Thus, the radical theologians concluded that divine-human relations with God are limited to the past or some unknowable future, but for now, God is dead.

4.4.3 Divine-Human Relations are Implausible

Unlike the neo-orthodox theologians who asserted that knowledge of God is limited, or the radical theologians who asserted that relation to God is no longer possible, Rudolf Bultmann (1957) asserted that every description of a nonphysical reality perceived by humankind is the result of deceptive “myth”. Bultmann’s notion of myth proposed that divine-human relations were not a thing of the past or an unreachable existential reality, but altogether implausible. Bultmann defined

⁷⁵ While the term “supernatural” is largely outmoded in theological-scientific discussions of divine action, the term was employed by Kelsey.

myth as follows:

Myth is an expression of man's conviction that the origin and purpose of the world in which he lives are to be sought not within it but beyond it – that is, beyond the realm of the known and tangible reality – and that this realm is perpetually dominated and menaced by those mysterious powers which are its source and limit (Bultmann 1957:101).

Bultmann saw myth as the grasping of humanity for a “transcendent power which controls the world and man” (Bultmann 1958:18). For Bultmann and Heidegger before him who defined religious experience as a feeling of total dependence, continuing human-divine encounters simply do not exist. With the rise of modern science, the idea that humanity and God have any real relation or that God exists at all became increasingly scrutinized. Tennant (1956:324) argued that the divine and human relationship consisted entirely on sense experience and reason and thus asserted:

Such immediate rapport between God and the human soul as theism asserts, cannot be discerned with [psychological] immediacy... nor can any transcendent faculty, mediating such contact, be empirically traced

Western academic theology continues to struggle with the notion that anything in religion that “claims to be a direct contact with a reality other than the physical” must derive from “the childhood of man” as an effort to “explain something that he was not rational or mature enough to understand” (Kelsey 1972:49). However, where the effects of Aristotle and Western Enlightenment thinking had not prevailed, such as in the developing parts of the non-Western world, a dualistic understanding of reality persisted: that of the existence and simultaneous human experience of a physical and nonphysical world.

4.5 Divine Action in Contemporary Theological Thought

This section includes an investigation of broad historical perspectives on causation from both philosophy and theology. The focus is not on “theology proper”, but instead includes documentation of general doctrinal perspectives of various

Christian denominations.⁷⁶ The methodology is primarily that of sociological inquiry rather than theological formulation. Categories such as retrospection and prospectation as conceived by Brümmer and Conradie are explored as a general framework for grouping theological perspectives on *concursum*. In this way, theological persuasions can be broadly identified as either establishing a formula by which God is said to act in the future or recognizing ways in which the action of God can be identified in the past. It is impossible to present one view as theologically superior to another, especially for the major categories of Christian theology. However, it is possible to properly group such perspectives for purposes of the review of literature in this chapter.

4.5.1 Brümmer, Farrer, and Wiles: Contemporary Theories of Divine Action

Brümmer (2007:322) noted that most theists maintain that divine agency is principally indirect: “God is always a primary cause acting by means of secondary causes and never intervening directly on the level of secondary causes”. In the most common conception of divine action, God acts through the natural order and through human actions. Wiles (1986:56) argued, however, that divine action must not be conceived as “just one more causal agent working among others” in the world. In like manner, Farrer (1967:62) argued that when divine action is conceived purely in terms of another link a chain of causations, “we degrade it to the creaturely level and place it in the field of interacting causalities”.

Farrer (1967:104) concluded that it is logically problematic to conceive *concursum* in terms of ascribing the same action to two agents; Farrer referred to *concursum* as “double agency”. To ascribe an action to both a human person and to God simultaneously could only mean that the action must be divine, superseding or preceding the human action. Because of the problem of *concursum*, Farrer concludes that the “causal joint” between divine and human action cannot be

⁷⁶ Essentially, the authors discussed in this section are largely philosophical theologians.

determined; that is to say, however, that Farrer did not reject the notion that such a causal joint exists, as Kant did before him.⁷⁷ Farrer conceded that humanity “does not and cannot relate [human conduct] to any supposed point at which an underlying act of the divine power initiates or bears upon creaturely action” (Farrer 1967:105). Brümmer (2007:323) argued that Farrer’s failure to provide an explanation for such a causal joint was inadequate, in spite of the fact that Farrer (1967:66) argued that the specific nature of the causal joint is “irrelevant to religious belief”. Wiles also disagreed with Farrer’s dismissal of knowledge of the causal joint, noting that his concept of double agency is “distantly analogical and unrelated to the causal story” (Wiles 1986:248).

Farrer (1967:61) argued that “if God acts in this world, [God] acts particularly; and if I had no conception of the particular lines along which [God’s] purpose works ... I could not associate my action with the divine and the whole scheme of religion as we have set it out falls to the ground”. Although Farrer admittedly failed to identify the causal joint, he maintained that particular action of God is not only possible, but essential to Christian theology. Wiles, on the other hand, argued that divine action should be conceived in terms of “the world as a whole rather than particular occurrences within in it, the whole process of the bringing into being of the world, which is still going on, needs to be seen as one action of God” (Wiles 1986:28-29). Brümmer (2007) noted that categories such as the “master-acts and sub-acts” of God (Kauffman 1972) were rejected by Wiles (1986:324). Thus, Wiles rejected the notion that a causal joint between divine and human action is necessary. Because Wiles denied that “God is in any way the agent of [human] sub-acts”, Brümmer concluded that Wiles’ conception of the relation between divine and human agency is “no clearer than in the case of

⁷⁷ Kant argued that in order for true *concursum* to occur between any two entities, the two causes must work in tandem, neither being subjected to or inferior to the other. Should either cause be inferior, true *concursum* did not occur, but one event was primary and the other was secondary. Farrer did not arrive at this same conclusion; his conclusion was purely agnostic insofar as the nature of such a causal joint between divine and human action cannot be easily identified.

Farrer” (Brümmer 2007:325).

Brümmer sought to provide an alternative to both Farrer’s theory of double agency and Wiles’ theory of divine agency, one that he believes is more coherent and comprehensive. Brümmer argued that sufficient and necessary conditions for action exist in every causal chain of events. Following Sartre, Brümmer argued that the “sufficient condition for an action being performed therefore consists of the conjunction of the agent’s choice and the complete set of factual circumstances that make it possible for the agent to perform the action in question” (Brümmer 2007:325). Thus, Brümmer argued that an agent can serve as a “contributory cause” to the action of another agent without being the “sufficient cause” for the agent’s final action. Brümmer’s proposal is that double agency is possible insofar as God motivates human beings to do the divine will without imposing that will on them. For Brümmer, “double agency is a matter of co-operation between two agents and not of one agent using the other as a tool” (Brümmer 2007:326).

Brümmer realizes, however, that the identification of a system by which double-agency occurs does not solve the practical problem of divine-human relations. Brümmer (2007:326) asks the question, “in what sense can one appropriately speak of [actions] as God’s acts?”. To address this problem, Brümmer turns to Lucas (1976) to devise a concept of “divine ascription” whereby certain acts can be attributed to God in a retrospective way. Brümmer argues that identifying the action of God is a matter of determining what aspect of the complete cause of an event was the contributory cause that made a significant difference.⁷⁸ Brümmer, utilizing Lucas (1976:4), notes that often times the most significant factors of causation are misidentified when there are multiple ascribed causes to a single effect. Lucas noted that one agent is often given credit for the action of another agent (Lucas 1976:13). Brümmer concurs with Farrer and Wiles insofar as there is

⁷⁸ In this sense, Brümmer follows Hume’s counterfactual theory of causation.

a difficulty in identifying the action of God in motivating the actions of nonbelievers (Brümmer 2007:328); however, Brümmer concludes that God may simply enable or “at least not prevent” certain actions and thus still be able to hold individual agents accountable. Brümmer concludes that not all actions are God’s action; there is some cooperation or independent action on behalf of other agents, namely, human agents. Brümmer agreed with Lucas (1976) that “the claim that all events are brought about by God would seem in the end to make all talk of divine agency vacuous” (Brümmer 2007:329).

4.5.2 Categories for Interpreting Divine Action: Retrospection and Prospecction

Brümmer concludes with three major points. First, Brümmer argued that “divine agency is therefore part of the complete cause of every event, and in this sense his agency is not finite like that of human persons”, second, that “God’s agency is not the only necessary condition for events to occur since [God] has decided to allow for secondary causes to co-operate with [God] in what [God] does”, and third, “if divine agency is not the only necessary causal factor, God need not be held responsible for every event” (Brümmer 2007:329). Brümmer (2007:329) argues that when ascribing action to any particular agent, such “ascription of responsibility applies only to actions and not merely to observable behavior.”

Finally, Brümmer (2007:330) suggests that determining the action of God is a matter of reflection and interpretation of past events. Brümmer suggests that divine action should only be ascribed to “those events that he brings about intentionally and not those events that are unintended side effects of his intentional acts” (Brümmer 2007:330). In other words, Brümmer argues that divine action can only be ascribed to God retrospectively if the event coincides with the divine will; events that were permitted by God but contrary to God’s positive will should not be considered divine actions. In this sense, Brümmer disagrees with Wiles. Some particular events are ascribable to directly to divine action even though God’s agency should be seen as the necessary condition for every event that occurs in the world (Wiles 1986:29). For Brümmer (2007:331), the “the tradition of faith provides the believer with an interpretative framework in

the light of which to decide whether to identify specific events as particular intentional acts of God.” Therefore, Brümmer agrees with Wiles (1986), that it is impossible to identify particular actions of God in the future, but it is possible to retrospectively identify those actions which are ascribable to the divine character.⁷⁹ Brümmer’s conclusion is therefore that such retrospection of divine action is a matter of daily religious practice, a way in which the world “acquires religious meaning” (Brümmer 2007:332).

Conradie (2006) follows a similar formula to that of Lucas and Brümmer in an article on ascribing healing to divine action. Following a soteriological perspective, Conradie notes that the biblical account is “full of examples of people who have subsequently ascribed” events to God’s involvement (Conradie 2006:7). For Conradie, there are varying levels of ascription in events such as healing; that is, there are aspects of healing that can be properly ascribed to biology, medicine, and in some case, divine action (Conradie 2006:19). Like Brümmer, Conradie’s treatment of ascription is less a matter of proscription, attempting to formulate how God will act in the future, and more a matter of retrospection, identifying the actions of God in the past. Such retrospection provides the opportunity for thankfulness and praise for divine actions in the past (Conradie 2006:16).

4.5.3 Discerning Ascription of Divine Action in Various Traditions

Contemporary thought concerning specific divine action, especially its interaction with science, “demands a demonstration that science has room for such phenomenon, even though (most agree) science could never prove that it occurs” (Peters & Hallanger 2006:148). While interventionist theories of divine action, implicit in evangelical and fundamentalist theologies, perceive God as setting aside the laws of nature to intervene and act in specific ways in creation, non-

⁷⁹ Brümmer referenced Hebblethwaite (1970), noting that such ascription is “not a straightforward claim that can be subject to some sort of empirical test”, but is a matter of faith.

interventionist theories of divine action have been the subject of scientifically-oriented theological thought in recent decades. Among such scientifically minded thinkers are Ian Barbour, Nancey Murphy, George Ellis Robert John Russell and William Stoeger; the theories of each of whom are briefly summarized below. Also John Polkinghorne, Arthur Peacocke, Philip Clayton

Scientific investigation of divine action have been the focus of a series of state-of-the-art research consultations convened by the Vatican Observatory in conjunction with the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (Richardson, Russell, Clayton, & Wegter-McNelly 2002:240). However, such research initiatives have not led to final agreement among theologians, philosophers, and scientists as to the nature of divine action or the nature of *concursum*. Arguments over the specific actions of God, precisely the debate on theories of *concursum*, lead to “fights over determinism and free will, the problem of evil, and so on” (Richardson, Russell, Clayton, & Wegter-McNelly 2002:91). Nevertheless, contemporary theories of divine action have been framed less by traditional categories of free-will versus determinism and more by broad theories on the role of God in naturalistic processes. For contemporary investigations of divine action, especially those that attempt to seek integration of theology and science, much less emphasis is placed on the specific intervention of God. Instead, the debate has shifted to focus primarily on the general role of God in creation.

Similar to Wiles’ (1986) theory of general divine action in creation as a whole, Barbour (1960) had earlier formulated such an argument. Barbour’s theory of divine action saw the action of God not as specific events in a causal chain, but as the whole process of creation. Barbour argued that when identifying divine action, “rather than looking for God’s intervention at certain points, we can speak of God’s activity through the process as a whole, in the purpose evidenced by its direction and in the appearance of organization out of chaos” (Barbour 1960:71). For Barbour, divine action is more a matter of teleology than intervention. The actions of God can be seen as “process and purpose” in creation. Such a shift in the theological formulation of divine action has led to a de-emphasis of supernaturalism and interventionism. Murphy (1988:6) summarized this

perspective by noting that “if we reject an interventionist account of divine action, we are left with two options: either God does not act at all within the created world, or else God acts at all times in all things”. Murphy, like Barbour and Wiles, concluded that “God is working at all times in all things to bring about the good, but the extent to which God can realize those good plans is, by divine decree, dependent upon the cooperation of all-too-often recalcitrant creatures, both human and non-human” (Murphy 1998b:14). Similarly, Langford (1981:76) asserts the notion of “General Providence”: the action of God as intelligently planning and governing events in a continuous way. Like Farrer, Langford maintains an agnostic position concerning the methods by which God acts, but does not thereby assume that God does not act at all in the world.

The emphasis on God acting in a general sense invokes an emphasis on divine immanence. Such an emphasis on immanence “also raises the issue of how we are now to conceive of God’s interaction with the world and how God might influence some patterns of events to occur rather than others” (Richardson, Russell, Clayton, & Wegter-McNelly 2002:240). Murphy concluded that quantum indeterminism may be a key to identifying divine influence, though according to Murphy, it is not necessary to assert causal indeterminism in higher levels of organization other than the human level since God’s will is “assumed to be exercised by means of the macro-effects of subatomic manipulations” (Murphy 1995, 327).

Peacocke (1993) argues that new perspectives from natural science have framed the divine-human interaction debate in new contexts, in particular, by providing new insights into issues such as top-down causation and the relation of the human brain to the human body (Peacocke 1993:165). Peacocke sought to integrate a variety of perspectives on divine action in such a way as to preserve the notion of “divine action making a difference in the world, yet not in any way contrary to those regularities and laws operative within the observed universe which are explicated by the sciences” (Peacocke 1993:158). For Peacocke, rethinking the ways in which “causality actually operates in our hierarchically complex world provides new resources for thinking about how God could interact with that

world” (Peacocke 1993:158). Similar to other scientific perspectives on divine action, Peacocke sought to reconcile the “continuing action of God with the world-as-a-whole” (Peacocke 1993:161). However, unlike Kaufman and Wiles, Peacocke stressed “more strongly than they do that this maintaining and supporting interaction [of God with the world] is a continuing as well as initial one; and can be general or particular in its effects” (Peacocke 1993:163). That is, Peacocke argued that while divine action may be general in nature, may have “causative effect upon individual events and entities within the world” (Peacocke 1993:163). Peacocke’s theory is essentially a compatibilist theory that is sensitive to contemporary science (Peters & Hallanger 2006:148).

Russell (1996:10-12) sought to develop a constructive theology that did not attempt to explain how God acts or even that God does act, but to make a basic theological claim that divine action is rational and credible. Similar to the notions of retrospection and prospection, Russell argued that divine action can be categorized as either objective or subjective. Objective divine action is that which affects the physical world, even if there are no human beings to experience such actions. Subjective divine action is the “hermeneutical act” of interpreting and identifying the actions of God in history. Subjective divine action would be similar to Lucas’ concept of ascription and Brümmer’s concept of retrospection. In like manner, Russell distinguished direct and indirect divine action: direct action tends to be objective while indirect tends to be subjective (Russell 2002:296).⁸⁰ Russell believes that while top-down notions of causation are important, a “bottom-up” conception of causation is indispensable to any theory of divine action (Russell 2002:300); Russell developed a proposal in relation to bottom-up causality (Russell 2002:300-301). Moreover, Russell also proposed a quantum theory of divine action, proposing that if science could discover certain causal links between quantum indeterminance and events in the physical world, it may

⁸⁰ I recognize that these are separate issues, but there are notable similarities between them.

strengthen the non-interventionist perspective on divine action (Peters & Hallanger 2006:206).

4.6 A theological survey of an understanding of *Concursus*

In Catholic theology, the relationship between God and creatures has been historically referred to as *conkursus divinus*, or divine concurrence. In theological terms, *conkursus* is the cooperation⁸¹ of God and humanity as the causal forces of some particular effect. *Conkursus* has been defined as divine activity that runs parallel with the activity of created things. *Conkursus dei* has been conceived differently depending on whether the stress is laid on divine actions or actions of secondary causes (Runes 2001:111). Theologians from various traditions have agreed that actions of creatures maintain some dependence upon created causes and also maintain some dependence upon the action of God. The difference in opinion concerns the measure and nature of such dependence. The question of *conkursus* has historically been related not only to the question of causation, but also to the question of power. In other words, who has the power to choose and act, God alone, the creature, or both?

The issue of divine *conkursus* has been problematic to theologians for centuries, as much as the debate of freedom versus determinism has been problematic to philosophers. For instance, O’Conner (2005) asserts that “those who suppose that God’s sustaining activity (and special activity of conferring grace) is only a necessary condition on the outcome of human free choices need to tell a more subtle story, on which God’s omnipotent cooperative activity can be (explanatorily) prior to a human choice and yet the outcome of that choice be settled only by the choice itself” (O’Conner 2005:4). O’Conner proposes that a logical quandary exists between relying on God as a primary cause or

⁸¹ It should be noted that “cooperation” is a loaded term with immense implications. That is not to say that *conkursus* is always “cooperation” per se, but in the case of Runes, I will maintain this definition.

precondition to human action and holding human beings personally accountable for their actions. In like manner, Tanner (1986) asserts that “it makes as much sense to deny that there are created powers and efficacy because God brings about all that is, as to deny there is a creation because there is a creator. It makes no sense at all, for the same reason in both cases; one would be denying the existence of an effect because of the existence of a cause” (Tanner 1988:86). That is, Tanner argues, it is illogical to say that creatures have no power in and of themselves simply because God created them first. This section will consist of a summary of these debated issues concerning the ways in which God and humanity interact.

Further, this section includes a brief summary of four general theories of *concursum*. These include mediate and immediate *concursum*, natural *concursum*, prior *concursum*, and permissive *concursum*. The work of the Jesuit theologian Barnard Boeder, who dealt extensively with the issue of *concursum divinum* from both theological and philosophical perspectives, is relied upon as a primary reference. Each subsection is not meant to be comprehensive, but intended to provide an overview of the basic schools of thought related to *concursum* as it has been understood in the broad Christian tradition.

4.6.1 Mediate and Immediate *Concursum*: Preparation and Interaction

Boeder (1902) distinguished between mediate and immediate concurrence as follows: mediate concurrence is the preparation of the creature by God for some action while immediate concurrence is God’s interaction with the creature in its moment of action. Mediate concurrence is considered by Boeder to be “moral concurrence” and immediate concurrence was considered to be “physical concurrence” (Boeder 1902:2). Mediate concurrence, Boeder argues, is exercised through “the medium of rational creatures”. To Boeder, immediate concurrence did not mean that “the action of the creature depends under all aspects immediately upon God” (which would be a denial of free volition), rather, creatures are in one respect acting according to their own activity and in another respect dependent on God both mediately and immediately (Boeder 1902:3). Boeder’s position is that no creature can do anything whatsoever “in the very

moment in which the action takes place God wills that the faculty from which it flows be really exercised” (Boeder 1902:3). That is, God acts immediately to sustain all creatures by virtue of the first cause of creation. Creatures, according to the position of immediate concurrence, are ultimately dependent on the Creator for all actions; creaturely action “proceeds” from the action of God.

Unlike Boeder, Kant did not believe that moral conduct requires God’s mediate concurrence, but he did deny that knowledge of such concurrence could ever be possible. If God concurs as a cooperating cause with human will, then human beings would not be the authors of their own actions. For Kant, the moral concurrence of God would be a “miracle of the moral world” in the same sense as miracles of the physical world (Kant in Wood 2001:435). In other words, concurrence from God, even in moral decision-making, would constitute an intervention in the natural order.

4.6.2 Natural Concursus: God sustains Humanity through Natural Order

The theory of natural *concursus* (or physical concurrence) states that “God helps creatures to act and work in harmony with their natural faculties” (Boeder 1902:1). According to natural concurrence, God concurs naturally with the material world, including the mind and emotions of humankind. German theologian Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714 – 1762 CE) asserted a general physical cooperation with God where in “God concurs mediately as efficient cause in all the actions of finite substances” and “concurs immediately as efficient cause ... actuating and conserving” such substances.⁸² Generally, however, Kant agreed with the classical view that all “substances” have their ground in God as the *prima causa* and thus there can be no *concursus*; for if there were, substances would be coordinated with God, not controlled by God. In the same way,

⁸² Baumgarten’s work on *concursus* can be found in *Concursus Dei Physicus Generalis, Metaphysica*, §958.

theological determinists argue that there can be no *concursum* in physical events because their first proximate cause is in nature itself, but the primary cause is still always grounded in God as the supreme *prima causa* (Kant in Wood 2001:434).

4.6.3 Prior *Concursum*: God acts through Humanity by Causation

The theory of prior *concursum* states that when apparently free creatures act, they act only as secondary causes because their existence is grounded in the first cause (God). Augustine (354-430 CE) asserts that before the fall it was possible for humanity to be sinless, but the grace of God was necessary (*adjutorium sine qua non*). Augustine argues that after the fall, the grace of God or “concurrence” aids humanity (*adjutorium qua*) with which humanity must cooperate. Further, Augustine affirms a general *concursum*, or the general cooperation of God as the primary cause and the activities of creatures as secondary causes (Runes 2001:111). Boeder (1902:2) asserts that “God concurs with [God’s] creatures in action as the first cause, whilst creatures are the [secondary] cause”. According to Augustine, human actions simply proceed from the primary action of God.

Influenced by Augustine’s notion of general *concursum*, Thomas Aquinas (1125 – 1275 CE) uses the term *operatio* to denote divine cooperation with the actions of finite beings. Aquinas asserts that God moves creatures to action (*Deus movet res ad operandum*); that is, creaturely action is exercised inasmuch as God directs its action. Aquinas maintains that God directs the operation of the created order (*quasi applicando formas et virtutes rerum ad operationem*); therefore, according to Aquinas, God is the cause of the actions of every agent (*secundum hoc omnia agunt in virtute ipsius Dei; et ita ipse est causa omnium agentium*). Pohle (1916) notes that the *concursum praevius* and *praemotio physica* of Aquinas are therefore “merely different names for one and the same thing” (Pohle 1916:74).

Aquinas argues for the dependence of finite activities upon the action of God insofar as God’s influence upon the activity of creatures is a motion or application exercised upon the faculties of creatures; therefore God “operates in their operation” and creatures act in virtue of divine power (Boeder 1902:1). The understanding of *concursum* postulated by Aquinas affirms *concursum praevius* as

cooperation with God that co-produces a free act of the creature and casually determines such an act as a *praemotio physica*. Accordingly, God then applies such predetermination to the otherwise indifferent will of the creature. Accordingly, the Thomistic view consists of the notion that the will of the creature is predetermined by God physically and *ad unum* before it determines itself. Aquinas states that “the first cause exerts the strongest influence upon the effect, that influence is nevertheless determined and specified by the proximate cause”. Therefore, according to prior *concursum*, God acts through creaturely action.

Further, Boeder (1902) considered the operation of the creature an essential part of the created order, apart from which it would be impossible for creatures to act in accordance with their own will (Boeder 1902:5). Boeder clarifies that God causes activity at the “moment when the creature operates, not as a divine operation, but as an operation natural to a finite faculty”. The creature is the secondary cause of the action and God decrees simultaneous concurrence with the action (Boeder 1902:5). When God wills the action of finite creatures, Boeder concludes, the creature is the proximate cause of “the same action which is attributed to God as its first cause” (Boeder 1902:5). The action of the creature is dependent on God not only mediately but immediately as well, not only because God is its source for existence but because God constitutes the reality of the creature itself (Boeder 1902:5). Thus, in the tradition of Augustine and Aquinas, Boeder argued that the action of God is exercised in the action of the creature.

4.6.4 Sequenced *Concursum*: God orients Human Will to exercise Freedom

The theory of sequenced *concursum* consists of the notion that God orients the human will to exercise its own freedom to act, but not necessarily to will. Sequenced *concursum* was defined by Pohle (1916) as *concursum collatum* or *concursum exhibitum*: the “actual bestowal of divine help for the performance of a specific act which the will freely posits” and by virtue of the “scientia media” are foreseen by God with absolute certainty. When *concursum collatum* occurs, God physically agrees to perform the same act the creature has chosen for itself. According to Pohle, the self-determination of free will “precedes the divine

causality as a condition precedes that which it conditions; not, however, as a cause precedes its effect” (Pohle 1916:74). Therefore, *concurus collatus* must be a simultaneous act. Unlike natural or prior *concurus*, according to the theory of sequenced *concurus*, the will to act arises first from the creature, after which God approves or disapproves of the action by concurring with the creature.

The Molinistic theory of *concurus*, named after the sixteenth century theologian Luis de Molina (1535-1600 CE), states that divine concurrence comprises two efficient causes, a first cause and a secondary cause, that produce the whole effect by means of equal cooperation. The Molinistic theory is a type of sequenced *concurus*. According to Molinism, in order for divine *concurus* to occur, two specific events must occur: offered operation, and actual cooperation: *concurus oblatas* and *concurus collatus*. According to Pohle (1916), *concurus oblatas* cannot produce a determined act of free will; its reality is merely hypothetical, but, argues Pohle, necessary because “free volition cannot operate of itself and independently” of a first cause. Dependence on the proffered aid of God, the human will is enabled to orient itself to its own freedom and “act according to its good pleasure” (Pohle 1916:73). Thus, in sequenced *concurus*, while the will may arise in the creature, the will is oriented by God either by approval or disapproval before the final action of the creature occurs.

4.6.5 Permissive *Concurus*: God Grants the Use of Human Will

The theory of permissive *concurus* states that God voluntarily permits human beings to exercise their will. Boeder (1902) notes a slight variation of prior *concurus* with reference to the Thomistic dictum “omnia agunt in virtute ipsius Dei, et ita ipse est causa omnium actionum agentium”;⁸³ that is, every being that acts is in the exercise of its action dependent upon an influence proceeding from Godself, and thus God is the cause of all actions of active beings. However,

⁸³ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* Ia. q. 105 ar. 5 in corp. *De Potentia* q. 3 art 7.

Boeder used the foundational notion of prior *concursum* from Aquinas to conclude that God grants permission for free creatures to act rather than simply viewing creatures as secondary causes preceding from God as the first cause. Therefore, when God concurs, God grants application of free will and does not suppress it, but ultimately, the action proceeds from God and not the creature alone by virtue of God's permission (Boeder 1902:6).

Further, Boeder argued for two characteristics of a morally free faculty: the use of liberty and the act of choosing (Boeder 1902:4). According to Boeder, the free act of the creature can depend on both God and itself immediately for action. Boeder stated that "God, willing the exercise of freedom at the moment when it is exercised, implicitly wills that there be a choice made by the creature" (Boeder 1902:4). In other words, God grants the actual use of freedom to the creatures; God grants the action of choice without making a firm determination. An *actus physicus* was to Boeder "the immediate effect both of God willing the use of the free will and of the creature having this use actually under God"; in the *actus physicus*, Boeder argued, free creatures can accept or refuse, by means of volition or nolition, options in relation to moral law and God thereby approves or disapproves of decision-making. Thus Boeder concludes that God may will to allow or not to impede the decision making of creatures (Boeder 1902:4).

4.6.6 Summary

This section consisted a survey of four major theories of *concursum*. The theory of natural *concursum* states that God sustains the series of causal events in the world by serving as their primary cause; therefore, all events in the world are only secondary causes. The theory of prior *concursum* states that because God is the first cause and all other causes are subject to God, it is truly God acting through seemingly free creatures, not the creatures themselves. The theory of sequenced *concursum* states that God orients the human will to make free decisions; that is, the will is not functional unless God regulates particular decisions. Finally, the theory of permissive *concursum* states that God grants human beings the use of free will; that is, God wills the will of the creatures.

These four theories⁸⁴ have collectively informed the notion of God at work in the world from a pneumatological perspective since it is essentially through the Spirit that God acts in the world. Hence, this chapter proceeds to a survey of pneumatology as it relates to divine *concursum*.

4.7 Pneumatology as the theological basis for *Concursum*

This section entails a transition from a broad philosophical and theological survey of *concursum* to Christian pneumatology as the theological foundation for *concursum*. The Spirit of God, in both biblical literature and philosophical theology, is generally regarded as the person of the godhead or that aspect of God which most immediately interacts with the world and thus, humankind. This section establishes a connection between *concursum* in the most general sense and *concursum* in relation to the Spirit as a survey of pneumatology. In the survey, the focus is not on the nature of God, the doctrine of God, or Trinitarian formulations; rather, the focus remains solely on a broad conception of the means by which the divine Spirit comes in contact with the human spirit. Thus, through this survey of pneumatology, various perspectives on pneumatological *concursum* are analyzed. The logical connection between *concursum divinum* and pneumatology was articulated by Boeder (1902:3):

By natural moral concurrence God causes those influences of created beings, for instance of parents, teachers, good friends, upon our intellect and will, which incline us naturally to choose what is right and to reject what is wrong. But incomparably more excellent is the supernatural moral concurrence, known to Christians under the name of Divine illuminations and inspirations, by which the Holy Ghost moves our souls to saving actions, in such a way that it depends upon the free-will of man whether he chooses to follow...

⁸⁴ It should be noted that I have not addressed either Pentecostal *concursum* or Process-Relational *concursum*; the survey in this section was meant only to be a broad survey of *concursum divinum* in the Christian tradition.

Thus, in this section a brief survey⁸⁵ of three major areas of pneumatology are presented: first, the action of the spirit in the biblical literature, second, the action of the spirit as understood in the ancient and early church and third, the action of the spirit according to modern theology. The major part of the survey is focused on modern theology, because theologians such as Pannenberg, Moltmann, and Welker have articulated positions that are relevant to later chapters of this doctoral thesis.

4.7.1 The Action of the Spirit according to Biblical Literature

The action of the Spirit in biblical literature centered on two aspects of the divine-human relationship: spirit and Spirit. That is, the work of God through the divine Spirit and the consciousness of the individual human spirit. The *pneuma*, the spirit of a human being, was regarded in biblical literature as “that aspect of a man or a woman through which God most immediately encounters him or her” (Kärkkäinen 2002:28). In fact, Kärkkäinen asserted that in several instances it is not absolutely clear whether the word referred to the human spirit or the divine spirit (Kärkkäinen 2002:28).⁸⁶ Such ambiguity suggests an intrinsic link or interdependence between the Spirit of God and the spirit of human creatures. Further, Yves Congar (1993) concludes that the biblical concept of spirit is a “subtle corporality rather than an incorporeal substance. In other words, “spirit”, in biblical literature, was more than mind or soul; it was regarded as a tangible force at work in the material world. Congar argued that the *ruach*-breath in the Old Testament is not disincarnate. Rather, spirit is what animates the body” (Congar 1997:3).

When “spirit” is set in opposition to “flesh” in the Old Testament it is done in

⁸⁵ I recognize that a “brief survey” of pneumatology is not easy; however, in this section I attempt to provide a rudimentary background for subsequent chapters where I will focus on *concursum* and pneumatology from two specific theological traditions: process thought and Pentecostalism.

⁸⁶ Kärkkäinen pointed to Mark 14:38, Romans 8:15, 11:8, and 1 Corinthians 4:21 as examples.

order to demonstrate the weakness of human beings as a purely earthly reality in contrast with the “spiritual” power of God universally present in the world (Kärkkäinen 2002:26). While the action of the Spirit of God was at times intertwined with the action of human beings, human beings were regularly portrayed in the biblical accounts as disadvantaged in comparison to the Spirit of God because of material, fleshly inhibition. Thus, human beings were portrayed as thoroughly inferior to and dependent on the divine Spirit, even for the existence of their own human spirit. In inter-testamental literature, terms such as the “Spirit of God” and “divine spirit” also referred to the experience of God’s actions on earth (Kärkkäinen 2002:28). The author of the Wisdom of Sirach portrayed the Spirit as the reality that performed God’s work on earth (Sirach 48:12). When the Spirit of God acted, the acts were documented in relation to the spirit of human creatures. Therefore, the transcendent God, the “wholly other”, was set in contrast with the immanent Spirit of God who interacted with human beings. In like manner, Schweizer (1985-6:428-29) contended that it is the task of the Spirit to enable individuals to “renounce the flesh” in a struggle or warfare between spirit and flesh. However, such a struggle does not necessarily indicate a tension between Spirit and spirit; it suggests the goal of their unity.

Thus Kärkkäinen (2002) observed that “the spirit of a human being is that aspect of a man or a woman through which God most immediately encounters him or her” (Romans 8:16; Galatians 6:18; Philippians 4:23; Hebrews 4:12; etc.), the “dimension wherein one is most immediately open to God” (Luke 1:47; Romans 1:9; 1 Peter 3:4). Further, the biblical texts, in certain instances, is “not absolutely clear whether the word refers to human spirit or the divine Spirit” (Kärkkäinen 2002:28). Therefore, the Spirit of God was portrayed as the meeting point where humanity and the divine interact; it was via in the Spirit that *concursum* occurred in the biblical literature. In the New Testament, Luke did not refer to the Spirit in relation to salvific experience or redemption (Kärkkäinen 2002:32). In Acts, Luke compares the birth of the church and its ministry by the power of the Spirit to that of Jesus: the church ministered to and healed people by the power of the Spirit in the same manner by which Jesus conducted his ministry (Kärkkäinen 2002:30).

Thus, Kärkkäinen concludes, in both the Old and New Testaments, the primary role of the Spirit in relation to the human spirit was not to influence or achieve individual salvation, but to empower the individual human spirit in relationship to the divine Spirit to perform the will of God on earth. In this sense, the encounter with the Spirit of God was the biblical crucible for *concursum divinum* to occur.

4.7.2 The Work of the Spirit in Early Christian Thought

The role of the Spirit in the early church was that of human empowerment or human encounter with the divine reality of God. Dunn (1970:698) asserts that in the earliest Christian communities, the role of the Spirit denoted:

Supernatural power, altering, working through, directing the believer... this is nowhere more clearly evident than in Acts where the Spirit is presented as an almost tangible force, visible if not in itself, certainly in its effects.

The force of the Spirit, acting and working in the midst of individuals in the early church, was considered as God unilaterally intervening and altering reality in response to petitionary prayers, but the Spirit acted in cooperation with the action of human beings. At “pivotal moments in the life of an individual or the early church” the Spirit was regarded as the source of “an extraordinary power” (Kärkkäinen 2002:31). The empowerment of the Spirit was understood as action, not to selfish ends or independent desires, but in full cooperation with the will of God. The empowered human spirit was compelled to cooperate with the Spirit of God. Cyril of Alexandria states that “Christ filled his whole body with the life-giving power of the Spirit ... it was not the flesh that gave life to the Spirit, but the power of the Spirit that gave life to the flesh” (quoted in Congar 1997:73). Further, biblical commentator Schweizer (1985-6:406) seeks to overcome the concept of the Spirit as a temporary power that comes and leaves again, which he saw as a misunderstanding of the biblical accounts. Instead, Schweizer (1985:6:409) argues that the Spirit is a “feature of the age of the Church”.

The understanding of the Spirit as empowerment of the human creature led to heresies condemned by the early church fathers. The primary heresy of the Spirit

was promoted by a sect called *Pneumatomachoi* (“Enemies of the Spirit”), promoted by Macedonius (d. c.362 CE) who asserted that the Spirit was an instrument of power created by God in order to act through humanity in the world. According to the view of the *Pneumatomachoi*, the Spirit remains at the level of an “interactive economy”, serving only to deal with the world and had no place in intra-trinitarian relations (Hilberath 1994:495-496). The *Pneumatomachoi* believed that the Spirit was the conduit or channel for relations between divine activity and human activity, but denied that the Spirit had any role in the person or character of God. The *Pneumatomachoi* were condemned because of a denial of a trinitarian understanding of the nature of God.

In the Eastern church, the Spirit is understood as the divine giver of life whose primary soteriological role is the divinization of human beings, a process referred to by the Eastern Church as “*theōsis*” (Burgess 1997:4). In the development of the doctrine of *theōsis*, the Eastern Fathers emphasized the experiential nature of the Spirit. The Eastern fathers viewed grace as a means by which human beings share in the divine life. Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Cyril of Alexandria concur that humanity was anointed by the Spirit by the incarnation of the Logos (Kärkkäinen 2002:43). Thus in the Eastern view, the Spirit is responsible for not only cooperating with humanity, but divinizing humanity, thus making *concursum divinum*, authentic divine-human relations, possible in spite of the less divine nature of the human spirit.

The Western view of the Spirit was largely one-sided and dealt primarily with an Augustinian interpretation of the Spirit as a self-contained member of the divine trinity. The Catholic Catherine Mowry LaCugna (1991:102-103) asserts that Augustine’s legacy in this regard led to a de-emphasis on the interactive role of the Spirit:

Even if Augustine himself intended nothing of the sort, his legacy to Western theology was an approach to the Trinity largely cut off from the economy of salvation... When the *De Trinitate* is read in parts, or read apart from its overall context and in light of Augustine’s full career, it is both possible and common to see no real connection between the self-enclosed trinity of divine persons and the sphere of

creation and redemption.

The de-emphasis on the role of the Spirit in Augustinian theology reduced the Spirit's work to the act of dispensing grace. The activity of God through the Spirit in the earth, such as the redemption of the created order, was largely ignored in the West; soteriological concerns were instead made a theological priority. The action of the Spirit was reduced to the administration of the sacraments or the work of the clergy. A general notion of the Spirit at work in the world was largely neglected.

During the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther (1483-1546 CE) reconsidered the role of the Spirit in the church. Luther asserted that there were two ways in which God relates to humanity: first, externally through preaching and the sacraments, and second, internally through the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts. Both relations, according to Luther, are vital, but the external relation is primary while the internal relation is secondary. Luther maintained that the Spirit is never given apart from mediation. Luther contends that deification is the real participation in the divine life of Christ: Luther expressed terms such as "participation in God", "union with God", and even *perichoresis* (as documented by Pannenberg, 1991:215), not unlike earlier notions of the unity of the divine Spirit and the human spirit.

4.7.3 The Work of the Spirit in Modern Theology

This subsection entails a brief survey of five modern theological positions related to the action of the Spirit in relation to the human spirit. First, liberal theology is surveyed as the tradition in which theologians articulated the notion that the Spirit as immanently acting in history. Second, Neo-Orthodox theology is surveyed as the tradition in which theologians considered the Spirit as "acting in being". Third, the perspectives of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Karl Rahner are documented, who saw the Spirit as working in human nature. Fourth, the perspective Jürgen

Moltmann is documented, who saw the Spirit as at work through immanent transcendence.⁸⁷ Finally, the perspective of Michael Welker is documented, who sees the Spirit as selflessly at work in the selflessness of humanity.

4.7.3.1 Liberal Theology: The Spirit Immanently Acting in History

Liberal theologians of the nineteenth century were dissatisfied with the radical disunity between the divine and human spirit. Theological liberalism dealt with pneumatological themes primarily concerned with direct human experience of the Spirit (Badcock 1997:112). The inaugurator of liberal theology, Frederick Schliermacher (1768-1834 CE) considered the Holy Spirit the “divine essence” with human nature in the form of the common Spirit that exists among Christians (Schleiermacher 1999: §123). Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889 CE) emphasized the work of the Spirit in and over the person of the Spirit. For Ritschl, the only meaningful way to speak of the Spirit was in regard to the Spirit’s work in history (according to Badcock 1997:116-117). Not unlike Hegel’s dialectical understanding of history, liberal theologians viewed the Spirit as a force at in the world, but attempted to reconcile their view with the prevailing rationalism of their time.

The German term for Spirit, *Geist*, communicates a unity of both spirit and mind in a more comprehensive way than its English equivalent; this was especially true in early Hegelian conceptions of spirit as “life” (Hilberath 1994:523). In so doing, Hegel blurred the line between “Spirit” and “spirit”. In the Hegelian vision, the final goal of all human history is the reciprocation of the knowledge of God to humanity by the Spirit; that is, the process of humanity knowing God in the same way God knows Godself. In Christ, the universal goal of divine-human unity was realized and actualized in a particular historical individual (Grenz & Olsen:37).

⁸⁷ It should be noted that Moltmann’s position is not altogether unique, as the church has struggled with the tension between immanence and transcendence for millennia.

4.7.3.2 Neo-Orthodox Theology: The Spirit Acting in Being⁸⁸

For Paul Tillich (1963), the Spirit of God may be regarded as the life-giving principle that makes human life and the life of the entire creation meaningful and distinct (Tillich 1963:294). Similarly, Karl Barth (1969) affirms that the work of the Spirit was “the divine preparation of man for the Christian life in its totality” (Barth 1969:31). The notion of the Spirit as the essence of Christian life, or in Tillich’s understanding, the “ground of being” itself, was a contribution by neo-orthodox theologians to pneumatological ideas of the divine-human relationship. If the Spirit is the source of life, or as Barth states, the divine preparation for Christian life, then the human spirit is by its very nature dependent on the divine Spirit.⁸⁹

4.7.3.3 Pannenberg and Rahner: The Spirit Working in Human Nature

Wolfhart Pannenberg (1991) notes two historical approaches have been taken concerning the essence of God. The patristic fathers maintained the idea of God as wholly “other” to combat the idea of a physical *pneuma* which the Stoics saw as “supreme reason”. In high scholasticism, the idea of “God as reason” was complemented with the idea of “God as will”, both of which Pannenberg criticized as inadequate (Pannenberg 1991:370-378). For Pannenberg, the essence of God consists of both immanence and transcendence; as the Spirit transcends the world the Spirit is simultaneously the immanent life of the world. In so doing, Pannenberg sees the Spirit was the force⁹⁰ that elevates creatures from their environment and orients them toward the future (Pannenberg 1991:118-123). The

⁸⁸ While this section is admittedly short, a brief mention of Tillich and Barth is, I believe, worthwhile in light of the pneumatological discussion in this chapter.

⁸⁹ I recognize that this subsection is short and somewhat awkward, however, I believe the contribution of the neo-orthodox theologians to pneumatology is worth mentioning.

⁹⁰ According to Pannenberg, the Spirit may be understood as the environmental network or, “force field” in which and from which creatures live. The Spirit is also the “force” that lifts them above their environment and orients them toward the future. This work of the Spirit ultimately leads to self-transcendence and forms the basis for the special life in Christ (Grenz 2001:52-54).

Spirit, Pannenberg believes, is the agent who makes possible the immediacy of Christ to all believers (Pannenberg 1991:102). This is Pannenberg's ecclesiological principle: the idea that the Spirit releases and reconciles the tension between the individual and the church and thus also releases tension between social influence and individual freedom.

Karl Rahner (1975:122-132) agrees with Pannenberg that God is an intrinsic aspect of human nature that functions as the necessary condition for human subjectivity; God is not alien to human nature. For Rahner, "God actually communicates [Godself] to every human person" by grace so that the presence of God becomes an "existential, a constitutive element, in every person's humanity".⁹¹ Further, Rahner affirms that God has already communicated Godself in the Holy Spirit "always and everywhere and to every person as the innermost center" of human existence (Rahner 1978:139). Since God is regarded as "central to human nature" for Rahner, when humanity expresses personal love for one another, it is an "all embracing act... which gives meaning, direction, and measure to everything else" (Rahner 1969:241).

More so than the neo-orthodox theologians, Pannenberg and Rahner united the divine Spirit with the human spirit in an existential way. Dependence on the divine Spirit was not seen by Pannenberg and Rahner as a perception of human experience,⁹² but as an aspect of human nature itself. Therefore, *concursum* in this sense was seen not as an encounter that occurs spontaneously or on certain occasions, but always and at once. The divine-human relationship functions in every human person by virtue of the very nature of their existence.

4.7.3.4 Moltmann: The Spirit at Work through Immanent Transcendence

Jürgen Moltmann (1992) notices the Augustinian influence on Western

⁹¹ See also Grenz & Olson (1992).

⁹² This notion would be similar to Schleiermacher's idea of the human feeling of complete dependence.

pneumatology and lamented the situation where both Protestant and Catholic theology have confined the Spirit to the work of redemption and thereby suppressed the Spirit from bodily, everyday life. Moltmann affirms the cosmic dimension of the activity of the Spirit in everyday life and asserts that concurrence with God should “carry experiences of the world into the experience of God. Reverence for life is absorbed into reverence for God and veneration of nature becomes part of the adoration of God. We sense that in everything God is waiting for us” (Moltmann 1992:8). Moltmann sets this argument in classical terms: the *Spiritus sanctificans* had been severed from the *Spiritus vivificans*. Moltmann states that “experience of the life-giving Spirit in faith and in the sociality of love leads itself beyond the limits of the church to the rediscovery of the same Spirit in nature, in plants, in animals, and in the ecosystems of the earth” (Moltmann 1992:9-10). Further, the experience of the universal Spirit of life, to which Moltmann calls for cooperation, encompasses everything from sexuality to politics (Moltmann 1992:225-226).

Moltmann believes that the church participates in the life of the Spirit (Moltmann 1993:33). In Moltmann’s relational ecclesiology, the church exists in relation to God and the world; everything, including God, exists only in relationships (Moltmann 1992:289-290). Moltmann concludes that individuals in the church, in relation with one another and in relation with God, serves God and the world simultaneously. Moltmann viewed the relationship between the Spirit and the world as mutual; that is, divine activity and human experience are not mutually exclusive, they are mutually dependant aspects of reality (Moltmann 1992:5-7). For Moltmann, the relation between divine and human activity is to be found in “God’s immanence in human experience and in the transcendence of human beings in God”. Not unlike Rahner, the presence of the Spirit transcendently aligns the human spirit with God (Moltmann 1992:7). Moltmann calls this view “immanent transcendence”, the idea that “every lived moment can be lived in the inconceivable closeness of God in the Spirit” (Moltmann 1992:35).

For Moltmann, the human spirit participates in the Spirit by acting for itself, even in the most mundane of human activities. Moltmann believes that in the activity of

the church, *concurus* occurs, primarily because it is through the church, invigorated by the Spirit, that God interacts with the world. Moltmann's notion of immanent transcendence was quite different from earlier notions of the Spirit's action wherein the Spirit transcends the human Spirit for empowerment or illumination. Therefore, according to Moltmann, the Spirit of God is always immanent in human experience and it is the human spirit that transcends the divine Spirit.

4.7.3.5 Welker: *The Spirit at Work in Selflessness*

In a manner similar to Pannenberg and Moltmann, Michael Welker (2004) argues for a pneumatology in contrast with the "pneumatologies of beyond", favoring an emphasis on the Spirit acting "in, on, and through fleshly, perishable, earthly life, and precisely in this way wills to attest to God's glory and to reveal the forces of eternal life" (Welker 2004: xii). Welker (2004) defines the activity of the Spirit as a "domain of resonance"⁹³ that develops the relation between God and humanity in the same manner of the development of human persons through diverse relationships only partially dependent on individual activity. In other words, human beings are developed passively by society in as much as they are developed actively by the individual. In the same way, the Spirit gives life to human creatures in as much as they give life to themselves (Welker 1994:314). Welker challenges the Western notion of self-determined individuation insofar as it promotes the Aristotelian notion of humans (and anthropomorphically the Spirit in turn) as "self-referential, outside the world and yet related to it, comprehending everything and thus perfect, controlling everything and at the same time at one with self".⁹⁴ The Spirit, for Welker, is contrary to self-creative self-sufficiency; the Spirit, according to Welker, is the essence of a self-giving, self-withdrawn, selflessness (Welker 1994:280). The Spirit's work, Welker concludes, is that of

⁹³ A term adopted from Niklas Luhmann.

⁹⁴ Aristotle's views can be found in *Metaphysics* XII 7.

turning the attention of humankind away from oneself and onto others (Welker 1994:284).

For Welker, the Spirit is seen as giving of Godself to humanity. The divine Spirit not only empowers the human spirit, but the Spirit selflessly gives life and power to human beings in measure to how much they give selflessly to other human beings. In Welker's view, *concursum* is the divine will concurring with the human will toward selflessness; when such concurrence occurs, the creature is oriented toward the reality of eternal life and thus, the reality of God at work in the world.

4.7.4 Summary

Pneumatological perspectives have varied greatly throughout history. At the consultation of Geneva in 1980 the World Council of Churches defined three major orientations of the work of the Spirit in the world: first, the ecclesial approach, whereby the Spirit works for unity of all churches, second, the cosmological approach, whereby the Spirit renews creation and bestows the fullness of life, third, the sacramental approach, whereby the Spirit is mediated through personal religious experience, faith, ritual, and formation (Kärkkäinen 2002:162-163). Clearly, in this survey, all three aspects of the Spirit's work are identified in various forms. However, the most difficult notion of the Spirit is not what the Spirit does, but how the Spirit does it; thus, the notion of *concursum* and the interaction of the divine Spirit and the human spirit varied greatly among different traditions and theological perspectives.

From the earliest understanding of the Spirit at work in the biblical accounts to the divisions of Eastern and Western thought, the definition of the Spirit's was anything but congruent. However, as the understanding of the divine Spirit's relation to the human spirit developed, a clear shift away from complete transcendence to immanence and interdependence has been identified. Theologians have struggled to relate the Spirit to the temporal world. It was assumed that God must be "pure spirit" as the antithesis of "mutability, multiplicity, and temporality" of the physical world (Kärkkäinen 2002:152). The theological struggle in pneumatology thus became a struggle to meaningfully

speak of the Spirit as literally present in the world. While Pannenberg, Moltmann, and Welker all understand the nature of the divine-human relationship differently, especially in contrast with earlier conceptions of pneumatology, their work contributes to a broad understanding of *concurus*, and serves as basis for subsequent chapters where *concurus*, in light of pneumatology and operational theology in the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions, is critically compared.



CHAPTER 5: *Concursus* in Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter entails a survey of the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concursus* and the spiritual empowerment of the individuals as the primary means by which God works in the world. The survey consists of the principal elements of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology and the activity of the Spirit, as the basis from which the corresponding Pentecostal-Charismatic perception of the God-world relationship is derived. Following a foundational pneumatology, the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as spiritual empowerment for divine-human interactivity is explored. The doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit provides the basis for further investigation into specific conceptions of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursus*. The analysis includes four perspectives on *concursus* from the Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective in light of the historical categories of *concursus* identified in the previous chapter. Following that analysis, a synthesis of these perspectives is presented as a specifically Pentecostal-Charismatic formulation that evades historical categories. Next, the Pentecostal-Charismatic notion of spiritual power is surveyed, which forms the basis of the final analysis of the *charismata* in operation, with detailed analysis of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursus* in relation to the appropriation and application of power through spiritual gifts.

While some Western observers have asserted that global Pentecostals and Charismatics have “misunderstood the Spirit” (Anderson 2003:178), generally they tend to have a “far more dynamic view of the Spirit’s work in the church” than their Protestant counterparts (Chan 2001:106). The basic tenet of Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality is the notion that the supernatural experiences described in the New Testament accounts also occur in a similar way in modern times (Kelsey 1972:36). Miracles, faith healing, and spiritual gifts frame the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of spiritual power. The notion of spiritual empowerment is a universally identifiable feature of operational Pentecostal-

Charismatic theology. Concerning the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, Anderson (2004:11) observes that:

All widely differing Pentecostal movements have important common features: they proclaim and celebrate a salvation (or “healing”) that encompasses all of life’s experiences and afflictions, and they offer an empowerment which provides a sense of dignity and a coping mechanism for life, and all this drives their messengers forward into a unique mission”.

The appropriation and application of spiritual power is a critical aspect of the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concursum*. Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality has been characterized by “an awareness of and an openness to the surprising work of God”, primarily via the baptism of the Holy Spirit which represents a “quantum leap in spiritual consciousness” evidenced by *glossolalia* and a “boldness and urgency” to participate in the mission of God (Chan 1998:38). Spiritual empowerment, conceived as cooperation with Holy Spirit by Pentecostals and Charismatics, is the theme common to the surveys included the next several sections and thus forms the general theme for this chapter.

5.2 Pentecostal-Charismatic Pneumatology

Pentecostals and Charismatics formulated their theology around a largely experiential pneumatology constructed with biblical language and imagery. Pentecostal and Charismatic pneumatology was a dynamic and contextualized manifestation of biblical revelation (Anderson 2004:197), a loosely constructed application literal New Testament hermeneutics fused with vibrant personal experiences. Pentecostals and Charismatics constructed their understanding of the Holy Spirit based on direct individual and corporate spiritual experiences interpreted in light of the New Testament. Thus the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements appropriated a pneumatology which they claimed to be unique to themselves and the earliest experiences of the Spirit in the apostolic age. Charismatic faith healer and evangelist Katherine Kuhlman (1962:198) thus articulated a minimal doctrine of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is the only member of the Trinity Who is here on earth

and working in conjunction with the Father and the Son. He is here to do anything and everything for us that Jesus would do, were He here in person.

Khulman's pneumatology was characteristic of most Pentecostal-Charismatics, especially at the operational, lived out lay level. The Holy Spirit is understood in the context of a synthesis of biblical terminology applied to personal needs and experiences. The biblical interpretation of the person and work of the Holy Spirit is central to Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology. According to Menzies (2000), the biblical pneumatology of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements was not limited to the pneumatology of Paul. That is, it is not framed in primarily soteriological terms. Rather, Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology contains a dimension of full richness and power concerning the work of the Spirit (Menzies 2000:101). For instance, oneness Pentecostals believed that God was revealed as Father (in parental relationship to humanity), in the Son (in human flesh), and as the Holy Spirit (in spiritual action). While the Oneness Pentecostals attempted to describe the actions of God through history, they did not address the issues of identify in the godhead, as traditional trinitarianism has attempted (Patterson and Rybarczyk 2007:123).

Pentecostals and Charismatics formulated their pneumatology on the basis of a literal reading and application of Lucan literature, especially the book of Acts. Stronstad (1984) noted that the Lucan pneumatological perspective, especially with regard to the issue of Spirit-empowerment, should be read as distinct from, though complimentary to, that of the Pauline literature. While Paul emphasized the soteriological dimension of the work of the Spirit, Luke emphasized the missiological dimension. Pentecostals and Charismatics emphasize the Lucan perspective of the person and work of the Holy Spirit and appropriate it to their own pneumatology. Menzies (2000) contends that Lucan pneumatology spoke of the Pentecostal gift as an "initiation into a dimension of the Spirit's power" that demanded "an ongoing openness toward and apprehension of the Spirit's power" (Menzies 2000:105). Pentecostal scholars such Menzies and Fee maintained that Luke described the gift of the Spirit exclusively in charismatic terms as the source of power for effective witness. Thus, Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology is

articulated primarily in Lucan terms.

From this Lucan point of view, Pentecostals and Charismatics believe that their pneumatological perspective is more biblical and more holistic than their Protestant counterparts; holistic insofar as the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements embrace a view of the Spirit that transcends natural and supernatural barriers. Pentecostal-Charismatic movements that emerged from the non-Reformed traditions, primarily from the Arminian rather than a Calvinist perspective, could be classified according to Mills (1973:125) as “holistic” traditions that were less dichotomized than their Reformed counterparts. Mills proposed that the classical Pentecostal were more holistic than the pre-Pentecostal Arminian traditions and that the Charismatic movements, referred to by Mills as the “Holy Spirit movements”, were even more holistic than the Pentecostals insofar as they deviated farther from the dichotomism of the Reformed traditions. Pentecostals and Charismatics believed that the deviation from dichotomism situates them in a missiological context more faithful to the book of Acts than other branches of Christianity who had become complacent, inactive, and inexperienced in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit.

The renewed emphasis on the Spirit in Pentecostalism gave Christianity new vibrancy and relevance (Anderson 2004:197). Pentecostals and Charismatics conceived the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit’s work, as central to their movements. According to Haya-Prats (1998), the Pentecostal gift is the promise that the Spirit will be there in the time of need that the Spirit is immanently at work in the mission of the Church. Further, Pentecostal pneumatology makes “divine involvement”, that is, God intervening in human affairs, possible for Christians in tangible ways (Anderson 2004:197). Such a conception of divine action permits a literal interpretation of the work of the Spirit in New Testament literature to be applied to modern times.

The Pentecostal reality, holistic and biblical, emerged as a renewed pneumatological understanding of God’s role in the world. According to Menzies (2000), the basic Pentecostal reality is a longing for “God's glory to be revealed visibly and powerfully” (Menzies 2000:173). Black Pentecostalism, for example,

is regarded as representative of this “original lived-out pneumatology” with its concept of the power of the Spirit distinct from non-black Pentecostal movements (Anderson 2004:273). Anderson (2004) notes that black Pentecostalism has been known for its ability to “carry its message alongside existing social relationships” and maintain an “action-oriented” message. Therefore, Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology is essentially distinct from transcendental spiritual experience of mysticism or the subjective immanent experience of liberalism. Pentecostals and Charismatics articulate a pneumatology that emphasizes action, mission, and operation through the power of the Holy Spirit coming to bear on the world. Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology depends on a theology of divine empowerment of human beings, and thus, the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is central to the fulfillment of the action oriented vision of the Spirit at work through humankind.

5.3 Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Empowerment for Divine-Human Interactivity

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was the single most important doctrine that distinguished the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements from their Wesleyan-Holiness counterparts during the early twentieth century. Considered a second or even third work of grace, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was regarded as an experience uniquely situated in the context of Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality. Because of the pneumatological emphases of the Spirit at work in the world and the church engaged in mission, Pentecostals and Charismatics formulated the doctrine of Holy Spirit baptism as an initiatory experience that prepares adherents to participate in the Spirit’s work. Pentecostals and Charismatics generally describe Spirit-baptism as an experience, at least logically if not chronologically, distinct from conversion which unleashes a new dimension of the Spirit’s power: an “endowment [sic!] of power for service” (Menzies 2000:48). Early Pentecostals who experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the Keswick conventions (1874-1875 CE) were credited with defining baptism as an “endowment of power for service” (Menzies 2000:19). In this definition, two Pentecostal-Charismatic ideals were unified: power, as spiritual enablement, and service, as missiological

action.

The imagery of “baptism” had biblical and experiential significance for Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, especially in the early stages of the development of the movements. Pentecostals and Charismatics speak of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as immersion in the same sense as water baptism; the person who is submerged within the “reality of the power of the Spirit” has “a vivid sense of the Holy Spirit’s power and presence” (Williams 2002:355). Continuing the initiatory imagery, Kärkkäinen (2002) noted Tertullian’s concept of “patrimony” in relation to the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of Spirit baptism. The notion of mutual cooperation, God bestowing the gift of the Spirit to the individual in harmony with the church, was a matter of Christian initiation (Kärkkäinen 2002:98). Further, in a comparison between the notion of Spirit baptism as initiatory in the teachings of the early church fathers and Pentecostals, McDonnell (1995) concluded that “the classical Pentecostal teaching of baptism in the Holy Spirit is not peripheral but central. The gifts of the Spirit were expected and received during the rite of initiation because they belong to the Christian equipment, to building up the community” (McDonnell 1995:180). The baptism of the Spirit was seen by Catholic and Protestant Charismatics as “the release of the power of the Spirit already given at sacramental baptism” (Gelphi 1971:179-183). Thus, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a pneumatological initiation into active participation in the mission of God. Pentecostal scholars generally view the baptism of the Holy Spirit as “a prophetic empowering available to every believer that enables them to participate effectively in the divine mission” (Menzies 2000:99).

Disagreement exists as to when the initiation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs. Classical Pentecostals tend to emphasize that the baptism of the Holy Spirit always occurs post-conversion while mainline Charismatics disagreed, arguing instead that the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred simultaneously with conversion. For example, Menzies (2000:112) disagreed with Gordon Fee’s position that Holy Spirit Baptism and conversion are simultaneous, contending that it encourages the notion that only a select few receive gifts of missiological

power post-conversion. Regardless of when the initiation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs, its significance was centered on its pneumatological empowerment for missiological engagement. The baptism of the Holy is the “implementation” of salvation by Pentecostals and Charismatics, the action of the Holy Spirit that equips individuals for service (Williams 2002:360).

5.4 *Concursus Divinus* in Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology

This section includes an analysis of *concursus* in the light of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. While a general theory of *concursus* from a Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective cannot be easily gathered from the literature, broad perspectives of the work of the Spirit in relation to human agency are identified and analyzed in relation to historical categories of *concursus*. Pentecostals and Charismatics believe in a very real interaction between divine and human agency, in many cases, in a more direct way than other branches of Christianity. Like many Pentecostals and Charismatics, Katherine Kuhlman (1962) describes herself as a person who was “hungry for deeper spiritual knowledge, not from man, but from God” (Kuhlman 1962:194). Experiential and operational interaction with the Spirit is intrinsic to the Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursus*. Pentecostal researcher Daniel Albrecht (1996:21) observes that:

... [Pentecostal] churches are designed to provide a context for a mystical encounter, an experience with the divine. This encounter is mediated by the sense of the immediate divine presence. The primary rites of worship and altar/response are particularly structured to sensitize the congregants to the presence of the divine and to stimulate conscious experience of God... the gestures, ritual actions, and symbols all function within this context to speak of the manifest presence of [the Spirit].

The presence and work of the Spirit in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches cannot be expressed in purely mediate or immediate, immanent or transcendent terms, but in terms of an understanding of *concursus* particular to the movements themselves. To Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, the “Pentecostal event” is of

utmost importance to the Christian life and the way in which God works in the world. Charismatic-Reformed theologian J. Rodman Williams (1998:2) described the imperative of the Pentecostal experience, that is, the operationalization of spiritual power in the Pentecostal-Charismatic context, as follows:

It is scarcely an exaggeration, therefore, to say that this rediscovery of the Pentecostal reality in our day is of vast importance. For it is not some theological or biblical matter of relatively minor significance, but concerns the whole dimension of power which is available for Christian life and witness...

For Pentecostals and Charismatics, *concurus divinus* entails diverse expressions and interpretations of the interaction between God and humanity. Early Pentecostals expected God to intervene, not only in the immediate need situations in which they found themselves, but in a larger sense, in the return of Jesus to wrap up world (Menzies 2000:23). According to such notions, Pentecostals and Charismatics see God as intimately involved in human affairs in immanent ways but also cosmically involved in transcendent ways. Thus, *concurus* for Pentecostals and Charismatics is not uniformly articulated in conventional terms. For this reason, this section seeks to acknowledge this challenge.

This section includes an analysis of three possible interpretations of the Pentecostal-Charismatic reality in terms of historical categories of *concurus*. First, literature is surveyed that indicates that Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* is prior *concurus*, whereby the Spirit was considered the first cause that advanced human action as secondary causes. Second, literature that indicates that Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* is sequenced *concurus*, whereby the Spirit oriented the human will to action, is surveyed. Third, literature is surveyed that indicates that Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* is permissive *concurus*, whereby the Spirit permitted the human will to exercise the freedom to act. Finally, literature is surveyed that indicates that Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* is *concurus* that does not fit traditional categories, but conceives the divine-human relationship in terms particular to the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Ultimately, this survey culminates with an analysis of spiritual power as the definitive aspect of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus*.

5.4.1 Pentecostal-Charismatic *Concursus Divinus* as Prior *Concursus*

At times, Pentecostals and Charismatics understand the way in which the Spirit interacts with human beings as *concursus praeivius* or as prior *concursus*. In this interpretation, the Spirit is seen as acting mediately through human beings as a first cause acting on secondary causes. According to this understanding, Pentecostals and Charismatics experience the Spirit as acting in and through them in ways beyond their control. For example, Pentecostals and Charismatics regard evidential tongues as “God’s action to which the believer simply yields”, parallel to the way in which sacraments are traditionally perceived: “they are God’s action in human acts” (Congar 1993:151). The inner working of the Spirit on the human mind and body is seen as the Spirit acting on both mind and matter. Hollenweger (2002:668) concludes that for Pentecostals and Charismatics “the field of God’s action is not reduced to human categories” such as “natural and supernatural”. Thus, the Spirit is understood as able to work mediately through the human will and human action.

Charismatic theologian Jean-Claud Schwab (1990:43) notes that the operation of the Spirit is “always mediated through human media: through understanding, experience, and emotion”. In like manner, Kelsey (1972:226) believes that when a Spirit-empowered human being communicates Christian truth to another human being, a “communication of depth” occurs, wherein Spirit speaks through spirit to spirit; in other words, the human being surrenders his or her spirit and allows the Holy Spirit to speak to the spirit of the other human being. Kelsey states that when Spirit-empowered humans engage in such spiritual communication, they do “not so much take action” as the Spirit takes action through them. In both cases, whether the Spirit is seen as acting through mind or acting through the body, human actions or desires are categorized as secondary causes initiated by the first cause of the Holy Spirit.

Chan (2001) argued that Pentecostals and Charismatics have difficulty traditioning their experience of Spirit baptism because of an “over-supernaturalized” concept of truth, whereby their strong sense of the Spirit’s

action divorces their understanding of truth from the broader Christian tradition. That is, if the Spirit acts directly and through individual persons, there is no perceived need for checking truth against historical tradition (Chan 2001:108). If the Spirit acts through human conduits, as a prior *concurus* interpretation would suggest, Chan concludes that the action of the Spirit is mediated through the intense subjectivity of the human channels. Thus, the Spirit's action is seen as reducible to independent cause and event occasions wherein the Spirit operates within individual human subjects. This view, Chan believes, isolates Pentecostals and Charismatics from the universal and cosmic work of the Spirit in the broader church and creation.

5.4.2 Pentecostal-Charismatic Concurus Divinus as Sequenced Concurus

Pentecostals and Charismatics also interpret their experiences of the Holy Spirit as *concurus collatus* or sequenced *concurus*, wherein the Spirit orients the human will to action. This view differs slightly from prior *concurus*, in which the work of the Spirit is conceived as more direct, active on the part of the Spirit but passive on the part of the human subject. In the case of *concurus collatus*, the Spirit is understood as prompting or directing the human will to act but the Spirit does not necessarily act directly through the human subject. This understanding of *concurus* is much more obscure and less directly identifiable within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, primarily because of the limitations of language in communicating the experience.

The interpretation of human-Spirit interaction in sequenced *concurus* is most identifiable in the faith doctrines within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. For instance, Katherine Kuhlman rejects the notion that divine healing required a commensurate measure of cooperative human faith in order to be effective. Such doctrines Kuhlman would attribute to the "action of the Holy Spirit, or indeed, the very nature of God" (Kuhlman 1962:193). Kuhlman's contention with such a doctrine conflicts with her understanding of a God of "all mercy and compassion" (Kuhlman 1962:194). However, Kuhlman also describes faith as "that quality or power by which the things desired become the things possessed" (Kuhlman

1962:200). A “power-filled faith”, Kuhlman believes, has “action and power”. Thus, she concludes, “if faith is powerless, it is not faith” (Kuhlman 1962:200). Faith, as a gift from the Spirit, is understood as the orienting factor toward participation in the Spirit’s power. Kuhlman recounts an instance wherein her mind was “so surrendered to the Spirit” that she felt the “Power of the Holy Ghost” intensely present in her own body (Kuhlman 1962:199). Therefore, when faith, considered as an orientation of the human will toward the will of God, is activated, the human subject acts in accordance with the will of the Spirit.

For Pentecostals and Charismatics, sequenced *concurus* is perhaps most often experienced in the context of a two part interaction. Anderson (2003) notes that African churches of the Spirit emphasize “the active and manifest presence of the Spirit in the church” (Anderson 2003:178). In this case, two words can be seen as most appropriate to understanding *sequenced concurus* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic context. First, the word “active” indicates a realization of the Spirit at work in the congregation, that is, in human subjects. Second, the word “manifest” suggests that the work of the Spirit is demonstrated visibly. In most cases, the manifestations of the Spirit involve the human subjects and are seen as God acting mediately from within, not immediately from without. Williams (1997) asserts that Spirit baptism “points to a whelming of the person, an event wherein man [sic!] in his conscious and subconscious existence is penetrated by the Spirit of God. No level of human existence is unaffected by this divine activity” (Williams 1997:1). Thus, the Spirit is not considered merely a first cause working through secondary causes, but the Spirit is seen as prompting the human subject and orienting the will of the subject to action. The “manifestation” of the Spirit’s action is therefore expressed through human action.

Finally, sequenced *concurus* is understood in light of the rituals of Pentecostals and Charismatics. Ritual, as religiously-oriented human action, suggested that the Spirit prompts or orients particular behaviors to affect certain results. Tangen (2007:3) discussed the notion of the “restoration of enactment” in Pentecostal theology:

We [Pentecostals] sociologically speaking, reintroduced some (interaction) rituals for Spirit experiences to the Protestant Church, possibly even to the Catholic Church. We did this by democratising the practice of laying hands on people and expect them to experience the Spirit with speaking in tongues as sign rather than as a goal - and by offering different models for seeking to be filled with the Spirit.

In the case of the democratization of Pentecostal-Charismatic rituals, sequenced *concursum* is understood as a chain of events wherein the Spirit prompts action, the human acts in alignment with the Spirit's will, and the Spirit responds. McClung (2002) notes that the key factor of persuasive attraction toward Pentecostal-Charismatic worship was that it communicates the conviction of "God among us and working with us" (McClung 2002:619). The concept of the Spirit as the presence of God working in cooperation human beings is characteristic of Pentecostal-Charismatic notions of sequenced *concursum*. While this type of *concursum* is more difficult to directly identify, it is evident that within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, human actions are often understood as directed by the Spirit, willed not independently by human agents, but oriented to will certain actions in cooperation with the Spirit.⁹⁵

5.4.3 Pentecostal-Charismatic Concursum Divinus as Permissive Concursum

In other instances, Pentecostals and Charismatics have suggested that interaction with the Spirit is a result of human decisions permitted by God. According to this understanding of *concursum divinus*, Pentecostals and Charismatics advocate a form of enablement wherein the Spirit grants the human will the ability to choose

⁹⁵ I am inclined to believe that sequenced *concursum* in this context is likely to succumb to the logical fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Simply because a certain religious behavior is performed, it does not necessarily mean that the will to act was inspired by the Holy Spirit. When particular effects are observable and follow certain acts, sequenced *concursum* in this context may be closer to Hume's notion of constant conjunction. That is, the will to particular behavior may appear to be oriented by the Holy Spirit due to certain effects, but the appearance of such effects cannot conclusively prove that the will was supernaturally oriented or the effect was a direct product of that orientation.

“supernaturally” and to perform the *actus physicus* not in purely deterministic or natural terms, but in terms of genuine freedom. Such a concept of *concurus* entails the notion of the “blessing” of God as divine enablement of human action. While permissive *concurus* is similar to sequenced *concurus*, it is distinguishable in that the Spirit-enabled human being has genuine freedom to choose and act versus the Spirit directing and orienting the human will toward choices and actions.

Permissive *concurus* is identifiable in Pentecostal-Charismatic worship. The raising of hands is a common response to the perception of God’s presence and blessing (Menzies 2000:24). Hands are raised as recognition that God is pleased with the vibrant worship as a form of reciprocation of blessing and praise. Reception of God’s blessing and thus God’s offer to allow freely chosen spiritual activity is primarily conceived as an offer from God that must be embraced or received. Some Catholic and Protestant Charismatics view the empowerment of the Spirit as “an offer that has yet to be received” insofar as the individual must concur with the offer of God to operate in the life of the individual (Muhlen 1978:141,203). Thus it is argued that receptivity by faith is the occasion for the reception of the freedom of the Spirit. Not unlike most Pentecostal-Charismatic theologians, Kelsey (1972:181) argues that human openness to the Spirit is an essential prerequisite to divine interaction. When human beings are busy with secular tasks as “all consuming activities” of daily life, they inevitable neglect the spirit world and thus “the Spirit has no chance of breaking through”.

Culpepper notes that mainline Charismatics have a “tendency to mix human works with divine grace” when spiritual gifts are “either consciously or unconsciously” regarded as evidence of spiritual maturity (Culpepper 1977:80). When individuals see themselves as divinely enabled to utilize spiritual gifts, they understand their actions as freely chosen but given by God as a result of their own spirituality. According to Williams (1997), the Pentecostal event of the baptism of the Holy Spirit comprises both a “giving and a receiving” in that “the gift of the Holy Spirit may be used to speak of the divine side of the event; the receiving of the Holy Spirit to express the human side of accepting the gift” (Williams 1997:3).

In terms of permissive *concurus*, Pentecostals and Charismatics understand interaction with the Spirit in terms of an offer from God that is freely appropriated by the individual. Once the Spirit is received, either as Holy Spirit baptism or particular spiritual gifts, the individual is permitted by God to operate those gifts in an imprecise collaboration between human choice and Spirit enablement.

Culpepper contends that some Pentecostals and Charismatics in the faith movements distort the doctrine of divine providence by confusing God's permissive will with God's intentional will. Culpepper argues that it is "obvious that everything that happens is according to God's permissive will, or it would not have happened. It does not follow, though, that whatever happens is according to God's intentional will" (Culpepper 1977:149). Such blurring of distinctions between human responsibility and God's will obfuscate the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of the Spirit at work, especially when viewed as permissive *concurus*. When conceptions of God's intentional will are confused with conceptions of God's specific will, Pentecostals and Charismatics are often unclear about what aspect of their operational theology is due to divine action versus human responsibility.⁹⁶ Mills (1973:121) maintains that the "Holy Spirit never leads toward irresponsibility in life" but towards responsibility. Evidence of Spirit-empowerment, Mills argues, is a life of responsible living and meeting personal obligations.

5.4.5 Synthesis: Pentecostal-Charismatic *Concurus Divinus* as Appropriated Power

While Pentecostal-Charismatic conceptions of *concurus* are largely vague and indeterminate in relation to historical conceptions of *concurus*, there is an

⁹⁶ This would be especially true in terms of faith healing. Most Pentecostals maintain that divine healing is God's specific will for all Christians yet there is a perpetual tension between personal responsibility (such as health and wellbeing) and the perceived will of God. Lines of distinction between what God permits to happen, such as illness or even death, are easily misinterpreted in relation to the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of God's permissive versus general will.

identifiable theme common to the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. While some Pentecostal-Charismatic activities and articulated pneumatologies are similar to prior *concurus*, sequenced *concurus*, or permissive *concurus*, there is an aspect of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* that evades categorization. In this sense, operational Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents articulate a novel vision of divine-human interaction. Charismatic theologians J. Rodman Williams (1997:1) clarifies⁹⁷ the interaction of the Holy Spirit and the human spirit in the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of Spirit baptism as:

... not a happening in which the person is so possessed by God that he loses his own identity. Nor is the Spirit's movement an invasion wherein the self becomes subjugated and coerced into a divine pattern of activity, so that the sole actor thereafter is God. Much less is it a pantheistic absorption into deity, or a sudden transportation out of this world into another realm. "Baptism" is not subjugation, or absorption, or translation, but the actualization of a dynamic whereby the whole person is energized to fulfill new possibilities. This fulfillment does have aspects previously unknown and unrealized (for example, the *charismata*, or "gifts of the Spirit"), since the divine Spirit is moving powerfully through the free human spirit. But at no point is there the setting aside of human activity. Indeed, quite the opposite, for it is only as the Spirit of God blows upon the human spirit that there is the release of man for fuller freedom and responsibility.

Thus what distinguishes Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus divinus* from other classical conceptions is the notion of divine empowerment, not a single causal event where the Spirit works through a human being or a single instance where God, through the Spirit, permits human activities. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, *concurus* occurs as a divine empowerment, not only to act according to natural causal mechanisms or even genuine human freedom, but to

⁹⁷ I am aware that this quotation is lengthy, but I believe that the terminology employed by Williams cannot be adequately summarized without losing some value of the original statement. I believe Williams' perspective is critical to understanding the broad theme of the chapter and the notion of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus*. In the review of literature, I was unable to find any other statement which deals with the issue of human-divine interaction as Williams did in this instance.

act freely with supernatural power.⁹⁸ In the language of Spirit baptism, some spiritual change is genuinely affected in the life of the individual, making it possible to live and act in a way that is peculiar to the Pentecostal-Charismatic identity.

Pentecostals and Charismatics distinguish the presence of the Holy Spirit in and on the life of the individual; in the latter case, the Spirit is regarded as “an additional operation of the Holy Spirit”, an “external coming” of the Spirit that results in the individual being both “Spirit-filled and Spirit-endowed” (Williams 2002:356). The terms “coming on” and “clothed with” used by Pentecostals in relation to empowerment of the Spirit “express an active, continuing endowment of the Spirit” whereby there is both “possession by and investiture with” the Spirit (Williams 2002:356). In like manner, David du Plessis compares Spirit baptism with water baptism. Du Plessis believes that in water baptism, the church is the agent, the water is the element, and the new Christian is the object. In Holy Spirit baptism, however, Christ is the agent, the Holy Spirit is the element, and the believer is the object (du Plessis 1970:30). Further, Culpepper (1977:59) notes that for Pentecostals and Charismatics, a genuine “thirst” for the Spirit is prerequisite means for the “appropriation” of Spirit-empowerment. Holy Spirit baptism was seen as more than an ecstatic experience; it is an empowerment that provides supernatural abilities. However, such empowerment is not imposed by God on human beings. Rather, it is an appropriation of divine power that has to be received and maintained.

For Pentecostals and Charismatics, there are requisite indicators that an individual is participating with the Spirit. These indicators include intimacy with God, sanctification as evidenced by exhibited “fruit of the Spirit”, an emboldened

⁹⁸ It is noteworthy that in the course description for “The Practice of Charismatic Ministry” offered by the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (Springfield, MO), one of the aspects Charismatic leadership taught by the course was “cooperating with the Spirit in power ministry” (AGTS 2009).

missionary zeal, and openness to various manifestations, *charismata* and *pneumatika*, of the Holy Spirit. Tangen (2007:3) proposes that Pentecostals have rediscovered their experiences in light of “something ‘we are doing’ in relational cooperation with the Spirit” rather than through imitation. Indicators of the Spirit-empowered life cannot be imitated; if they are genuine, they are evidential of an internal transformation of the human spirit in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Thus, such evidences demonstrate the actualization of such power, power that Menzies (2000:171) describes as the “dynamic presence and power of God active in the lives of Christians”. Thus *concurus*, in the Pentecostal-Charismatic sense, is considered an activation of human and divine power in a cooperative way.

Pinnock (1996:171) argues that Pentecostals have “faced up to the necessity of further actualization” of the power of the Spirit and “do something about it”. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, divine *concurus* is understood as an activation of a power and grace already present in the human spirit augmented by the divine Spirit. In like manner, Kärkkäinen (2002:97) concludes that the Pentecostal event of Spirit baptism should not be seen as a “new imparting” but as an “actualization of the graces already received”. This is why Kärkkäinen, concludes that some Pentecostals and Charismatics use the term “release” for the event of Spirit baptism. Further, Pentecostals and Charismatics primarily speak of the Spirit as being “released” from within the individual for “total inward occupancy” (Williams 2002:355). The power of the Spirit, as understood in Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences, is not only God acting transcendentally or immediately in human affairs, but acting immanently and mediately through human agency. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, power that is evident in the life of an individual is “surely greatly due to the Holy Spirit within” because Spirit baptism is understood as “an amplification of that power” (Williams 2002:360).

The necessity of the human will in cooperating with the Spirit of God is foundational to an Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concurus*. For individuals to remain empowered, an active participation and appropriation is considered necessary. Williams (1996) notes that the term “sharers of the Holy Spirit” is evident in the New Testament and that such sharers may “fall away”

from such sharing (Williams 1996:129). Williams references Paul's command "do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19) to imply that "the Holy Spirit may be rendered ineffective in a person's life by that person's own actions. Hence, the Spirit ceases to be an operative force" and "sharing is no more" (Williams 1996:129). Further, Culpepper (1977) notes that most Pentecostals and Charismatics believe that an individual who had been Spirit-baptized did not automatically remain Spirit-baptized for the rest of his or her life (Culpepper 1977:55). Moody (1968), however, distinguishes between Spirit-baptism and Spirit-empowerment. Moody believes that Spirit-baptism "is not repeatable and cannot be lost, but the filling can be repeated and in any case needs to be maintained" (Moody 1968:138). Nevertheless, the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concursum* is that of an appropriation of supernatural power that could be attained or diminished, activated or neutralized.

5.4.6 Pentecostal-Charismatic Spiritual Power

In order to fully understand the Pentecostal-Charismatic notion of divine-human interaction, their interpretation of "power" in terms of their *concursum* must be understood as well. Formulating their conception of appropriated supernatural power from a literal reading of the New Testament, Pentecostals and Charismatics interpret their experiences in the light of biblical accounts of divine-human interaction. The Greek word for "power" in the New Testament is *dunamis*, which refers to "power, ability, physical or moral, as residing in a person or a thing" as well as "power in action" (Vine 1981:11). The New Testament authors often designate miracles as "power" or "powers" (Williams 1996:153), and "mighty works (*dynameis*)" (Williams 1996:155). Such designations, Pentecostals and Charismatics asserted, are a foretaste of the "powers of the age to come" (Williams 1996:156). Adherents of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have affirmed the "continuity in the *dunamis* of the Holy Spirit down to present day" (Williams 2002:360). Menzies (2000:70) maintains that Luke describes the gift of the Spirit exclusively in charismatic terms as a source of power. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, a narrow, evangelical interpretation of Paul's theology of the charismata undermines the Pentecostal view that God desires all to be

missiologically empowered (Menzies 2000:100).

Kraft (2002:1092) proposes that certain principles govern the way spiritual power operates in the universe. Kraft believes that one of the primary principles of spiritual power is exhibited when human beings honor and obey a spiritual being, thus enabling that being to do more in human reality. Thus, Kraft concludes that when individual human beings obey God, God is more able to enact God's own will among human beings than would otherwise be possible. For Kraft, the Pentecostal-Charismatic operation of spiritual power is distinguished from other world religions not by the presence or absence of such power but by its source. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, Kraft concludes, that source is the God of Christianity (Kraft 2002:1092). Thus, according to Menzies (2000), the promise of the Pentecostal experience provides the church a "focused an aggressive sense of expectation with respect to spiritual power" (Menzies 2000:99).

Anderson (2004:284) argues that the reason for the very existence of Pentecostals and Charismatics is their conviction in the power of the Spirit working in the church. Pentecostals emphasize the manifestation of divine power through healing, deliverance, prophecy, speaking in tongues and other phenomena (Anderson 2004:234). Pentecostal-Charismatic power is integral to the movements' continued sense of expectation and effectiveness in mission (Menzies 2000:48) and "missiological power" (Menzies 2000:83). Williams (1974) notes that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is "a gift of power upon the sanctified life" (Williams 1974:180). According to Menzies (2000), the Pentecostal experience provides "power for witness, not justification before God or personal cleansing" (Menzies 2000:115).

Moreover, spiritual power is articulated in experiential terms by Pentecostals and Charismatics. Charismatic evangelist Katherine Kuhlman (1962:2000) believes that the Holy Spirit is the "power of the Trinity". Speaking of an experience of the Holy Spirit, Kuhlman states that she "felt the Power of God flow through my body" (Kuhlman 1962:198), and that she felt the "depths and power" of the Holy Spirit (Kuhlman 1962:198). Further, Kuhlman speaks of the Holy Spirit as a "power" that came upon her (Kuhlman 1962:176), and the "greatest power in

Heaven and earth” (Kuhlman 1962:192). Thus Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents articulate the power of the Holy Spirit in experiential terms.

Tippett (1971:81) argues that “power-oriented people require power proof, not simply reasoning if they are to be convinced” of the Christian gospel. Such verificational evangelism became integral to the expansion of the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, especially in the “global South” and developing nations. For African Pentecostals, the source of God’s power is found in the Holy Spirit (Anderson 2003:181). Allen Anderson’s sociological and theological exposition of African Pentecostals (2003) provides clear examples of the concept of spiritual power in the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concursum divinum*, especially in terms of operational theology. That is, operational theology is formed in terms of how the experience of the Spirit is to be lived out and applied to perceived needs, both natural and spiritual.⁹⁹

The issue of spiritual power in the African Pentecostal context is, according to Anderson, centered in the “pervasive awareness of a lack of power” (Anderson 2003:184). African Pentecostals view God as the absolute source of all power; the “same source of being and existence” is the enabling power of God. Anderson argues that “longing and continual quest for power, and the preoccupation with the spirit world, are the African manifestation of a universal human need” and that the “message of receiving the power of the Spirit of God, the greatest power of all, fulfills that need” (Anderson 2003:183). The idea that God’s power is imparted to believers through a symbolic act such as the laying on of hands has great significance in Africa and demonstrates “God’s power in action” (Anderson

⁹⁹ It should be noted that operational theology is defined as the way in which Pentecostal-Charismatic beliefs are expressed in Pentecostal-Charismatic praxis. This is articulated in secondary scholarship, often by scholars outside the Pentecostal tradition. However, this may be contrasted with the way in which Pentecostal-Charismatic beliefs/convictions are expressed in the dogmatic works of Pentecostal theologians themselves versus how Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents actually live out their individual lives. In other words, what adherents actually believe in is not necessarily the same as what they say they believe in. Nevertheless, in some instances, operational beliefs are certainly a congruent expression of professed beliefs.

2003:185).

Not unlike Liberation theologies of Latin American, for African Pentecostals, the power of the Spirit is considered the power to liberate communities from both the spirit world and the Western “colonial” forms of Christianity (Anderson 2003:186). The African Pentecostal notion of power is “almost identical to the biblical concept of power that is sought for and claimed through the Holy Spirit” (Anderson 1991:63-67). Further, Anderson (2003:180) observes that those empowered by the Spirit in the African Pentecostal context are identified by pronouncements claimed to be the “utterances of the Spirit and by their ability to demonstrate the power of the Spirit by meeting concrete human needs in times of sickness and other afflictions and evil disturbances.”

In the West, especially in the North American context, Pentecostals and Charismatics largely withdrew from modern society because of a realization that they could not stand against “powerful rationalistic and naturalistic thinking”. Thus, Pentecostals and Charismatics withdrew into their own “structured sub-culture” (Kelsey 1972:35). However, in the global context, the message proclaimed by Charismatic preachers of the “power of the Spirit to meet human needs” is welcome in societies where a lack of power is keenly felt on a daily basis (Anderson 2004:234). Therefore, the application of spiritual gifts is the primary activity wherein Pentecostal-Charismatic notions of *concursum*, operational theology, and real human needs all intersect to form an unusual theological perspective and ecclesiological identity.

5.5 *Charismata* in Operation and Pentecostal-Charismatic *Concursum*

In many Pentecostal-Charismatic churches, the Spirit is given credit for everything that occurs. The Spirit is regarded as causing people to receive the “selfsame Spirit”, to prophecy, speak in tongues, heal, exorcise demons, have visions and dreams, live “holy” lives (Anderson 2004:197). However, while the Spirit is often given credit, tension is evident between the immediate action of the Spirit, the mediate action of the Spirit through human beings, and the action of

human beings themselves. These categories are generally expressed through miracles, manifestations, and spiritual gifts, the *charismata* within the broad range of Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences. This section includes a brief survey the ways in which *concursum* is conceptually related to these three expressions. Particular attention is given to the operation of the *charismata*.

5.5.1 Miracles of the Holy Spirit

When Pentecostals and Charismatics see the Spirit as operating immediately in their midst, they generally attribute such action to miracles, signs, or wonders. In this case, the Spirit is understood as acting in a primarily immediate or transcendent way. Martin (2002) defines miracles as “any aspect of divine activity” by which individuals experience the saving power of God (Martin 2002:876). Further, Martin argues that in Pentecostal-Charismatic practice, miracles point to the “lordship of Jesus Christ over the whole universe, bringing about physical and moral effects that clearly transcend the power of merely human resources (Martin 2002:876). Miracles, signs, and wonders are generally attributed to purely “supernatural” activity by Pentecostals and Charismatics. Thus, Kärkkäinen (2002:92) notes that Pentecostals and Charismatics emphasize their transcendent experiences in terms of supernatural activity. Pentecostals and Charismatics place high importance on miracles, claiming that a skeptical age “requires signs and wonders, demonstrations of the Spirit and of power” (Culpepper 1977:141). Such immediate and direct action of the Spirit is considered occasional: moments when the supernatural power of God penetrated natural experiences. Pentecostals and Charismatics articulate these miraculous experiences in terms of the Spirit “breaking through”, “coming down”, and “demonstrating power”. Fudge (2003) contends that “the presence of God's power within humankind had always, from the human perspective, demanded evidence” (Fudge 2003:42). Thus, Fudge concludes, early Pentecostal ideas of experience are “put down to clearly discernable and physically evident phenomenon” (Fudge 2003:42). Pentecostals and Charismatics understand such physically visible supernatural phenomenon as miracles.

While the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of miracles credits the Spirit as working among them as an external force, independent of their actions, miracles are often summoned or “called forth” through pious praying, fasting, or worshipping. Charismatic theologian J. Rodman Williams (1996:157) asserts that “all miracles that Christ did in his earthly ministry will be done by those who believe in him”. Thus, the miraculous action of the Spirit is not regarded as the prerogative of God alone but as a reciprocal relationship of human and divine interaction.

When miracles are demonstrated in the midst of Pentecostals and Charismatics, they believe that they are evidence of the truth of their convictions. Williams (1996:153) believes that “there will remain the witness to the validity of the gospel by genuine miracles of confrontation down through the ages, even to the end”, not unlike the conception of “Power Evangelism” formulated by John Wimber. Albrecht (1996:23) notes that “the Pentecostals envision a world subject to invasions by the supernatural element” and “expect encounters with the supernatural... claims of signs, wonders, and miracles” that are “not limited to the regions of the Sunday ritual” but “part of daily life”. Miracles are seen as the direct, immediate action of the Spirit as a result of human piety for the purposes of confirming the truth of the gospel message. Pentecostals and Charismatics literally apply the Lucan perspective to modern-day “signs and wonders”, affirming that Luke clearly acknowledged the important role that miracle plays in missiology (Menzies 2000:152).

5.5.2 Manifestations of the Holy Spirit

Pentecostals and Charismatics also understand the power of the Spirit as visible through physical human manifestations. Such manifestations are understood in the Pentecostal-Charismatic context as the action of the Holy Spirit working mediately through human bodies, minds, and emotions as a demonstration of power. Manifestations are not always easily distinguished from miracles, but generally, they contain a human component that is absent from miracles, which are considered more transcendent and external. Williams (1996:149) notes that in

the New Testament, the designation of “wonders” is often used in conjunction with the word “sign”, indicating that miracles, while visible in natural terms, typically point beyond themselves to the extraordinary supernatural activity of God. Manifestations, on the other hand, typically had personal significance to the individual through whom the Spirit was understood to be working.

Pentecostals and Charismatics understand manifestations as encounters with the Spirit wherein some aspect of their personal faculties are surrendered to the Spirit for a period of time. In this way, manifestations are not unlike mystical experiences of other branches of Christianity. However, Pentecostals and Charismatics generally considered manifestations of the Spirit to have some visible component that others could see and interpret. Neo-Charismatic C. Peter Wagner coined the term the “Third Wave of Pentecostalism” to describe the phase of charismatic renewal and supernatural manifestations outside the confines of classical Pentecostalism and mainline Renewal movements. Therefore, the manifestations Wagner identified were considered signs that the Spirit was at work beyond the classical Pentecostal or mainline renewal movements.

Manifestations are understood by Pentecostals and Charismatics a sign of the power of the Holy Spirit through human agents. Concerning the African Pentecostal experience, Anderson (2003:183) describes the following manifestations:

The manifestations of the Spirit, the noise, the tongues, the prophesyings, perhaps the dancing, the jumping, and even the music—all this will convince one that these people are not in complete control of their senses!

When manifestations are present, most often during vibrant Pentecostal-Charismatic worship, the loss of control of personal faculties is respected as evidence that the human being has surrendered to the Spirit’s power and the Spirit had assumed control of their mind, will, and body. Heron (1983:13) notes that the African Pentecostal experience of the infilling of the Spirit demonstrates “something very different from unusual gifts, skills or wisdom. It is a violent and temporary possession of a person by a force rushing upon him from without,

manifested in an ecstatic form comparable with that associated with some kinds of prophecy”. Manifestations are always temporary expressions of the Spirit’s power through human beings unlike the baptism of the Holy Spirit which is understood as a long term empowerment.

5.5.3 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The most important aspect of the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of spiritual power is the operation of spiritual gifts, the *charismata*, whereby the *concursus* is most readily identifiable. With spiritual gifts, Pentecostals and Charismatics express a greater concern for human agency, human responsibility, and physical activity. In the appropriation and application of the *charismata*, Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology and ecclesiology are intensely operational in nature. Following the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the initiatory Pentecostal experience, becomes “the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry” (Menziez 2000:198). By means of the “endowment of power for service”, spiritual gifts are appropriated and applied to real life situations, wherein Pentecostals and Charismatics understand the human-divine relationship to operate and the divisions between supernatural and natural experience to recede.

Pinnock (1996) notes that the Pentecostal experience was “not just a theory, but altered real-life situations” wherein people are awakened to the “powers of life and spiritual gifts” (Pinnock 1996:133). Empowered by Holy Spirit baptism, Pentecostals and Charismatics understand themselves to be empowered by the Holy Spirit with spiritual gifts that can be used to address life needs such as sickness, fear, anxiety, hunger, and even death. Chan (2001:105) notes that in Spirit-filled churches the *charismata* are expected to “operate freely in the life of the church”. Spiritual gifts are considered to be both appropriations of the Spirit’s power and the appointment of leadership for the church that enable the church to function fluidly, directed not by human decisions alone but dynamically guided by the Holy Spirit. Hollenweger (2002:665) notes that most of the gifts of the Spirit noted in 1 Corinthians are gifts of speech, yet at least two, healings and

miraculous powers, are gifts of action. Further, Hollenweger observed a “conspicuous difference” between the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-30 in that the latter described gifts that did not refer to powers or activities but “persons of status in the ancient church” (Hollenweger 2002:665). Together, gifts of action and gifts of persons can be understood as the means by which human beings cooperate with the Spirit in the church. Therefore, Pentecostals and Charismatics believe that real *concursum* occurs through spiritual gifts. The Spirit provides the gifts and the human agents appropriate them.

For Pentecostals and Charismatics, spiritual gifts operate through human agents, generally through human to human contact. The value of personal contact in the operation of healing is “strongly emphasized” by Pentecostals and Charismatics (Williams 2002:834). Pentecostals and Charismatics believe that “laying on of hands” for physical healing is “as a practice available in principle” to all believers (Williams 2002:834). In order for spiritual gifts to function, they must operate through human beings in terms of genuine action, contact, and application. By analyzing the terms *pneumatikos* (spiritual), *sarkikos* (fleshly), *physikos* (natural), Hollenweger (2002:667) argues that spiritual gifts are not phenomenological but functional. The aforementioned terms, Hollenweger asserts, are functional terms not ontological terms. Spiritual gifts are not to be understood as mere experiences of the Spirit, but as functional applications of the Spirit’s power. In other words, spiritual gifts cannot function without human agency. Therefore, Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* is most identifiable not in miracles or manifestations, but in the cooperation of the human and divine through spiritual gifts. Three primary spiritual gifts are characteristic of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements: glossolalia, divine healing, and prophecy. The operation of these spiritual gifts, which are understood as functional in nature, is an expression of particular examples of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* in action.

5.5.1 Glossolalia

Glossolalia, or “speaking in tongues”, was one of the spiritual gifts peculiar to the classical Pentecostal movements, which understood the gift as the singular “initial

physical evidence” of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, in the broad context of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, various interpretations of the gift of tongues have been communicated. Because *glossolalia* is conceived as comprising the activity of the Holy Spirit as well as the faculty of human speech, it can be analyzed as an operational gift with identifiable human and divine elements. Chan (2001:57) notes that tongues are regarded by Pentecostals as the “primordial words that arise spontaneously in response to the invasive coming of the primal Reality to the believers which Pentecostals identify as Spirit baptism.”

Mills (1973:83) describes the operation of *glossolalia* a functional gift wherein “speech to God” bypasses human subjects and speaks “directly to the divine ear”. According to Mills, the operation of *glossolalia* provides Pentecostals and Charismatics with the ability to communicate directly with God uninhibited by the limits of the human mind. In other words, Mills argues that when *glossolalia* is operational, it is a means by which audible sounds produced by the human agent bypassed the mind and spoke directly to God. Such an event is understood as possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal understanding of *glossolalia* is that of a “disengagement of the mind and the speech apparatus so that the speaker’s mind neither chooses the words that are spoken nor understands what is said” (Culpepper 1977:88).

However, Assemblies of God theologian William Graham MacDonald (2005:2) argues that biblical *glossolalia* is evidence of simultaneous submission and freedom that comes from intimate fellowship with the Spirit of God. In the Pentecostal experience of *glossolalia*, MacDonald asserts that:

Biblical *glossolalia* is produced by, and therefore revelatory of Christ above and within one’s being. One’s spirit is engaged with His [sic!] in the utterance of the holy speech of which He [sic!] by His [sic!] Spirit produces the words, voicing them in consonance with the speaker’s oral concurrence. One is built up by such holy speaking, as in any communion with the Lord. But because of the mystery involved for the speaker’s mind, there is of necessity a deepening of dependence on Christ, and at the same time there exists an incomparable freedom of expression in Him [sic!].

According to McDonald, there is a concurrence between the human faculties of

speech and the activity of the Holy Spirit when the gift of *glossolalia* is operational. In McDonald's understanding, the mind of the human agent is involved in the speech processes and thus, when cooperating with the Spirit, the mind is transformed and the agent's freedom of expression is enhanced. In this reciprocal formula of interaction, the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of *concursum* is demonstrated to be that of mutual cooperation. Similarly, Dunn (1975:82) notes that a popular Pentecostal-Charismatic dictum is "without the Holy Spirit you can't, but without you, the Holy Spirit won't".¹⁰⁰ Such an understanding of divine-human cooperation assumes that in the experience of *glossolalia*, the individual is not compelled to speak, but chooses to do so. However, in so doing, the words that are spoken are not spoken under the power of the individual but by power supplied by the Holy Spirit.

Some Pentecostal-Charismatic observers notes that other theories of *glossolalia* exist. Spittler (1976) contends that *glossolalia* should be seen as a human phenomenon "not limited to Christianity nor even to human behavior". The notion that *glossolalia* defines the Pentecostal-Charismatic experience is rejected by Spittler. Similarly, the linguistic theory of *glossolalia* suggests that as the Spirit brings forth "other tongues", the Spirit draws linguistic remnants of cultural exposure out of the minds of the speaker, allowing them to speak in unknown tongues. For some Pentecostals and Charismatics, the linguistic theory negates the power of the Spirit, but to others, it is seen as enhancing the "Spirit's working in normal processes of speech" is thus sufficient ground for "greater respect for the Holy Spirit's power" than simply the Spirit overpowering the faculties of an individual person and speaking directly through them (Mills 1973:116). Therefore this understanding of *glossolalia* emphasizes the human activity in the operation of the gift without rejecting the mediate activity of the Spirit.

¹⁰⁰ This quotation is not unlike that of John Wesley, "Without God we cannot, but without us, God will not".

5.5.2 Divine Healing

Divine healing is a spiritual gift that is also considered foundational to classical Pentecostals. Menzies notes that Pentecostal and Charismatics “long for [God’s] healing power to flow through us to bring healing and grace to others” (Menzies 2000:173). The gift of healing is considered an expression of the Spirit’s power when it is in operation. Martin (2002:876) notes that miracles are distinguished from healing in the New Testament, “probably due to the special ability of healing miracles to symbolize and communicate the saving power of God”. Thus the operation of the gift of divine healing is strongly associated with the aggressive evangelistic strategies of Pentecostals and Charismatics, because they understand the demonstration of physical healing as evidence that God can also save the soul.

Charismatic evangelist Katherine Kuhlman (1962) articulated imprecise notions of the Spirit’s activity in divine healing. In some instances, Kuhlman asserts that the Spirit could heal individuals immediately, without the operation of the gift of healing through human agency. Kuhlman recounts an experience wherein “the Presence of the Holy Spirit is in such abundance that by His [sic!] Presence alone, sick bodies are healed” (Kuhlman 1962:198). However, Kuhlman also believes that a prerequisite to divine healing is not to question “God’s promise to heal” and to believe that the ailment is already healed before praying. Kuhlman states that a human being seeking divine healing should “believe that it is already done” and focus attention not on the ailment, but on God (Kuhlman 1962:170).

More radical Pentecostals and Charismatics in the healing movements, such as Kenneth Hagin (1974), base their understanding of healing on a three part theological construct. First, they believe that complete physical healing is God’s will for every Christian. Second, they believe that Jesus made the provision for physical healing in the atonement. Third, they believe that physical healing must be “claimed” by faith, whereby the “healing power of God is released”. Thus, extreme Pentecostals and Charismatics consider divine healing a demonstration of

God's power fused with a demonstration of human faith. If an individual fails to be divinely healed and illness persisted, it is, in some extreme cases, blamed only on unbelief or unconfessed sin.¹⁰¹ In this case, there is a clearly identifiable human aspect to the understanding of *concursum*; in fact, human action is not considered secondary, but primary.

Disparate descriptions of the operation of the gift of healing by Pentecostals and Charismatics fail to communicate a clear theology as to how the gift operates, especially in terms of *concursum*. Nevertheless, the vast majority of Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences involving the gift of divine healing identify both a human action, either by someone applying the gift or someone receiving the healing, and a supernatural action on the part of the Holy Spirit. Stickler (2001) describes prayer for physical healing as "cooperation with the Holy Spirit", identifying that the operation of the spiritual gift of healing required action from both the Holy Spirit and the human agent. Petitionary prayer combined with faith is most often the human activities that serve as the crucible wherein the gift of divine healing operates.

5.5.3 Prophecy

Prophecy is identifiable as a commonly expressed spiritual gift within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. While not a doctrinal priority of the same magnitude as *glossolalia* and divine healing, prophecy is a spiritual gift that operates in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches and also serves as a demonstration of the Spirit's power. The gift of prophecy is described by Pentecostals and Charismatics as a spontaneous, intelligible utterance, inspired directly by the Holy Spirit. According to Bennett (1977:99), the gift of prophecy is "manifested when believers speak the mind of God, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and not from their own thoughts." Unlike *glossolalia*, prophecy is understood as the

¹⁰¹ See J. Nico Horn's *From Rags to Riches* (UNISA: Praetoria, South Africa, 1989).

verbal expression of intelligible words, inspired by the Holy Spirit but spoken through human agents.

According to Pentecostals and Charismatics, an individual who operates in the gift of prophecy does not decide what to say, formulate a way to say it, and then decide to speak; rather, the gift of prophecy is understood as an urge from the Spirit to speak from which the words, chosen not by the speaker but by the Spirit, would flow. Menzies (2000:126) notes that “as the source of prophetic inspiration, the Spirit grants special revelation and inspired speech”. In the operation of the gift of prophecy, Pentecostals and Charismatics understand that human agency is more involved than with *glossolalia*. Therefore, in the operation of the gift of prophecy, Pentecostals and Charismatics are aware of the possibility of “starting in the Spirit and ending up in the flesh”, thus “spoiling what God had intended” (Culpepper 1977:111). In terms of *concursum*, the operation of the gift of prophecy requires intentional human action inspired by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the gift of prophecy can be identified as sequenced *concursum*, whereby the Holy Spirit orients the human will to speak specific words.

5.6 Conclusion

While a survey of the literature demonstrates that spiritual power is the definitive aspect of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum*, the expression of the ways in which such divine-human activity actually function remains ambiguous. As noted, this ambiguity may simply be indicative of the constraints of language or it may demonstrate that Pentecostals and Charismatics do not have a uniform theory of *concursum* that can be universally applied. Such doctrinal diversity is not unusual considering the vast diversity of experience and doctrine with the movements themselves. Nevertheless, the survey of literature demonstrates that Pentecostals and Charismatics affirm that spiritual power can be appropriated and applied through the operation of spiritual gifts and cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Thus, Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* is best described as primarily mediate concurrence with the power of the Spirit through human agency.

While Pentecostal-Charismatic historians “denied or at best severely minimized”

the factor of human agency when accounting for their own history and used “supernaturalistic principles of explanation” to invoke the Spirit as the source of their success (Cerillo 2002:393), in real life, operational terms, there is significant emphasis on human agency. Further, although some Pentecostal-Charismatic historians assert that God “directly produced the movement with little or no involvement of secondary causes or agencies” and claimed that in terms of the origin of the movement “the source is in the skies” (Cerillo 2002:393), the emphasis on human action, especially in terms of cooperation with the activity of the Spirit, is evident in the literature. Culpepper (1977:80) notes that Pentecostals and Charismatics often confuse the operation of spiritual gifts with “solo performances that call attention to the individual through whom they flow” rather than emphasizing that spiritual gifts are manifestations of the Spirit. Further, Menzies (2000:203) argues that the Pentecostal reality “must be seen for exactly what Luke describes it to be, the source of boldness and power in our Christian service and witness”, but it “should not be confused with Christian maturity”. Tension between human and divine action characterize *concursum* in operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology.

Charismatic theologian Morton Kelsey (1972) argues that the problem of how God and human beings interact is difficult to communicate from a Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective. Kelsey asserts that the “actor-action-subject” formula does not necessarily apply in a worldview wherein the contact and interaction with the divine is possible. Kelsey argues that simply because a subject and object interact, it does not necessarily imply that there is an intrinsic distinction between them. Instead, he concludes, humanity is a “part of the field in which he acts” and thus, humanity is acted upon by God as they act (Kelsey 1972:138). To Kelsey, *concursum* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic context is a matter of a complex, intrinsic interaction that cannot be reduced to causal mechanisms, either by God or by a human agent. The complexity of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum*

provides sufficient ground for comparison with Process-Relational notions of *concurus* in subsequent chapters.¹⁰²



¹⁰² I should note that were it not for complexity, little room would remain for critical comparison. The complexity and diversity of experiences in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements allow for comparison with a theological tradition such as Process-Relational theology. If the theologies of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements were narrowly defined, codified, and dogmatic, any form of comparison would certainly be more difficult.

CHAPTER 6: *Concursus* in Process-Relational Theology

6.1 Introduction

This chapter includes a survey of the Process-Relational understanding of *concursus* as the means by which God interacts with the world and humanity. Because the Process-Relational conception of *concursus* is altogether unlike classical perspectives mentioned in previous chapters, an interpretation of Process-Relational *concursus* in classical terms is not utilized. For example, Process-Relational *concursus* cannot be *concursus collatus* (sequenced concursus) because God does not simultaneously act with human beings, but merely “lures” or influences human beings to act according to their own free will. In like manner, Process-Relational *concursus* cannot be permissive *concursus* because God does not permit creaturely freedom; God can neither permit nor prevent freedom. Rather, Process-Relational *concursus* is explained on its own terms using its own exclusive terminology. The chapter includes four major sections: Causation, Freedom, and Determinism in Process-Relational Theology, Process-Relational Pneumatology, Divine Action in Process-Relational Theology, and *Concursus Divinus* in Process-Relational Theology.

The first section frames the questions of freedom and determinism from Chapter Four in Process-Relational terms. The Whiteheadian concept of prehension is explored in terms of the interrelatedness of all entities in the Process-Relational worldview. The role of God in the processes of freedom and determinism is explored for all entities in the world, wherein it is concluded that though the past largely determines the constitution of reality for most entities in the world, God offers the possibility of novelty. Finally, the first section concludes with an exploration of the ways in which God interacts with human beings to offer the possibility of novelty in the moment to moment occasions of individual lives. Whitehead, Cobb, and Mesle are used as primary sources throughout section one.

The second section includes an exploration of pneumatology from the Process-Relational perspective. Largely reliant on the work of Process-Relational

theologian Blair Reynolds, the section documents the notion of the immanent Spirit not only active in the created order but very much intrinsically a part of the created order. The Spirit's relation to the material world is explored from a Process-Relational perspective. Next, the Spirit's involvement in human experience is explored from a Process-Relational perspective. Finally, section two concludes with an exploration of the various conceptions of the Spirit in the Godhead according to Process-Relational theists. While Trinitarianism is one viable option for interpreting the relatedness of the Spirit in Process-Relational theology, not all Process-Relational theists are Trinitarians.

In the third section, divine action is surveyed according to the Process-Relational perspective. Divine action is conceived quite differently by Process-Relational theists compared to classical theists in that God is not an agent acting externally on the world, but God is conceived as internal to the world and the world is conceived as internal to God. Creation is explored as the basis for understanding God's active role in the world. The nature of God's power in Process-Relational theology is presented as persuasive rather than coercive power. The philosophical, theological, and evidential arguments for God's inability to act coercively are presented according to the Process-Relational literature. Open-Evangelical theology is briefly mentioned insofar as its adherents affirm persuasive power over coercive power, but do not forsake the notion of coercive power entirely. Next, persuasive power is presented as basis for divine love, a position that Process-Relational theists firmly defend. Finally, section three concludes with the a survey of the mechanics of divine action, including the philosophical categories and constructs used by Whitehead and other Process-Relational theists to explain the means by which God acts in the world. Whitehead, Cobb, Mesle, and Clayton are used as primary sources throughout section three.

Section four focuses on *concursum* from a Process-Relational perspective. The notion of *concursum* in Process-Relational theology is unlike the notion employed in classical theism because its ontological definitions of the nature of God and the constitution of reality are vastly different from other theological and philosophical systems. *Concursum* is explored from the Process-Relational perspective in terms

of God's interaction with the world as a whole. Next, *concursum* in terms of the divine-human relation is surveyed from a Process-Relational perspective. Finally, section four concludes with a survey of the divine lure as articulated by Process-Relational theists; that is, the way in which God influences or persuades the world. Notions such as the initial aim and superjective nature of God are documented. Whitehead, Cobb, Mesle, Clayton, Pittinger, and Ford, are used as primary sources throughout section four.

6.2 Causation, Freedom, and Determinism in Process-Relational Theology

Process-Relational theology affirms both determinism and free will in all occasions of experience. For all entities in the world, "process" is the continuous nexus of occasions of experience whereby actual entities prehend prior occasions of experience and react to them. While the influence of prior occasions on the present exert a strong influence on the outcome of each new occasion of experience, Process-Relational theists maintain that there is always an element of free will, or at the very minimum indeterminacy, for all occasions of experience, no matter how minimal. In other words, "while the past does have a powerful impact on the present and future, there remains room for genuine freedom." (Mesle 1993:37). Therefore, while the past, or past occasions, exert much influence on each new occasion, the possibility for novelty or indeterminacy always exists. Process-Relational theists not only believe that freedom is possible, but that "freedom is an inherent feature of reality." (Mesle 1993:59). Whitehead (1929:529) expresses the perpetual tension between freedom and determinism as follows:

God and the World stand over against each other, expressing the final metaphysical truth that appetitive vision and physical enjoyment to have equal claim to priority in creation. But no two actualities can be torn apart: each is all in all. In God's nature, permanence is primordial and flux is derivative from the World: in the World's nature, flux is primordial and permanence is derivative from God. Also the World's nature is a primordial datum for God: and God's nature is a primordial datum for the World. Creation achieves the reconciliation of permanence and flux when it has reached its final term which is

everlastingness- the apotheosis of the World.

In Process-Relational thought, therefore, God plays a cosmological role in the process of all events of in the universe. While past events largely determine the present and ultimately the future, new possibilities are always offered by God for all entities. Because the world serves as data for God's perception, God can order possibilities and offer such possibilities as sense data back to all entities in the world. God offers to every event, every actual occasion, and its ideal possibility or in Whiteheadian terms, its "initial aim". Process-Relational theists interpret this exchange as "creative transformation" whereby the past is "prehended", possibilities are ordered and offered by God, and a new future is realized moment by moment. Thus, determinism as well as freedom, play a role in the Process-Relational conception of reality; "the world contains chance and freedom as well as determinism" (Mesle 1993:47). Nevertheless, while freedom exists, the "greatest casual efficacy in most events derives from their immediate past" (Cobb 2003:16). Determinism appears to be the most viable explanation of natural phenomena because of what Process-Relational theists define as the "causal efficacy of the past" (Cobb 2008:31), meaning essentially that what was in the world contributes, with causal effect, to what now is in the world. However, the world is not purely deterministic and the world is not "merely an outgrowth of the past" (Cobb 2008:35). Therefore, Process-Relational theists do not affirm *concursum praevis* (prior *concursum*) in the classical sense of God as a "first cause". In Process-Relational theology, God does not cause any event, but provides pure possibilities for individual entities to exercise freedom and attain novelty. Griffin (2003) notes that "no event in the world, accordingly, is ever brought about unilaterally by God; divine-creaturely cooperation is always involved" (Griffin 2003:13). Thus, cooperation between God and the world reflects the "very nature of the divine-world relation" (Griffin 2003:13).

6.2.1 Prehension and the Interrelatedness of All Entities

Because of the vastness of past data that contribute to the moment by moment constitution of reality, determinism appears to be the single most reasonable and

rational method of analyzing and interpreting events in the world. The role of past events allow scientists to “predict with incredible accuracy because sheer statistics over power individual decisions” (Mesle 1993:48-49), but such statistical probabilities do not negate the possibility of indeterminacy or freedom for each moment of experience of each actual entity in the world. Continuity with the past ensures stability in both the material and psychic structure of the world. While “every momentary experience is both largely continuous with the past”, which ensures stability, it is “in some measure new and different”, which provides the possibility for novelty (Cobb 2003:55). All actual entities are inextricably and completely related to one another. The influence of other entities in contributing to the immediate future of all other entities is virtually unquantifiable. However, Process-Relational theists urge that the basic nature of reality should be understood in terms of actual entities that are “present in subsequent actual entities, participating in their very constitution” (Cobb 2003:39); thus, all things thoroughly interrelated, including God. However, Process-Relational theists are not pantheists. The world is not God and God is not the world. In fact, “most process theology strongly eschews pantheism” (Cobb 2003:28). The role of God in the constitution of the world moment by moment is a defining facet of Process-Relational theology and foundational to understanding *concurrency* in Process-Relational terms.

As illustrated by Whitehead’s formulation of the exchange of data between God and the world, God’s role in both the freedom and determinism of all events in the world is central to Process-Relational theology. Cobb (2003:27) notes that “much of what God does is determined anecdotally to each occasion” is “surely central to process theology”. Known as the “primordial nature” of God, Process-Relational theists conceive this aspect of God’s being as “God’s external experience of all possibilities, as the foundation of freedom of the world.” (Mesle 1993:58). Thus, God’s experience of the world is not merely passive, but constitutes the very possibility of freedom for all other entities. In prehending both past experiences and possibilities presented by God in each new occasion, Process-Relational theists contend that all entities in the world perpetually seek value as the future

unfolds.

6.2.2 The Process-Relational Role of God in Freedom and Determinism

In Process-Relational theology, God breaks the process of determinism by offering ideal possibilities to all entities at each moment of experience. Process-Relational theists “affirm that very much about every occasion is fully determined by God and the occasion’s past” (Cobb 2003:27). In the process of the unfolding of reality, entities prehend their immediate past, God prehends the past and immediate experiences of the world, God orders pure possibilities for each occasion, God offers possibilities to each occasion as “sense” datum, entities prehend the ideal possibilities (or initial aim) offered by God, and finally, entities exercise some measure for freedom to choose the possibility offered by God or perpetuate based purely on the deterministic processes of the past. Within this process of exchange, God does not coerce or intervene to force entities to act: such intervention could easily be conceived as simply another form of determinism. While “God strictly determines limits”, God does so to ensure “that value can be realized through persuasion” (Cobb 2003:27). According to Process-Relational theology, God persuades in each moment, but God never coerces. Cobb (2003:26) explains this perspective on persuasion as follows:

Neither God nor the past nor any combination of the two determines exactly what any occasion will become... God’s working within the occasion is not limited to introducing alternatives to sheer determination by the past ... lures toward the actualization of the fullest realization of value in itself and in its contribution to others. How full occasions follow the lure is their decision.

The preservation of the freedom of each entity in each moment of experience is central to Process-Relational thought; neither the immediate past nor God ever serve as a deterministic cause. According to Process-Relational theology, God acts by persuasion alone and enables freedom of all entities because of the basic notion that “God is love”. In other words, the “most basic expression of God love is that God acts as the grounds creaturely freedom” (Mesle 1993:59). It is argued that if God can unilaterally intervene in the natural processive order, then God violates

the freedom of that particular entity. In terms of naturalistic laws, Cobb (2003:27) noted that “their behavior follows their nature ... these ‘laws’ and their changes can be understood as, at least in part, resulting from divine persuasion”. Thus any change in, or the sustenance of, natural laws is at “least in part” a result the persuasion, not intervention, of God. According to Process-Relational theology, God does not supernaturally intervene at certain events to disrupt the natural, deterministic order of the world. Rather, according to Process-Relational theology, God “intervenes in every event so that divine influence is a natural part of the world’s normal causal sequences and denies that God ever interrupts these normal sequences” (Griffin 2003:13).

6.2.3 The Process-Relational View of God and Human Freedom and Determinism

While the notion that “God is love” may be difficult to conceive in terms of the laws of physics or the structure of atoms, when applied to larger societies of occasions of experience like human beings, the argument becomes clearer. In fact, according to the Process-Relational conception of reality, for human beings, the “datum of most prehensions is a nexus” (Cobb 2008:31). In terms of human freedom, Process-Relational theists would argue that for human beings, “our past both creates and limits our options” (Mesle 1993:47) for each new moment or occasion of experience. While God is concerned with human affairs, neither does God nor the immediate past determine the moment to moment future of human beings. Process-Relational theists argue their positions not only on philosophical grounds, but also on the basis of addressing a general aversion to faith. Griffin (2003:23) asserted:

If we are to have any hope of overcoming the long-standing belief that the scientific worldview conflicts with the Christian faith, which has been one of the two major causes of the decline of faith in the past centuries, especially among intellectuals, we need a form of Christian faith that does not presuppose supernatural interventions. The importance of this point becomes even more evident when one recalls that the same idea of divine power lies behind the problem of evil, which has been the other major cause of the loss of faith.

The Process-Relational argument is that God does so because “God is love” and that the exercise of persuasive power is more loving than the exercise of coercive power. For Process-Relational theists, the necessity for a revised understanding of God’s power according to classical theism is not only beneficial, but critical to preservation of faith. If God’s power can be reinterpreted in terms of divine love for human beings, Process-Relational theists contend that they are acting on behalf of upholding the Christian faith in the face of intense human scrutiny.

6.3 Process-Relational Pneumatology

The Process-Relational understanding of the Holy Spirit is not unlike that of Moltmann, who notes that the “experience of the Holy Spirit is as specific as the living beings who experience the Spirit, and as varied as the living beings who experience Spirit are varied” (Moltmann 1992:8). Process-Relational theology affirms individuality, individual freedom, and interrelatedness of all entities in the world and thus affirms the general direction of Moltmann’s expression of varied experiences of the Spirit at work in the world. Process-Relational theists offer a unique pneumatological perspective because of their conception of God in the world and the world in God. Perhaps the most thorough articulation of a Process-Relational theology was by Blair Reynolds (1990), though other Process-Relational theists speak of God in terms of “the Spirit” or using the Christian term “Holy Spirit” to speak of God’s involvement in the world. According to Reynolds and Process-Relational theists in general, the Spirit of Process-Relational pneumatology is depicted as passible, responsive, and vulnerable to the contingencies of the universe and human history. This section includes a survey of Reynold’s Process-Relational pneumatology as well as insights into pneumatology from other Process-Relational theologians.

6.3.1 The Spirit and the Material World in Process-Relational Pneumatology

Process-Relational pneumatology emphasizes the Whiteheadian category of the consequent nature of God; that is, the temporal pole of God, which is related to the changing world. Blair Reynolds (1990) articulates a comprehensive Process-

Relational pneumatology that provides the basis by which the Christian conception of the Holy Spirit can be interpreted in Process-Relational terms. The purpose of Reynolds' work is the "formulation of a doctrine of the Holy Spirit, God as immanent in ourselves and our universe" within the Process-Relational theological and philosophical context. Reynolds seeks to interpret the Whiteheadian notion of divine immanence, that is, God in the world and the world in God, pneumatologically (Reynolds 1990:9). According to Reynolds (1990:13), Whitehead's notion of an ever changing universe, when interpreted pneumatologically, eliminates the traditional ontologically dualism of the God-world relationship. Process-Relational pneumatology is articulated in terms of an intimate, two-way relationship between God and the world (Reynolds 1990:14).

Kärkkäinen (2002:152) notes that one of the main struggles of pneumatology in general has been to "relate the Holy Spirit to the temporal order". Reynolds contends that classical theology had conceived the Spirit as contrary to the mutable, changing world. If the Spirit is something the world is not, that is, eternal as opposed to temporal, Reynolds concludes that the Spirit could not be described as literally present or at work in the world. The importance of immanence in Reynolds' pneumatology cannot be minimized. Not unlike traditional liberalism, Reynolds saw the Spirit as immanently accessible in human experience. For Reynolds, the Spirit was seen as present "within the universe, among us, not in some remote a-temporal realm above and beyond the world" (Reynolds 1990:35). Reynolds conceives the Spirit in terms of procession; that is, ever changing advancement in dynamic relation to the world (Reynolds 1990:119-131). In Process-Relational form, Reynolds emphasizes the "contingency and interdependence of all reality", but also proposes that the Spirit is a "dynamic reality" of continuous creative activity in the world (Reynolds 1990:125). Reynolds argues that, if contingency did not exist, there would be no novelty and the world would be static. In Process-Relational pneumatology, the Spirit is not conceived in terms of evasion of the material world, but in terms of the actualization of all material possibilities. In Process-Relational pneumatology, the immanence of God is emphasized and the Spirit is considered present in the entire

creation and in all human creatures. Ultimately, Reynolds concludes that the Spirit is “concerned with all of life, not just with those aspects specifically seen as spiritual or ecclesiastical” (Reynolds 1990:125). Thus, Process-Relational theist Norman Pittinger (1979) warns against the “danger of seeing the Holy Spirit simply in the context of Christian life – and, even worse, solely in the context of ecclesiastical experience – is that we narrow intolerably one great aspect of the operation of God in the world.” Thus, Process-Relational theology does not isolate the work of the Holy Spirit to Christian experience or the context of the church; rather, the Spirit is universal.

6.3.2 The Spirit and the Human Experience in Process-Relational Pneumatology

Reynolds proposes that human experience of the world is simultaneously experience of the Spirit. Reynolds argues that because God is conceived by Whitehead as an actual entity among other actual entities, and by Hartshorne and Cobb as a society of actual entities, the human interaction with God in the world does not differ from other interactions with the world (Reynolds 1990:40-41). For Reynolds, the Spirit in the world is the means by which human beings interact with God. Further, Reynolds surveys the lives of Christian mystics in an attempt to bridge the gap between Process-Relational conceptions of God and experiences of the Spirit in the broader Christian tradition. Reynolds terms mystical experience of the Spirit “affective redemption”; that is, the gentle activity of the Spirit that touches the affective side of human life, free from the bonds of strict mind-body dualism. Reynolds notes that personal, mystical experiences of the Spirit throughout history have been ongoing and processive rather than singular and static. Reynolds (1990:103) notes:

The mystical literature provides a concrete illustration of an aesthetic-affective pneumatology that is of meaning and value ... the fundamental mystical intuition of God as diffuse in the cosmos provides the basis for a spirituality in which purity is not found in a separation from the temporal-material world but is formed in a deeper penetration of the universe.

Process-Relational theologians have referred to the Spirit as “creative-responsive

love”; when the love of the Spirit is emphasized in terms of real relations with the world and the ability to experience genuine suffering. Utilizing the work of Irenaeus, Reynolds formulates a “process soteriology” whereby he proposes that any distinction between spirit and matter could be avoided. The notion of the redemption of the whole is significant to Process-Relational thought because there is no dichotomy between matter and spirit; the world is comprised not of atomic particles but of actual entities which are occasions of experience. Further, Griffin (2003:26) notes that “our most immediate access to God is, of course, to God as the Holy Spirit acting in our present experience.”

6.3.3 The Spirit of the Godhead in Process-Relational Pneumatology

Reynolds articulates a dynamic view of creation and the world in terms of a “process notion of an emphatic bond between God and the world and also of the Holy Spirit as creative transforming love” (Reynolds 1990:111). Reynolds emphasizes the doctrine of the trinity as a means by which the relational aspects of Process theology could be expressed. Reynolds notes that the doctrine of the trinity expresses “elements of relativity, complexity, or multiformity and change within an otherwise simple, immutable, self-contained deity” (Reynolds 1990:132). However, not all Process-Relational theists are Trinitarians and the doctrine of the Trinity is not a prerequisite for a Process-Relational pneumatology. While Process-Relational theists maintain that the doctrine of the trinity is a means by which the idea of “relatedness”, which is central to Process-Relational categories, can be expressed without a physical world, it is not central to the basic tenets of Process-Relational theology. In fact, the notion of relational trinitarianism is more often utilized by Open-Evangelical theists than by Process-Relational-Theists.

6.4 Divine Action in Process-Relational Theology

While it is clear that Process-Relational theists affirm God’s involvement in the world and articulate God’s role in philosophical terms, it is much less clear how God interacts with the world in the Process-Relational system. However, Process-

Relational theists are much more concerned about the mechanics of divine action than many other forms of theology¹⁰³ and are actively engaged in discerning scientifically observable mechanisms for divine action. Clayton (1997:175) notes that because naturalism has been, for the most part, successful in explaining events in the world, religion is compelled to demonstrate equally sufficient explanations for claims of supernatural intervention. Process-Relational theists have made great strides in this regard and largely seek not to decry scientific inquiry, but to reconcile it with religious and philosophical insights. Thus divine action should have not only a theological basis, but a rational and scientific basis as well.

6.4.1 Creation as the Basis for Divine Action in Process-Relational Theology

The doctrine of creation permits the most rudimentary and foundational conception of divine action, one that does not necessarily conflict with the laws of physics or a naturalistic worldview, because naturalistic explanations presuppose the existence of a world to observe (Clayton 1997:48). For Process-Relational theists like Clayton, the doctrine of creation is foundational to understanding divine action in the created world. In Process-Relational theology, God has power, but “the power of God is inherently interwoven with the power of the world” (Mesle 1993:9). Thus, Process-Relational theists affirm panentheism, all things in God, as the basis from which divine action in the created order occurs. While Clayton maintains that creation *ex-nihilo* is possible within the Process-Relational framework, most Process-Relational theists contend that the world was not created

¹⁰³ While it may seem bombastic to make this claim, it should be taken in the context of this doctoral thesis. For example, the work that Process-Relational theists have done to explain or at the very least investigate the means of divine action far outweighs the work of Pentecostal-Charismatic theists or Evangelical theists. That is not to say, however, that other theologians from other traditions have not sufficiently sought to explain divine action or have not sufficiently engaged science to seek such explanations; it should simply be noted that for purposes of the two traditions in this comparison, Process-Relational theologies tend to have a much more refined theory of divine action.

out of nothing but co-exists eternally with God in one form or another, ensuring real and eternal relations for God. In both cases, “God’s power is the power that enables all of reality to continue its creative advance” and thus is the power “that makes the creature and is experienced by every creature” (Mesle 1993:14).

Because Process-Relational theologies understand the world as “in God” and God as “in the world”, divine action is not conceived in purely subject-object terms. That is, God does not act on the world from the outside. Therefore, the question of divine action in Process-Relational terms becomes an ontological question: What is the ontological nature of the God-world relation? When the world is ontologically conceived “outside” of God, divine action is implicitly conceived in terms of an independent “foreign agent” intervening in the natural order (Clayton 1997:100). For Process-Relational theology and panentheism, however, each “physical interaction” is part of the being of God in a universal sense, more so than classical theism (Clayton 1997:100). God constitutes the very being of the world and in like manner, the world constitutes the very being of God.

6.4.2 The Nature of God’s Power in Process-Relational Theology

In philosophical terms, power is typically described either as coercive or as persuasive (influential). The use of power in any context need not involve coercion, that is, the use of force or the threat of force. Power may be exerted through persuasion or influence as well. Thus, the difference between coercion and influence can be reduced to the means by which power is utilized. When debating the issue of divine action, the important factor for Process-Relational theists is the nature of the power that God inherently possesses. The debate concerning divine action and God’s exercise of power in the world is less about how much power God possesses and more about what kind of power is most valued or perceived to be valued in the human understanding of God. Therefore Process-Relational theists argue that the ways in which human beings conceive of how God acts in the world largely depends on what kind of power human beings value most. If human beings value coercive power, they are more likely to conceive of divine action in terms of coercion; but if human beings see persuasive

power in terms of love, they may be more inclined to conceive divine action in terms of persuasion. Hartshorne (1984) argues that there are essentially two options for conceiving of the power of God. The first is the “power to determine every detail of what happens in the world” and the second is the power to “significantly influence the happenings” of the world (Hartshorne 1984:11). Hartshorne (1984:11), a seminal Process-Relational theist, concludes that “the only viable doctrine of divine power is that it influences all that happens but determines nothing in its concrete particularity”. Therefore, the persuasive power is God’s ability to influence everything but determine nothing. As Mesle (1993:15) notes, “it would be a mistake to think that the God of process theology is weak”. On the contrary, Process-Relational theists maintain that God exercises immense power through acting in the world, but the power God exercises is persuasive rather than coercive.

Cobb (2003:7) notes that the idea of the “Almighty” God derives from a misinterpretation of the Old Testament word *El Shaddi*. While *El Shaddi* conventionally translated as “The Almighty” Cobb notes that the word is actually “a proper name for a god who was originally, we may assume, not identical with Yahweh. Accordingly, “Yahweh” was translated as the “Lord”. Because translators were unsure about what do with the word *El Shaddi*, they simply came to substitute “God Almighty” or “The Almighty” for each instance of *El Shaddai* (Cobb 2003:7). Cobb’s perspective is central to reconciling the Process-Relational understanding of God’s power and divine action with the biblical portrayal of God. Cobb notes that while “readers of the Bible are led to assume that it teaches divine omnipotence” (Cobb 2003:7), “nothing in the name even points to power”. According to Cobb, the “original meaning was the ‘Breasted One’” (Cobb 2003:7). The decision on behalf of translators to emphasize coercive or forceful power “reflects theological beliefs prevalent at the time of translation and has nothing to do with meanings of the text itself” (Cobb 2003:8). Cobb rejects what he sees as the “arbitrariness of this substitution” (Cobb 2003:8). However, the perception of God as “The Almighty” wielding immense coercive power to intervene in the world is largely engrained in Western culture, particularly because

of the biblical presentation of God's actions as such.

For Process-Relational theists, the idea of "God Almighty" should be rejected purely on the grounds of "the problem of evil and the nature of divine power" (Cobb 2003:82) because if God has the coercive power to disrupt the world to prevent evil but elects not to do so, then God is morally responsible for much of the evil and suffering in the world. Process-Relational theology conceives the morality of God in much different terms: that God ultimately wants to alleviate suffering in the world "but cannot", "at least, God cannot do so simply by willing it" (Mesle 1993:20). Thus Process-Relational theists conclude that God's only ability to act in the world is by persuasive rather than coercive means.

It should be noted that Open-Evangelical theists affirm the notion that God acts primarily by persuasive rather than coercive means, but maintain that God could act coercively if God so chooses. While the relationship between Open-Evangelical and Process-Relational theology is for the most part "friendly, supportive, and overlapping" (Cobb 2003:81), the nature of divine power remains a topic of impasse from both perspectives. Although Open-Evangelical theists emphasize the persuasive power of God, they "argue for these views scripturally, and process theologians do so philosophically" (Cobb 2003:82). Oord (2009:6) argues that "process conceptions of divine limitation leave many theists unsatisfied". Nevertheless, Oord maintains that God provides "power and freedom to all creatures capable of self-determination" (Oord 2007:9). As a Nazarene theologian, Oord employs the Wesleyan term "prevenient grace" to describe God's gifting of freedom and power to creatures moment by moment (Oord 2007:9). Oord, a key partner in Process-Relational and Open-Evangelical dialogue, suggests an alternative labeled "involuntary divine self-limitation," as opposed to "voluntary divine self-limitation" to suggest that God is limited by external factors rather than intentionally self-limited, as classical theism suggests. Oord's work seeks to reconcile the differences between concepts of divine power in Open-Evangelical theism and in Process-Relational theism. In like manner, Rice (2003:191), an Open-Evangelical theist, maintains that theists should not be forced to choose between a "God who determines everything" and a "God who

determines nothing”.

6.4.3 Persuasive Power as Divine Love in Process-Relational Theology

Coercion involves both the coercer and the coerced, that is, an agent that coerces another agent, and an agent that is coerced by another agent. Coercion diminishes the targeted agent’s freedom and responsibility, a violation that most would argue, at least in practical terms, is a moral violation.¹⁰⁴ Process-Relational theists understand divine action and the exercise of persuasive power as an act of love that does not violate the freedom of creatures or interfere with the regularity of the natural order, but rather enhances freedom. For Process-Relational theists, “divine power is not coercive power, but empowering, liberating, and persuasive power. The exercise of divine power enhances the power of creatures, it does not remove it” (Cobb 2003:82). God acts in love and only enhances rather than disrupts creaturely freedom in so doing.

Aquinas argues that God’s love should not be considered the same as human love. Process-Relational theists agree with Aquinas in a sense. Generally, human love is reactionary or responsive in nature. Human love is motivated by the object of its love. Aquinas contends that God’s love is creative in nature, not motivated by the object of love, but merely by the creation. Process-Relational theists would agree to a certain extent. While Aquinas, with most of classical theism, contends that God’s love is impassible and devoid of empathy, Process-Relational theists would depart at this point. God’s is absolute, but God’s love is simultaneously sensitive to the subjective experiences of the creation. God is not impassible, but is affected by the experiences of the created order. Therefore, as God loves, God seeks to enrich the freedom of the creatures, thereby enriching God’s own experiences.

¹⁰⁴ For example, even the staunchest Calvinist would find it difficult to defend the coercion of one adult person over another or the violation of one adult’s freedom over another. In practical terms, when such freedoms are violated, the result is some kind of violent reaction or, on a macro-scale, war.

Mesle (1993:30) notes three aspects of persuasive power in terms of divine action and divine love. First, persuasive power is the “ability, the power, to be open, to be sensitive, and to be in relationship with the world about us”. This definition applies also to God. The foundation of God’s loving nature is God’s deep openness, relationship, and dependence on the created world. Second, persuasive power is “the ability to be self-creative” (Mesle 1993:30). In the Process-Relational conception of divine action and divine love, “self-creativity is the ability to integrate the world into a unified self, rich in relationships but unique in response” (Mesle 1993:30). Again, such a conception applies not only to human beings, creatures, and entities, but to God as well. Finally, persuasive power is “the ability to influence others” (Mesle 1993:30). Ultimately, God’s power is to influence the world, but in like manner, Process-Relational theists contend that the world exercises considerable influence on God.

6.4.4 The Mechanics of Divine Action according to Process-Relational Theists

Classical theism has assumed that divine action implies that “God acts on creatures as an external force.” However, such notions are “alien to process thought.” (Cobb 2003:27). While various theories of divine agency exist, Process-Relational theology conceives of God’s actions in very distinct terms, primarily because of its ontological distinctions. For instance, Clayton (1997:177) is skeptical of Farrer’s theory of double-agency because of its apparent conflict with the natural scientific explanations for causation. From Clayton’s perspective, the concept of God’s “continuous intervention” in the theory of double-agency is ambiguous and does little to provide a scientific or philosophical framework in which divine action can be said to occur. Not unlike distinctions between God’s love and human love, Clayton argues that an interpretation of divine action is a problem of judgment because God’s action tends to be portrayed in the same way as human action. For Clayton, divine action should be “treated in terms appropriate to the actions and intentions of the agents” (Clayton 1997:185). Commenting on the work of Polkinghorne (1995), Clayton (1997:207) notes that human agency may serve as a model for divine agency insofar as the argument

can be made that if the physical world can accommodate human agency, there exists the possibility that it can accommodate divine agency as well. Thus, “God, like human persons is a subject who acts and is acted on” (Cobb 2003:13). By means of a survey *concurus* in Process-Relational theology, the manner by which God acts, especially in relation to human beings, is explored. The Process-Relational conception of the divine-human relation illustrates the means by which persuasive divine action occurs.

As a panentheist, Clayton (2008:205) argues that while it is one thing to suggest that God acts in the world through the “divine lure”, it is quite another to develop a theologically coherent theory of divine agency. Clayton (2008:207-209) formulates a theory of “participatory divine agency” whereby the actions of God are neither occasionalist nor interventionist, but instead utilizes perspectives from both Schliermacher and Whitehead. Clayton contends that for both Whitehead and Schliermacher, divine agency is critical to the understanding of any agency in the world via panentheism. However, Clayton argues that Schleiermacher and Whitehead held quite different opinions of God as well, insofar as each conceived of the way in which God is immanent in the world.¹⁰⁵

6.5 *Concurus Divinus* in Process-Relational Theology

In Process-Relational theology, the relationship between the human spirit and the Spirit of God is one of mutual reciprocity. Classical theists conceive the divine-human relationship in three ways: as the image of God in humanity, as the sustaining providence of God, or as direct intervention in human affairs. By contrast, Clayton (1997) proposes a fourth “ontological” possibility for understanding the divine-human relationship whereby human beings “sense” God

¹⁰⁵ Clayton’s work, *Adventures in the Spirit*, is a thorough account of divine action from a panentheistic perspective. However, Clayton is not a dogmatic Whiteheadian and has some disagreements with classical process theology. Nevertheless, because Clayton identifies himself as a panentheist, his perspectives are relevant. While there are other panentheists whose theories of divine action could be taken into account, Clayton’s perspective is thorough and largely representative of panentheistic views.

because they are “in God”, an ideal, panentheists assert, that is true for the entire created order. The Process-Relational view of divine action makes the notion of *concursum* between God and human actions “as close as it can possibly be without dissolving the difference-in-nature between the infinite God and the finite world” (Clayton 1997:102). According to Process-Relational theists, while “traditional theology has had to deny the reality of time for God” which “threatens the biblical understanding of the importance of history and of human responsibility” (Cobb 2003:31). Therefore, the issue of *concursum*, the relationship between God and human action, is of critical importance for Process-Relational theists. In fact, Whitehead and Process-Relational theists understand God as “working in our history for a world in which each respects all others, in which all are free, in which the coordination that is necessary for society is effected largely by persuasion” (Cobb 2003:11). Process-Relational theists affirm that God does care about the world and does act in the world because what happens in the world affects God.

6.5.1 Process-Relational Concursum and God’s Interaction with the World

In Process-Relational theology, God dynamically interacts with the changing processes of the world. In fact, Process-Relational theists do not conceive God as an agent participating in a causal process from the outside, but as intrinsically part of the changing processes of the world. God is as much part of processes of the world as the world is part of processes of God. Process-Relational theists object to the perceived denial of mutual reciprocity between God and the world advocated by classical theists. *Concursum* is more intrinsic to the God-world relationship in Process-Relational theology than in classical theism which largely advocates a God-world relationship based on the act of creation rather than an unfolding of creation (Clayton 1997:101). In other words, God did not create the world and then intermittently choose to interact with as a type of intervention. Rather, the act of creation is continuous and God’s interaction with the world is part of the creative process. In this way, Process-Relational theists affirm the notion of general providence, “divine power as always present and active, but as always,

inescapably interwoven with the casual forces of the world.” (Mesle 1993:121). Thus, God not only sustains the world, but is part of the world. As a part of the processes of the world, Process-Relational theists maintain that “God everlastingly responds perfectly to the ever-changing situation of creatures. This is the meaning of divine love.” (Cobb 2003:34). Divine love, therefore, means intrinsic relations with the entire created order. The God of Process-Relational theology does not love or act passively, but loves and acts in tandem with the unfolding of the world.

In Process-Relational terms, God shares in “the experience of becoming with the entire universe” and as the experiences of the world unfold, they are synthesized “into God’s own infinitely vast and complex experience” (Mesle 1993:50). Technically, Process-Relational theists contend that the world is not changing *per se*, but the world is “becoming” as each new occasion prehends its past and possibilities and becomes something new in each subsequent occasion. God also participates in the process of becoming along with the world. Whether it is an individual actual occasion or Godself,¹⁰⁶ each actual occasion in the world becomes the “superject” of its own prehensions (Cobb 2008:32). That is, each occasion becomes more than the sum of its past experiences with each new occasion, a reinforcement of the Whiteheadian notion that “the many become one and are increased by one”.

Because God is intrinsically part of the process of becoming for all occasions, the immanence of God in the world is an important factor in the God-world relation for Process-Relational theists. Whitehead demonstrates “in technical detail how God’s immanence in the world functions to bring into being life and consciousness and love and to creatively transform all things” (Mesle 1993:145).

¹⁰⁶ Process-Relational theologians differ on whether God is a “single, everlasting, actual entity” or a society of actual entities (Cobb 2003:14). Whitehead conceives God as a single, everlasting, actual entity while Hartshorne reconceives God in terms of a society or sequence of actual entities. Nevertheless, the fact that God operates according to the same metaphysical principles as all other entities is what matters most for the coherence of the Process-Relational metaphysical and theological system.

When Process-Relational theists maintain that “God is in the world, and the world is in God”, they emphasize that “each continually provides novelty to the other” and “their mutual immanence is the reason that neither becomes static” (Cobb 2003:29). Mutual immanence therefore provides novelty and dynamism in the world and in God. Without the world, God would be static; without God, the world would be static.¹⁰⁷ Further, as the world realizes value,¹⁰⁸ God realizes value and as the world suffers, God suffers. For Process-Relational theists, God experiences the experiences of the world. Therefore, all “human (and other creaturely) experiences are taken up into the unified cosmic experience that is God” (Mesle 1993:137).

Process-Relational theists make a distinction between two types of processes for the sake of clarity: microscopic and macroscopic processes. First, “microscopic processes are the concrescences of individual actual entities. Macroscopic processes are the successions of occurrences.” (Cobb 2003:30). Because God prehends all of the experiences of the world, God experiences of the world are macroscopic. However, while “God is an instance of process” most Process-Relational theists maintain that “God is an instance that is quite distinct from the instances that make up the world.” (Cobb 2003:29). Although Process-Relational theology contends that God enhances the freedom of the entities in the world, the notion that the world contributes to the divine life is of equal importance. According to Process-Relational theists, Whitehead’s conception of the God-world relation is “completed in an understanding of how all creatures contribute to the divine life” (Mesle 1993:145). Process-Relational theists affirm that “God is entire and whole” (Cobb 2003:30) but argue that “to be entire and whole constantly involves the inclusion of a changing whole” (Cobb 2003:31). God must include the becoming of the world within God’s own experience in order for God

¹⁰⁷ At the very least, the world would otherwise be deterministic, if not entirely static.

¹⁰⁸ The phrase “realizing value” is part of the Whiteheadian aesthetic tradition. For Whitehead, as the world increases in complexity and creativity, more beauty (an aesthetic value) is realized.

to be whole. Thus Cobb (2003:31) concludes that “in a truly changing world, a God who did not include new events would not be complete”. Accordingly, God is “affected by the world and therefore is continually incorporating what happens” in the world (Cobb 2003:33) into God’s own experience. Further, Cobb (2003:33) notes that for Whitehead, God is a single, everlasting concrescence, continually new prehensions of the world are incorporated in the ever-enlarging satisfaction, but there is no ‘change’”. In other words, God does not change with the changing of the world, God simply becomes. Therefore, Process-Relational theists can affirm the notion that “God is indeed perfect and complete” (Cobb 2003:34) because God perfectly participates in and experiences the unfolding of the world.

6.5.2 Process-Relational Concursus and Divine Interaction with Humanity

According to a Process-Relational interpretation of the God-world relationship, there exists strong theological reasons for the analogy between the “human and divine agent and thus between human and divine agency” (Clayton 1997:258). Therefore, if human consciousness can lead to physical changes in the world, God must also be able to persuasively act in the world. Further, Hartshorne suggests that “the relation of God and the world” should be conceived in terms of “the psyche or soul to the body, or the most particularly to the brain” (Mesle 1993:137). The ways in which God interacts with human creatures and the ways in which human creatures interact with the world serve to illustrate *concursus* from a Process-Relational perspective. Thus, because “God cares deeply for every creature and interacts with all creatures” (Cobb 2003:81), Process-Relational theists can affirm that “clearly there is interaction between God and human beings.

Divine immanence is essential to the Process-Relational understanding of *concursus*. Human beings are simply societies of actual entities like all other societies of actual entities in the world. God participates in the process of the prehension of new possibilities for each actual occasion in human beings like God participates in the prehension of new possibilities for all other entities in the world. In fact, “a succession of actual entities” is precisely how Whitehead defines

a “living person” (Cobb 2003:14). Therefore, “the language of I-Thou suggests an over-againstness or externality that is inadequate and misleading” (Cobb 2003:12). For Process-Relational theists, God is not “outside” of the human person but an intrinsic part of the reality that constitutes the human person moment by moment as each new occasion of experience is realized. Thus human beings can affirm that notion that “we participate in constituting the very being of one another and the divine reality participates in constituting our being as we participate in the constituting of the divine reality. We are quite literally in God, and God is quite literally in us” (Cobb 2003:13).

Among Process-Relational theologians, Cobb in particular emphasizes the Christian and biblical basis for the God-human relations as conceived by Process-Relational theology. Cobb argues that “if one reads the bible in any straightforward way, creaturely events have an impact on God that is already not predetermined” (Cobb 2003:31). Affirming the biblical notion of interrelatedness, Cobb notes that “Paul himself says of human beings that we are members one of another and jointly members of the body of Christ. We are in Christ and Christ is in us. The Holy Spirit is also found within” (Cobb 2003:13). Further, Cobb contends that “the mutual immanence of all things only makes the personal character of relationships deeper, more inextricable” (Cobb 2003:13). The notion that God interacts with human beings persuasively rather than coercively provides Process-Relational theists the platform to assert that it is “far better to emphasize God’s love and God’s desire that we love one another” (Cobb 2003:11).

6.5.3 Process-Relational Concursus and the Divine Lure

Arguing that God acts persuasively rather than coercively in relation to the world and human beings, Process-Relational theists struggle to identify and explain the physical mechanisms by which such actions occur. God has a primordial nature, which is “God’s knowledge of all possibilities” (Mesle 1993:50). Most Process-Relational theologians agree with Whitehead that “possibilities are eternal; they are more or less relevant and they may or may not be actualized in any given moment” (Mesle 1993:50). It is by means of ordering pure possibilities that God

presents an initial and ultimately a subjective aim for all occasions. Possibilities are eternal because “what is or will be possible always was possible” (Mesle 1993:50). In God’s interaction with possibilities and actualities, “there is a gradual process of inclusion of all that happens in the created order” that does not, however, “change the form of God” (Cobb 2003:32). That is to say that “change in process thought applies to the difference between successive occasions. In the concrescence of a single occasion there is becoming, but not change” (Cobb 2003:33). Further, God “eternally and unchangeably” knows all that constitutes “the infinite realm of possibility” (Mesle 1993:50). Prehension of possibilities or the aims of God for each occasion are part of what occurs in creating the future moment to moment in Process-Relational thought. The means by which God communicates or presents the data as a “divine lure” and the means by which each entity feels or perceives the data is regarded in Process-Relational theology as largely speculative. Griffin (2003:32) notes that “every finite actual entity receives an initial aim from God, being thus evoked into existence by prevenient grace.” Thus, “God never confronts any finite actualities that were not themselves called into existence by a prior exercise of the evocative power of God.”

Process-Relational theists insist that actual occasions should not be conceived in terms of agents who exist prior to the action of prehending the past and prehending possibilities for the future. Actual occasions do not exist prior to prehending, they become in the process of prehending. Therefore, data from the past and data from the divine lure of God are not mere passive data waiting to be processed by something that exists already. Rather, each cohesively contributes to the becoming of the actual occasion in each moment of experience (Cobb 2008:35). Further, Process-Relational theists maintain that while there is objective data that each actual occasion feels or prehends, there is a “subjective form” that constitutes how the data is felt. For human beings, the subjective form is consciousness (Cobb 2008:34). Korsmeyer (1976:155) describes the process of the divine lure in classical terms of “revelation” as follows:

Insofar as each creature’s final subjective aim is in accord with God’s aim there is a resonance in which the effect of God’s presence is

maximized. This phenomenon, I suggest, may be consciously felt as God's initiative. When one responds to it, an interpersonal communion is formed, which we call revelation.

However, divine revelation should not be confused with divine lure. For Process-Relational theists, the divine lure is not merely a matter of the transmission of information. Ford (1978) maintains that "God works by divine persuasion by providing those lures toward which we can aspire". The divine lure is not only the presentation of possibilities for each new occasion, but the exercise of God's persuasive power to influence the outcome each occasion as well. Further, Ford (1978) contends that "freedom is responsibly exercised in the light of future possibilities, which become lures insofar as they are valued".

Cobb (2003:100) notes that "Whitehead tells us that in every moment we are being directed, called, or lured by God to that self-actualization that is best for that moment and also for future occasions in our own personal life and in the lives of other creatures, human and non-human." Therefore, God's persuasion is not an imposition of the divine will on the creatures, but a lure that leads to the creature's most viable self-actualization. Hasker (2003:228) defines God's actions in terms of two categories: actions of personal influence and actions of control of nature. Regardless of how God's actions are conceived, the Christian God is "known first and foremost as an agent, one who is active in the world and in human life." According to Process-Relational theology, "the acts of personal influence are fairly readily accommodated by God's provision of the initial aim for each of the occasions of experience that serially make up a person's life" (Hasker 2003:229). Further, Pittinger (1989) notes that "what begins as the initial aim given by God in our very existence can be adopted as our own aim, and toward its achievement we may strive" (Pittinger 1989). Thus Pittinger frames the lure of God in terms of providence as "above all, God is there, with the lures that augment this striving; in religious language, God's grace is working toward us, in us, for us, and with us". Ultimately, however, Process-Theists affirm the notion that "people and other creatures have the freedom to reject or distort the divine lure, choosing the worse rather than the better" (Neville 1998:22).

In *Process and Reality* (1929), Whitehead mentions the notion of a “superjective” nature of God. However, the notion of the superjective nature is not a broadly agreed upon topic among Process-Relational theists. The superjective nature may relate to the divine lure, but Process-Relational theists differ in their interpretations of Whitehead. Whitehead (1929:135) states that “the ‘superjective’ nature of God is the character of the pragmatic value of his specific satisfaction qualifying the transcendent creativity in the various temporal instances”. Further, Whitehead briefly states that the superjective nature is “the particular providence for particular occasions”, but notes that “what is done in the world is transformed into a reality in heaven, and the reality in heaven passes back into the world” (Whitehead 1929:532). The notion of “particular providence for particular occasions” has led some Process-Relational theists to interpret Whitehead in terms of God communicating specific details about daily decision-making to individual human beings. Hasker (2003:244) argues that although Process-Relational theists maintain that God is “constantly communicating to all beings [God’s] divine will for them, in the form of the ‘initial aim’ for each occasion of experience”, the way in which God actually communicates to human beings is questionable. Griffin (2003:4), however, notes that prehension is “nonsensory” in that the prehension of past events or of the possibilities offered by God should not be understood in the same way as sense data.

However, the idea of the superjective nature notion is debated heatedly. Mellert (1975) interpreted Whitehead’s idea of the superjective nature to mean that God “passes back to the world not only the stubborn facts of history, but a sense of what perfected actuality might have been”. Middleton (1993:225) argues that God “positively or negatively prehends the actions of men and women, taking perfected actuality and ‘throwing it back,’ through the divine superjective character, into the world in order to evoke new creative responses on the part of men and women”. Lansing (1973:145) notes that Whitehead’s use of the expression, “passes back” must imply “that the satisfaction of God is objectified at least partly in terms of his physical feelings of the world”. Moreover, Lansing (1973:146) concludes that “Whitehead’s precise understanding of the superjective

nature is unclear and ambiguous at best". Finally, Lansing (1973:151) summarizes the superjective nature by noting:

Since the giving of the initial aim is a result of both God's primordial envisagement of the multiplicity of eternal objects and his prehensions of the temporal world, it can properly be said to be an aspect of, if not the entirety of, God's superjective character. It [the superjective nature] is God's immanence, God's conditioning of the world. The superjective nature, then, is not a distinct part of God. Instead, it is the objective side of the combined functions of the primordial and consequent natures.

By acting superjectively, God conceptually "offers as a lure to each actual entity as it arises that subjective aim the completion of which, in that entity's own concrescence, would create the kind of ordered, complex world that, when prehended by God, would result in maximum intensity of satisfaction" (Sherburne 1966:227). However, in an article in *Process Studies*, Sherburne (1986) concludes that it is difficult to find any actual evidence that the superjective nature of God exists or that God in any way reciprocates interaction with the world. Sherburne argues that naturalism was the only rational conclusion as to how the world actually works. Ultimately, the details concerning the actual functioning of the superjective nature of God is ambiguous and unclear from Whitehead's own works. Nevertheless, what Process-Relational theologians such as Ford (1978) have provided is the theological and biblical basis to affirm the fact that God acts persuasively by means of a divine lure, but the details of how that lure is actually exercised in reality, especially in the macro-sense of human persons remains to be fully developed.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter, comprised a survey of the notion of *concurrency* from a Process-Relational perspective. Issues such as divine action and the nature of divine power were explored to formulate a broad understanding of *concurrency* in Process-

Relational theology. Process-Relational pneumatology was also investigated.¹⁰⁹ Process-Relational theology makes great strides in bridging the gap between a scientific worldview and a theistic worldview, especially in terms of conceiving how divine action and divine-human interaction can be possible. As Altizer (1977:15) notes of John Cobb and the Process-Relational theologians,¹¹⁰ “in opposing the dominant currents of the modern world, Cobb does not call us back to a pre-modern outlook. There is no possibility of making such a return with integrity, for there is much in the modern world that must be affirmed, and much of this undercuts the traditional metaphysical outlooks and the theologies based upon them.” Process-Relational theists do not attempt to combat scientific assertions with theistic assertions, but instead attempt to reconcile the reality of God with the data of science.

The first section of this chapter emphasized that although determinism plays a role in affecting the current state of all of reality, there always exists an element of freedom or indeterminacy for all actual occasions. The idea that all actual occasions are inextricably linked and interrelated was explored. The prehension of both past experiences and possibilities presented by God for each new occasion was presented as significant aspect of the Process-Relational understanding of the constitution of reality. Insofar as God presents possibilities to all occasions, Process-Relational theists maintain that God acts by persuasion alone and enables the freedom of all entities in the world. For human beings, the immediate past both creates and limits human options for each new moment of experience. The section included an exploration of Process-Relational pneumatology. The Holy Spirit, as the primary means by which human beings experience God, is immanently accessible according to Process-Relational theology. The Holy Spirit, in the Process-Relational conception of pneumatology, influences the affective

¹⁰⁹ The survey of pneumatology in the Process-Relational tradition is the logical connector between Process-Relational theology and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology.

¹¹⁰ This is a primary source; Altizer was speaking about Cobb and Cobb’s role in modern theology.

side of human life. Though Reynolds and other Process-Relational theists view the doctrine of the trinity as a means by which divine relatedness can be expressed, it was noted at the end of the first section that trinitarianism is not an essential aspect of Process-Relational theology.¹¹¹ In section three, the notion that the power of God is inherently interconnected with the power of the world was emphasized. The Process-Relational position that God's only means by which to act in the world is through persuasion rather than coercion was explored extensively. The Open-Evangelical position of persuasion as the primary means of divine action, but not the only means, was briefly mentioned. In section four, God's love, as articulated by Process-Relational theists, was presented as God's desire to enrich creaturely freedom, thereby enriching God's own experiences of the world. That is to say that God genuinely cares about what happens in the world because what happens in the world genuinely affects God. Section five consisted of a survey of *concursum* in Process-Relational terms. According to Process-Relational theology, God not only sustains the world, but God is part of the world and the world is in God. The notion of mutual immanence was briefly explored as a means by which novelty and dynamism are realized both for the world and for God. Process-Relational theists emphasize that God is quite literally "in" humanity and humanity is quite literally "in" God. God lures human beings, and all entities in the world for that matter, to realize value in each occasion through the divine lure. The divine lure is not only the presentation of possibilities by God, but the persuasion of God to influence occasions of experience. Finally, the notion of the superjective nature of God was surveyed; it remains somewhat ambiguous and there is no uniform agreement among Process-Relational theists in

¹¹¹ Such doctrinal rejections (or oversights) in Process-Relational theology may imply that the Process-Relational theists begin with a philosophical notion of God and attempt to fit the biblical witnesses in terms of their particular philosophy. Most Process-Relational theists would not argue that point. In fact, they highly value philosophical coherence over strict Biblicism. In fact, many Process-Relational theists question the veracity of the biblical witness insofar as God as portrayed as "Almighty" or omnipotent because it does not correlate with their philosophical constructs.

this regard. Nevertheless, conceptions of the superjective nature of God encapsulate essential concepts of Process-Relational *concursum*, such as the influence and persuasion of God in dynamic interaction with the world.

For Process-Relational theists, there is a mutual reciprocity and a mutual immanence between God and the world and God and humanity. God acts upon and within beings; human beings address God, God is affected by what they have to say” (Cobb 2003:78-79). As Cobb (2003:33) contends on behalf of the Process-Relational community, “our claim is that God cares about what happens in the world and is responsive to us”. Thus it can be concluded that the God of Process-Relational theology cares about human concerns and acts in the world in response to such concerns. Ultimately, the Process-Relational perspective of *concursum*, the divine-human relationship, can be summarized simply as “where we are, God is there too” or “God is in us and we are in God” (Cobb 2003:13).¹¹²



¹¹² Of course, those outside the Process-Relational tradition would question this notion, especially in terms of evil. The question may be asked: If human beings are committing evil acts (such as murder), is God there? Process-Relational theists would answer in the affirmative, and they would suggest that God is suffering with the victim and possibly, suffering with the perpetrator. Nevertheless, Process-Relational theists would also insist that the murder was not God’s will; instead, they would argue that God was powerless to stop the action from occurring.

CHAPTER 7: A Critical Comparison of *Concursus* in Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational Theologies

7.1 Introduction

Both philosophically-oriented Process-Relational theology and operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology trace their most immediate roots to the early twentieth century, a time of intense scientific progress and technological advance. However, both Process-Relational theists and Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents also share common, deeper roots in the Age of Enlightenment,¹¹³ a period of dramatic socio-religious change in the West. In fact, the development of Process-Relational theology in the academy and the emergence of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements among the laity can both be framed as delayed reactions to the ideals of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was a time of philosophical revolution and religious upheaval, a time in which humanity declared that “man has the ability to find the truth by the use of his senses and reason” (Shelley 1995:314). While optimism toward human nature grew in light of scientific and social progress, skepticism of religion and religious authority grew in equal measure. The Age of Enlightenment gave birth to the ideals of modernism, whose proponents came to value scientific observation and almost simultaneously devalue religious revelation. During this period of religious crisis in the West, two types of reactions emerged: a rational tradition which tried to “harmonize reason and faith” and more radical reactions which sought to eliminate either faith or reason entirely (Shelley 1995:315). Both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology can be seen as twentieth century reactions to the lingering ideals of the Enlightenment in modernity; the former as a radical rejection of reason and science and the latter as an attempt to harmonize reason and faith. Both traditions rejected the deceptive ideals of modernism, albeit in

¹¹³ Primarily in the seventeenth century in Europe and North America.

very different ways. Nevertheless, it is through a common distrust of modernism that the basis for comparison between the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology can be established.

A period known as “The Great Awakening” followed the Enlightenment in North America. The Great Awakening was a time of religious renewal in which the traditions of evangelicalism and Wesleyanism emerged, with John Wesley as one of the Great Awakening’s principal progenitors (Shelley 1995:334). The period of the Great Awakening gave birth to the pietistic movements, including Methodism. However, pietism in itself was a Romanticist reaction, or perhaps even a retreat, from the relentless advance of modernism on Western culture. For Wesley and the pietists, private faith and private religious experience provide direct access to God that did not require scientific or empirical validation. It is from the pietist movements that Pentecostalism emerged in the twentieth century and, incidentally, theologians in the Wesleyan tradition came to find affinity with Process-Relational theology. Again, the two movements share common roots. As Altizer (1977) noted, “pietism was the real source of post-Enlightenment Christian theology” (Altizer 1977:3) because it renewed interest in religion and instigated new religious movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As Cobb (2003:99) notes “just at the time that intellectuals reject experience as a source of knowledge, and especially of religious knowledge, widespread interest in spirituality has arisen in culture.”

Nevertheless, if a comparison of Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology are to be framed in the context of modernist reactions, the ideals of modernism must be delineated. Ultimately, a “modernist worldview” emerged that came to largely dominate culture in the West by the early twentieth century. South African missiologist David Bosch (1991:264-267) outlines seven major elements of modernism. Modernism, according to Bosch, is characterized by the following features:

- Reason is considered to be supreme. The Cartesian primacy of thought over being is maintained.

- Reality is considered to be dualistic. The subject-object dichotomy was maintained.
- Causality is mechanistic. Everything was considered to be governed by the laws of cause and effect.
- Progress is considered to be inevitable. Imperatively, human knowledge is understood to continuously to increase.
- Science is considered to be neutral. Knowledge obtained via the scientific method is seen as factual and value-free.
- Problems are considered to be solvable. All problems are, in principle, thereby solvable.

People were understood as self-sufficient. Autonomy and individuality were supreme.

In the modernist worldview, reality is understood as reducible, atomic, and mechanistic. An analysis of the parts rather than the whole is the chief task of objective scientific inquiry (Bosch 1991:264-267). Throughout the burgeoning modern era of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, both scientists and theologians struggled with the question of God's relation to the world and ultimately to humankind. While the world was being understood in more and more deterministic, reductionistic, and atomistic terms, theologians struggled to understand the role of God in culture. While deism became a popular solution for philosophers such as Voltaire (Shelley 1995:316), other philosophers, especially the idealists, sought to understand how God could be understood to act in terms of scientific and rationalistic parameters.

The theological dilemma of *concursum*, the way in which God and human beings interact, was debated throughout the course of modern development. Beginning with Hume's scrutiny of causation at the earliest stages of the Enlightenment, philosophers sought to understand the mechanisms of nature and ultimately of humankind; and, if possible, of God as well. The role of Immanuel Kant in the development of the modernist worldview and the modernist perception of

concurus is significant. Kant maintained that “substances”, a conceptualization of empirical experience, cannot be in union with God as *concausae* (cooperative causes) because they are only a subordination of causes; that is, substances are grounded in God as *prima causa* (first cause). Kant insisted that matter was created by God and for that reason there could be no *concurus* between God and the world. Kant also suggested that natural events have no *concurus* because their *prima causa* was purely natural (Robinson 2009). In so doing, Kant reinforced the modernist notions of dualism, the subject-object distinction, and causality.

Thus within modernism, divine action generally came to be understood not only in terms of God as the first cause, but if any genuine *concurus* were to occur in the world, then God would act as an agency in interaction with the agency of the second cause. The idea of God as either initiating the first cause or interacting with secondary causes in the world established the modernism notion of contradictory dualism between God and the world, reinforcing the idea that if God acts, God must disrupt normal causal mechanisms. In the twentieth century, Barth expressed concern about this notion of *concurus*, arguing that it reduced God to a “cog in the universal machine rather than its master”. Such an error, according to Barth, “deprived God of the power over the system that is needed to save. Such a God merely fulfills the metaphysically ordained divine function” (Bowman 2006:13). However, Barth defended the notion of the transcendence and otherness of God, thereby reinforcing the notion of the world’s alienation from God and embracing the modernist ideals of dualism and subject-object distinction between God and the world.

By the middle of the twentieth century, philosophers and theologians began to question the ideals of modernism, especially in relation to human volition. Essentially two possibilities became dominant explanations for the causal mechanisms in the human being: either “upward determinism”, based largely on a reductionist understanding of physical causality, or “downward causation” which implies that the human mind, the human spirit, or even God could somehow affect the otherwise naturalistic and deterministic system of the physical body. Consequently, the debate concerning *concurus* came to focus on the question

whether or not “downward causation” could coexist with “upward determinism”; that is, is it possible for that which is metaphysical or immaterial to have the capacity to influence “that which sustains its very existence”, physical matter (Murphy 1996:25). Such questions provided new, substantial information for framing the question of *concurus* and renewed the possibility of God interacting with human beings. With new scientific discoveries that weakened the modernist ideals of causal predictability of the quantum world, the inadequacies of modernism were questioned, and Western culture began to shift in a new, post-modern direction that opened new possibilities for understanding *concurus*.

Postmodernism opened new possibilities of understanding the ways in which God works in the world for both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. While both traditions were largely reactions to the ideals of modernism, both traditions also found their own understanding of *concurus* compatible in many ways with postmodernism. According to Bosch (1991:350-362), postmodernism tends to be more holistic in its outlook and values subjectivity and experience. Bosch articulates seven corollary characteristics of postmodernism in juxtaposition with the ideals of modernism:

- Reason includes non-rational and spiritual dimensions. Metaphors and symbols are valued.
- Reality is holistic and interdependent, not limited to subject-object classifications.
- Contingency and teleology are possibilities rather than merely linear causality and control.
- Failure is possible. Human knowledge can be flawed and progress can be impeded.
- Knowledge is fiduciary in nature; facts can be no more than interpretations of data.
- Optimism is chastened in the face of socio-scientific complexity and the reality of evil.
- Cooperation and community are valued as expressions of interdependence.

A cultural shift toward postmodernism led to revised epistemology and reformed notions of scientific inquiry; such changes provide an opportunity for a new platform upon which *concurus* could be conceived, for both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. Lederle (1994) argues that the postmodernist shift in Western culture may aid the theological advancement of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements (Lederle 1994:25) by providing a less hostile environment in which their experiential claims can be debated. In like manner, Altizer (1977) warns that “even pietistic theology [had] become impossible in the second half of the twentieth century” (Altizer 1977:3); that is to say, a retreat from modernity became a less viable option. In postmodernism, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents no longer need to hide behind piety and Process-Relational theists no longer had to fear being chastised for metaphysical speculation.

Thus, in the postmodern context, *concurus* from both a Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective and a Process-Relational perspective can be compared, contrasted, and evaluated for compatibilities. The purpose of such a comparison is to not only to identify the many differences that separate the two traditions, but to identify similarities, points of contact, that may ultimately serve to enhance both traditions in mutually beneficial ways. Pinnock (1996:171) concludes that while the “problem of Christians who are experientially deficient, who do not know the Spirit’s power” persists in the post-modern era, “no group knows better how to confront the problem of non-realization” in relation to the Spirit than the adherents of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. In similar manner, Cobb (1990:1) contends that Pentecostalism requires an adequate philosophical explanation for its claims, a “transformation of Pentecostal teaching that maintains its health and renders it sustainable.” Should such similarities leverage differences in the following comparison (of the operational conceptions of *concurus* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements with the philosophical conceptions of *concurus* in Process-Relational theology), sufficient commonality may clarify and inform the shared experience of *concurus* in both traditions. Therefore, both traditions may benefit from understanding *concurus* on the terms of the other.

Such understanding may sufficiently illuminate the “unalterable experience that gains expression in changing language” (Cobb 2003:58), the experience of God interacting with humankind.

This chapter includes two major sections followed by a conclusion. The first section includes documentation of significant differences between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concurus*. Differences are documented and analyzed in four major subsections followed by a summary. In like manner, the second section entails a documentation of similarities between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concurus*. Similarities are documented and synthesized in five major subsections followed by a summary. The conclusion at the end of the chapter represents a qualitative test of the hypothesis of this doctoral thesis: Does the literature support compatibilities between the operational Pentecostal-Charismatic and philosophical Process-Relational conceptions of *concurus*? The final section consists of a conclusion as to whether of similarities allow for sufficient leverage to support the possibility of overcoming differences between the two traditions.

7.2 Differences

This section focuses on an analytical comparison of a Process-Relational understanding *concurus* and a Process-Relational understanding of *concurus by documenting differences in the literature*. There are several significant differences between Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* and Process-Relational *concurus*, most foremost of which is that Process-Relational theology is primarily philosophical in nature whereas Pentecostal Charismatic theology is primarily operational in nature.¹¹⁴ Process-Relational theology is based on a comprehensive,

¹¹⁴ I demonstrated the basis for operational vs. philosophical theology in chapters 2 and 3. The differences between operational *concurus* and philosophical *concurus* are documented in chapters 5 and 6. While Process-Relational theology also has ideas and these ideas are influential, and in that sense “operational”, they are operationalized from the basis of philosophical constructs. Pentecostal-Charismatic theology is not operationalization of official dogma (see footnote 3), but applied theology derived primarily from experience.

broadly developed metaphysical system. Pentecostal-Charismatic movements derive their operational theology¹¹⁵ primarily from a literal reading of scripture and consequent reenactment of the experiences described in the New Testament. Process-Relational theology, by contrast, is based largely on rational, philosophical, and scientific constructs. That is, a Process-Relational theology of *concursum* is primarily conceptual but a Pentecostal-Charismatic theology of *concursum* is primarily biblical.¹¹⁶ Such differences mark the fundamental distinctions between the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. However, several specific issues related to *concursum* are outlined in this section.

In the subsections below, specific issues are investigated and differences between Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* and Process-Relational *concursum* are described based on literature from both traditions. The first subsection describes the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements as primarily fundamentalist in orientation while the Process-Relational theological tradition is primarily liberal in orientation.¹¹⁷ The second subsection describes the Pentecostal-Charismatic conception of *concursum* as primarily supernatural in orientation versus the Process-Relational conception of *concursum* in terms of metaphysical naturalism. The third subsection denotes the exclusivity of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology and spiritual experiences as compared to the universal nature of

¹¹⁵ Again, I do not want the term “operational” to be confused. This is not merely an operationalization of official Pentecostal-Charismatic doctrinal statements, but the way in which Pentecostal-Charismatic theology is lived out by its adherents in day to day experiences.

¹¹⁶ Although “biblical” tends to be an oversimplification, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents claim that their theology is derived from a literal reading of the biblical text. Process-Relational theists would not make that assertion. While both traditions claim at least some faithfulness to the bible, the difference can also be understood in terms of philosophical Process-Relational theology being well articulated and conceptualized while operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology remains pre-reflective and cannot be derived from the official teaching of Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations.

¹¹⁷ I recognize that this maybe an overgeneralization, but the diversity of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements is vast. As a whole, the movements certainly tend toward fundamentalism more than liberalism.

Process-Relational pneumatology. Finally, the fourth section involves a description of reactive versus implicit¹¹⁸ *concurus* as related to the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions respectively. Subsection four reflects original work, derived from the analytical comparison. The section concludes with a summary and synthesis of the findings in the preceding subsections.

7.2.1 Fundamentalism vs. Liberalism

While Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology share an historical reaction against modernism and a general affinity toward postmodernism, the manner by which both traditions respond to modernism mark a significant difference between them. Process-Relational theology does not seek to entirely displace rationalism or empirical scientific inquiry; instead, it seeks to find ways to give such modern ideals religious expression. Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, by contrast, are grounded in a pervasive distrust of rationalism, scientific progress, and intellectualism. According to Lederle (1994), the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have brought deep changes in attitude regarding the human perceptions of reality, challenging the “contemporary idolatries of rationalism, naturalism, and individualism” (Lederle 199:24). Process-Relational theology, on the other hand, became situated in Liberal Protestant traditions and the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements aligned with religious fundamentalism. Lawrence (1995) identifies the characteristics of religious fundamentalism as a general aversion to modernism and secularism, the distrust of Enlightenment values and institutions, and contempt for all outsiders.¹¹⁹ The fundamentalist nature of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements sets their

¹¹⁸ The concept of “implicit *concurus*” is defined later in this chapter.

¹¹⁹ It is important to note an exception. Walker (1989) notes that “ancient African and traditional African resources have determined that black theology would appropriate Christian revelations in ways that do not entail extreme fundamentalist claims to exclusivist particularity” (Walker 1989:257). This matter will be dealt with in greater detail in Section 7.3 on “Similarities”.

response to modernity in stark contrast with the mythological response of Process-Relational theology.

There exists within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements a “deep antipathy to critical rationality applied to theology” (Olson 2006:29). Pentecostal author Nañez (2005) concedes that there exists within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements a deeply-rooted tradition of anti-intellectualism, a tradition that had lasting effects on the theology and practice of adherents. Such anti-intellectualism and pietistic fundamentalism is largely incompatible with the approach taken by Process-Relational theists, who sought instead to confront the claims of modernity directly and construct a rationally cohesive metaphysical and naturalistically viable form of theism. Pentecostals and Charismatics established their movements on “pragmatism, experientialism, emotionalism, romanticism, individualism, and anti-intellectualism” (Nañez 2005:97). As Pinnock notes, the “Spirit was not primarily an intellectual belief for early believers, but a dynamic fact of experience” (Pinnock 2006:166). Further, while Pentecostals and Charismatics seek to understand *concursum* in purely biblical terms through a rediscovery of the apostolic experience, Process-Relational theists seek a scientifically viable explanation for divine action and divine-human interaction.

7.2.2 Supernaturalism vs. Metaphysical Naturalism

An overemphasis on supernaturalism characterizes the understanding of *concursum* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements while an emphasis on naturalism is a characteristic of *concursum* in the Process-Relational theology. Nañez (2005) identifies some supernatural emphases of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements that reinforce anti-intellectualism as follows: the idea of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a “cure all”, the expression of “verbal gifts” that bypass the intellect, the doctrine of the “rapture” as escapism, the doctrine of sanctification that encourages rebuke of the world as inherently evil, and “altar theology” that reinforces a notion instantaneous blessing or power (Nañez 2005:117-125). For Pentecostals and Charismatics, God interacts with humanity by “breaking through” natural barriers through supernatural means. Further, supernatural

activity in the world is relegated to the activity of the Holy Spirit. Thus, a supernatural pneumatological emphasis exists within the operational theology of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. However, Pentecostal observer Lederle (1994) warns that a comprehensive Pentecostal-Charismatic theology must avoid an “overinflated pneumatology which seeks to explain everything from a supernatural perspective” (Lederle 1994:23). By and large, the Pentecostal-Charismatic agenda challenges the “mindset of secular modernity” (Lederle 1994:23).

Williams (1996) believes that the Great Commission, to preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations, cannot be “fulfilled through human strength and power” (Williams 1996:141). The apostolic task, which continues to the present time, would have been impossible without “power from on high” (Williams 1996:142). Williams argues that there was “utterly no way the apostles could have proceeded without the spiritual investment of power” which came immediately and transcendentally on the day of Pentecost (Williams 1996:142). The power of the Holy Spirit, Williams contends, is a gift from God and an “ongoing promise to believers of all generations”. While Williams believes that the church has some power without the Pentecostal experience, he argued that “the outpouring of the Spirit, which is possible for all believers, can endow the church with additional supernatural power” (Williams 1996:143). Further, Williams concludes that the work of the church should be “accompanied by spiritual manifestations: miracles, signs, and wonders” (Williams 1996:146), all of which speak of supernatural disruptions of the natural world.

Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* is defined primarily in supernatural terms, that is, in the expectation of miracles and supernatural manifestations. A supernatural understanding of *concursum*, or an understanding of *concursum* in supernatural terms, especially that which characterizes the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, supposes that God “elevates creatures to a way of acting to which their nature with its faculties is inadequately proportioned, although it may be raised to the same by a special divine operation” (Boedder 1902:1). According to a supernatural notion of *concursum*, God concurs supernaturally with the creatures

and “makes use of them as ministerial or instrumental causes for the extraordinary divine operation known by the name of miracle” (Boedder 1902:1). Culpepper notes that Pentecostals and Charismatics often place disproportionate emphasis on the “bizarre, unusual, the dramatically miraculous elements, as if power is to be identified with these and these alone” (Culpepper 1977:75). For Pentecostals and Charismatics, the ability of human beings to work signs and wonders is intrinsically linked with the power of the Holy Spirit. Williams (1996) argues that “there is a vital connection: if the church truly operates in the power of the Spirit, there should be supernatural manifestations” (Williams 1996:149). Further, Williams asserts that as Pentecostals and Charismatics work miracles on earth, it is not their own doing but “God’s doing as God works through human beings” (Williams 1996:151). Such notions of supernaturalism that conceive of God intervening to empower and work through human beings form the primary characteristic of *concursum* in Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.

However, according to Olson (2006), the statistics of miracles presented by Pentecostal-Charismatic evangelists and faith healers are “inflated and stories of healings exaggerated if not invented” (Olson 2006:28). Similarly, “overemphasizing the power of the Spirit often leads to bitter disappointment and disillusionment when that power is not evidently and immediately manifested” (Anderson 2004:198). Culpepper argues that the Pentecostal-Charismatic tendency to assume that certain gifts provide evidence of divine power is a false assumption (Culpepper 1977:87). In like manner, Menzies (2000) argues that “giftedness is not necessarily linked to spiritual maturity”, a principle that “serves as a warning against being too awed by displays of spiritual power. Spiritual gifts are not necessarily a mark of spiritual leadership” (Menzies 2000:181). Further, Macchia (2002) acknowledges that “pneumatology must not be confined to the realm of the miraculous but must also be expanded to include God’s providential work through natural processes and efforts” (Macchia 2002:1136). Therefore, while Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have over-emphasized the miraculous and unusual, Pentecostal scholars recognize that their pneumatology and consequently, their notion of *concursum*, must be broader in scope. As Mesle

(1993) notes, the idea that “unless belief in God justifies expectation of divine intervention, such belief can make no difference” is a false assumption (Mesle 1993:137).

While Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* is typically characterized in supernatural terms, Hollenweger (2002) argues that it has never been adequately established that the bible separated reality into natural and supernatural realm; these categories, Hollenweger concludes, are largely due to Thomistic influences on Western theology (Hollenweger 2002:668). Hollenweger (2002:668) concludes that if human conventions such as the “laws of nature” are subject to change because of new scientific discoveries, so too should theology be malleable in terms of the historical dichotomy between “natural” and “supernatural” realities. Hollenweger (2002:667) argues that “*glossolalia* and other gifts of the Spirit have been demonstrated to be human abilities”, “natural gifts that many human beings may possess.” However, Hollenweger concludes, when natural gifts are functionally coordinated, make the proclamation that “God is here” (Hollengweger 2002:667).

Process-Relational *concurus*, on the other hand, is characterized by metaphysical naturalism instead of supernaturalism. Metaphysical naturalism, in terms of Process-Relational philosophy, is an ontological perspective in which all of reality is observable in emperical, naturalistic terms, but is a metaphysically based. Metaphysical naturalism, in contrast with supernaturalism, rejects the possibility of any external intervention to disrupt natural causes. Metaphysical naturalism is monistic rather than dualistic. While metaphysical naturalism proper typically represents a rejection of the possibility of the existence of mind or spirit independent of matter, Proces-Relational metaphysical naturalism is an affirmation of the possibility of mind because it is not dualistic: there are no substances, only events, rending dualism disputable. In Process-Relational pneumatology, the Spirit is not conceived in supernatural or miraculous terms wherein individuals are overwhelmed or filled in depersonalized ways; on the contrary, Process-Relational theology understands the Spirit in terms of enabling the full potential of human beings to act in the world. According to Bowman

(2006), a Process-Relational theist, “the brand of evangelical popular piety often on display in Christian media-television, popular music, and packaged revivals-focuses headily on praise of divine power majesty is hard not to conclude that such replays, however sincere and well intentioned, frequently serve the purpose of congratulating the worshiper in being a subject of the most powerful monarch, or, to put it another way, on backing the winning team” (Bowman 2006:12). Process-Relational theists are emphatic in their view that “God has no supernatural power to coerce the world” (Mesle 1993:64).

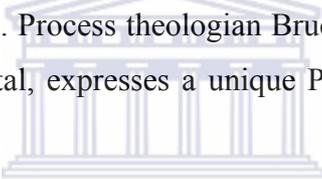
Process-Relational theists argue that a “careless theology of miracles can be cruelly unkind” (Mesle 1993:118). Thus, while Process-Relational theists believe that “miracles” are possible, they do not define miracles in supernatural terms. Among Process-Relational theists, John B. Cobb, Jr. developed the most comprehensive natural theology.¹²⁰ Cobb argues that when confronted with the realities of naturalism, Christians began to interpret miracles “from being astounding occurrences to being ones that violated the laws of nature” (Cobb 2003:14). Pentecostals and Charismatics, for example, came to understand miracles as a “unilateral intervention by God, setting aside the laws of nature and acting in a way that conflicted with them” (Cobb 2003:15). However, Cobb argues that with advancements such as “the new physics” and post-modernism caused the scientific world to reconsider the deterministic presuppositions of the natural world. Such considerations provide the basis upon which Cobb argues that so-called “natural laws” are simply statistical averages, that is, the laws appear to be stable and predictable because they reliably produce consistent results. Thus, Cobb proposes that “instead of absolute imposed laws, laws are now statistical averages” (Cobb 2003:15).¹²¹ Miracles, or events that occur out of the ordinary, are possible in Process-Relational theology, but what seems to be a miracle

¹²⁰ Cobb’s book is entitled, *A Christian Natural Theology*.

¹²¹ Cobb contends that because the universe is comprised of such a vast number of individual entities, the likelihood that they will remain statistically consistent is very high.

“might as well be a violation of a law, but in fact it simply demonstrates the statistical nature of the law” (Cobb 2003:15). That is, if something unusual occurs, instead of immediately identifying it as a supernatural miracle, it should instead be identified as a statistical variation of otherwise considerably stable natural laws. For Mesle (1993), to immediately attribute what seem to be miracles to direct supernatural intervention is “demeaning to God and deadly to theology” (Mesle 1993:119).

Process-Relational theists affirm the reality of divine activity in the world, but contend that God acts through natural rather than supernatural means. Such divine activity applies to divine-human interaction as well, but unlike Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, Process-Relational theists argue that God does not empower individuals by means of supernatural intervention. Rather, God’s interaction with humankind is primarily a matter of naturally empowering humans to achieve the divine will. Process theologian Bruce Epperly (2007), who is not a denominational Pentecostal, expresses a unique Process-Relational interpretation of the Pentecostal reality:



Pentecost calls us to believe ‘more’ rather than ‘less’ about divine activity in the world and our ability to experience God’s dramatic, as well as gentle, movements in our lives. Pentecost challenges us to become Progressive Pentecostals who expect great things from God and great things from ourselves.

Further, Epperly suggests that mainstream theological liberal interpretations of scripture “leave little room for the divine liveliness described in the gospel healing stories and the resurrection” (Epperly 2007). The denial of divine activity is, according to Epperly, a serious flaw in the “waning theology of twentieth century liberal Protestantism”. Epperly proposes a deeper natural theology in which God is ever present and always creatively at work within the universe. Process-Relational theists such as Epperly do not deny that God is at work in the world, but note that “miracles become problems when we think of them as demonstrating divine power to intervene in the world however God wishes” (Mesle 1993:118). While Pentecostals and Charismatics affirm supernatural intervention, Process-Relational theists contend that God works in the world, and with human beings,

primarily through natural means, but not according to the naturalism of modernism.¹²²

Nevertheless, there is a clear distinction between naturalism according to a deterministic, reductionist definition and the metaphysical definition proposed by Process Relational philosophers. Within the scope of Process-Relational theology, metaphysical naturalists recognize that naturalistic processes are the most apparent causes in the physical world, but the metaphysical dimension of reality provides the possibility of the non-physical having affects on the physical.¹²³ In fact, David Ray Griffin defends the possibility of para-psychological phenomena by means of human activity, but firmly clarifies that such phenomena are explainable in terms of extraordinary natural abilities, not supernatural divine intervention. As Griffin (2000) notes:

Parapsychology, besides showing that those types events traditionally considered miracles are not different in kind of events reported in most religious traditions, also provides reason believe that they are explainable in terms of natural, albeit extraordinary, powers possessed by certain human beings, so that no supernatural act of God need be invoked (Griffin 2000:11).

In this way, Griffin and other Process-Relational theists maintain that there is “yet hope for overcoming the longstanding notion that the Christian faith conflicts with the scientific worldview” when supposed miracles or other extraordinary phenomenon occur. However, Griffin affirms the possibility of a Christian faith that does not “presuppose supernatural interventions”. For Process-Relational theists, the issue of *concursum* is not a debate concerning “not natural versus supernatural” agency (Mesle 1993:115), because in panentheism, all things are in

¹²² The naturalism of modernism is essentially reductionist and mechanistic.

¹²³ I have identified this as “idealism”, a similarity between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theologies, upon which I comment in detail in Section 7.3. Because Process-Relational theists define reality in terms of “event metaphysics” rather than “substance metaphysics”, extraordinary phenomenon is explainable in terms of the same metaphysic principles that constitute all of reality. This view is in contrast with supernaturalism, which assumes an external intervention as the cause.

God and God is always at work in all things. Although extraordinary natural occurrences or even parapsychological activity may be possible in metaphysical naturalism as conceived by Process-Relational theology, the fact that supernatural intervention is not presupposed marks a significant difference with the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.

7.2.3 Exclusivism vs. Universalism

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements are marked by a tendency toward exclusivism, especially with respect to Spirit-empowerment, which creates a “caste” system for Christians, effectively separating those who are Spirit-filled from those who are not. The privatization of the experience of the Spirit, recognized by most Pentecostals and Charismatics as the initiatory Baptism of the Holy Spirit, distinguishes the Spirit-filled believer both personally and individualistically. Nañez (2005), contends that the Pentecostal-Charismatic theology of the *charismata* has been a catalyst for anti-intellectualism insofar as “foreign languages, the future, deep insights, and all information all otherwise unknown, can be mainlined to the soul and then gush forth through the lips of the believer” (Nañez 2005:118). The idea that God provides special revelation and personal, individual experience is overly emphasized in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements relative to Process-Relational theology, which instead emphasizes universals over exclusive religious experience. Mesle (1993) contends, however, that the emphasis on personal religious experience promotes the assumption that “the limited insights of a few people in one culture become regarded as God’s final word” (Mesle 1993:90). Such exclusive religious claims would be considered an error of judgment by Process-Relational theists, who would contend that God’s work and voice is universal, continuous, and while not impersonal, certainly not proprietary.

Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents also tend to reinforce the subject-object distinction between the individual and the Spirit in the form of the “I-Thou” relationship. In alignment with classical theology, Pentecostals and Charismatics often describe the Spirit in terms of otherness, as an entity on the outside who can

be beckoned or called to action. The Spirit is addressed as an object of worship. However, in Process-Relational theology, the Spirit is seen in a much more Tillichian sense, not as the Ground of all Being, but as universally and continuously active and present. That is, the Spirit is not a subject who acts through transcending in and out of the objects of action; the Spirit constitutes the very reality of all objects. In Process-Relational theology, the Spirit is not working against the material world and the material world is not contrary to the Spirit; the Spirit and the world are mutually dependent.¹²⁴ Altizer (1977:60-61) notes the firm distinction between classical theologies, the category to which Pentecostal-Charismatic theology tends to relate, and modern theologies:

Although the personal character of the I-Thou relation between man [sic!] and God was thus preserved, what resulted in the Christian experience of the Holy Spirit was not what is usually meant by the I-Thou relation, for that relation suggests overagainstness, confrontation, speech, and response. The relation of the primitive Christian believer to the Spirit was far more intimate than that. There was no imagery of a spatial separation or of demand and obedience. There was, rather, the imagery of two spiritual realities, each fully responsible for itself and self-identical, nevertheless mutually indwelling each other.

In terms of the identity and role of the Spirit, Process-Relational theists argue for a “post-personal” structure of existence, where the Spirit and humankind are no longer conceived in terms of I-Thou or subject-object distinctions. Process-Relational theists such as Cobb insist that humanity’s “basic vision and structural of existence ... cannot naively return to a pre-axial position nor even simply bypass Christian ‘personal’ and ‘spiritual’ existence in favor of either Buddhist or purely secularist visions. Rather, we must discover a ‘post-personal’ structure of existence which does not simply negate but transforms the traditional Western

¹²⁴ Altizer’s observation should not be confused with pantheism, which Process-Relational theists would firmly deny. However, when understood in terms of the bipolar nature of the Process-Relational God, the Spirit as seen as the Consequent Nature working in the temporal world.

Christian structure of existence” (Tracy 1977:27). Thus, Process-Relational theists do not conceive of the Spirit as acting in personal terms because they conceive of the constitution of reality as a whole much differently than the ways in which it has been conceived in other traditions.¹²⁵ For Process-Relational theists, universals are the only way to speak of the structure of reality. As Welker (1994:269) argues, “individualistically oriented religious adherents disregard “the interconnections of the diversity of forms released by the Spirit through the *charisms*”. The universal structure of reality affords Process-Relational theology a more universal understanding of the *charismata*.

The ways in which the *charisms* of the Spirit are appropriated and used also demonstrates a distinction between operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend to claim the *charismata* as personal gifts from the Spirit that can be appropriated and utilized in intensely personal and exclusive ways. Spiritual gifts, in this sense, are seen as similar to natural talents and abilities, affinities toward spiritual action appropriated by individual believers. The communal *charismata* have potential to exclude. Koenig (1978:106) noted that such individualism and exclusivism tend toward “egotistical absorption in religious experience because their inspiration is uncontrollable and incomprehensible and their operation is unforeseeable and unpredictable.”¹²⁶ Decrying such exclusivism, Koenig argued, instead, for communal *charismata* that are more closely aligned with the ideals of Process-Relational theists, who emphasize universality. The experience of *glossolalia*, for instance, whether initiatory¹²⁷ or not, “arouses the individual interested in the attention of the many” and situates the Spirit-endowed individual in the center of

¹²⁵ To clarify, reality is processive and the fundamental nature of reality is that of occasions of experience, not material or immaterial substance.

¹²⁶ It is worthwhile to note that Koenig also wrote on “Individualization and Incorporation through Charismata”, the idea that the *charismata* should reinforce community and relationality rather than individuality.

¹²⁷ That is, glossolalia that is understood as the “initial evidence” of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents.

the entire human-God community (Welker 1994:270). Because of exclusivist tendencies, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents have a tendency to isolate their experience of the Spirit and their understanding of God's relation to humanity in purely ecclesiological terms. Generally, Pentecostals and Charismatics, especially in the West, tend to isolate what happens in the church from what happens in public. The operation of the *charismata* in exclusion from the "outside world" led to the development of an artificial wall between Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and those outside the movements. According to Welker (1994:15), interest in the sensational *charisms* within the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements has:

... on the one hand a strong public effect, but on the other hand is regarded with suspicion by publics both inside and outside the church. Perhaps that is precisely why unique, peculiar, or spectacular personal experiences, which are inaccessible to outsiders and which contradict the rationalities that the culture has drummed into its members, are regarded as 'experiences of the Spirit' and made the focus of attention.

Miroslav Volf (1987) shares with Welker a concern with the exclusivism of Pentecostal-Charismatic churches and instead advocates a vision of the communal *charismata*. Volf's observation demonstrates the difference between the exclusivism of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and the universal vision of Process-Relational theists. Volf argues that the exclusive, ecclesiological-oriented operation of the *charismata* in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements seriously limits the possibilities for the Spirit's action in the world and interaction with humanity. The prevalence of such exclusivity reinforces a general perception of a purely supernatural and spectacular operation the *charismata*. Volf (1987:1987:184-185) comments on the exclusivity of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, especially with respect to the *charismata*:

Charisms should not be defined so narrowly as to include only ecclesial activities. The Spirit of God is active not only in the fellowship (of the church) but also through fellowship in the world. The Spirit who is poured out upon all flesh (Acts 2:1ff) also imparts charisms to all flesh: they are gifts given to the community, irrespective of the existing distinctions or conditions within the community. Very frequently charismatic is taken to mean

extraordinary. Ecclesiologically this restricted understanding of charisms can be found in some Pentecostal (and “Charismatic”) churches that identify charismatic with the spectacular.

Thus, Pentecostals and Charismatics understand their experiences of the *charismata* as special, selective, and exclusive interactions with the Spirit that are not available to those outside of their own movements. Because of such exclusivity, *concursum* is conceived as a private, individualistic, supernatural event whereby God penetrates the natural order to interact with human beings in privileged ways. However, Process-Relational theists do not understand *concursum* in terms of exclusivity and privatization of the Spirit’s work. Process-Relational theists envision “God as presenting the possibilities that make freedom meaningful”, not only for human beings endowed with special abilities, but for all creatures. The Spirit calls human beings, and all creatures, “toward better choices” (Mesle 1993:120). Therefore, God interacts with human beings in the same way that God interacts with all other entities in the universe, because the Spirit is universal and acts universally. Far from ecclesiastic exclusivity, Process-Relational theists affirm a panentheist vision of reality in which “all things” are in God in the most universal sense. Thus, conceptions of exclusive and universal *concursum* mark a significant difference between Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists.

7.2.4 Reactive vs. Implicit *Concursum*

As documented in Chapters five and six, there is a clear difference between the formulations of a theology of *concursum* in Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theologies. While Process-Relational theists have a considerably developed and specific notion of *concursum*, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, especially in terms of operational rather than professed theology, have a largely incoherent notion of *concursum*. Chapter five documented how Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents conceive of *concursum* in terms of prior, sequenced, and permissive *concursum*, although not as a matter of adaptability, but as a matter of inconsistency. Although a theology of “appropriated power” was documented as the most readily identifiable Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective on *concursum*,

the manner by which such a theology is articulated and implemented is as varied and diverse as the movements themselves. However, one aspect of Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* is generally consistent. That can be labeled “reactive” *concursum*, or a conception of the divine-human relationship as one in which God reacts to the requests, piety, worship, or prayer of human beings to supernaturally act on their behalf. Pentecostals and Charismatics operationalize their theology of *concursum* in such a way as to indicate that God’s action and intervention is summoned, requested, or beckoned by human action. In contrast, the Process-Relational notion of *concursum* is far more implicit: God does not react to human action in ways that God would not otherwise act. Therefore, Process-Relational theology can be labelled “implicit *concursum*”, a conception of the divine-human relationship as one in which God perpetually acts in the interest of enhancing the freedom of the creatures. Implicit *concursum* is in alignment with Clayton’s theory of panentheistic-participatory divine agency because the “actions of all finite agents participate in the divine act”, but with partial autonomy (Clayton 2008:216). In Clayton’s theory, all acts are *concurrent* acts because God is always and at once at work in the world.¹²⁸ The dissimilarity of “reactive” and “implicit” *concursum* is not insignificant; it sets apart the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions.

The difference between reactive and implicit *concursum* can be seen nowhere more clearly than in the operational practice of prayer. In the practice of prayer, the theology of *concursum* becomes operationalized in each tradition, that is, human action defines the authentic substance of the theology rather than professed doctrine. In spite of what is theologically professed, a practice as foundational to Christian religion as prayer certainly distinguishes behavior from belief. For Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, prayer is a matter of eliciting a reaction from

¹²⁸ It should be noted that the idea of implicit *concursum* is compatible with Murphy (1988), who argues that God acts at all times but remains “non-interventionist”. Further, Murphy contends that there could be a macro-effect of subatomic divine activity without violating natural laws.

God and thus can be seen as an operational manifestation of reactive *concursum*. However, Process-Relational theists decry such reactive approaches to prayer, noting that “surely Christians do not think that God sits back passively, doing nothing, until some human being begs for a favor in a sufficiently groveling way” (Mesle 1993:111). Piety coupled with prayer is ineffective for Process-Relational theists. Instead, “prayer should be an act whereby we center ourselves around and align ourselves with the sacred” (Mesle 1993:111). Moreover, prayer requests should be “for something that is in harmony with God’s purposes” (Cobb 2003:104). Therefore, in opposition to Pentecostals and Charismatics who emphasize faith as a prerequisite to eliciting a divine reaction, Process-Relational theists maintain that prayer is “not a question of 'faith'” (Mesle 1993:115) and does not depend on the sufficient supplication of creatures. For Process-Relational theists, “some popular beliefs about prayer have destructive consequences” (Cobb 2003:103) because they reinforce the notion that prayer elicits reactions from God to interact with human beings in ways God would not otherwise interact. Prayer is not an “effort to change God’s mind” (Mesle 1993:112); prayer does not evoke God to act, but connects human beings with what God is already doing in the world.

Further, and more specifically, prayer for divine healing demonstrates the difference between reactive and implicit *concursum* in religious practice. Because the doctrine of divine healing¹²⁹ is central to Pentecostal-Charismatic belief, prayers for divine healing are consequently central to operational Pentecostal-Charismatic notions of *concursum*. However, Mesle (1993) reasoned that any notion of prayer that is based on the idea that “God can simply heal whenever God wishes, must also suppose that God has so far chosen not to do so” (Mesle 1993:112). For Process-Relational theists, God is not the “unilateral agent for healing” (Cobb 2003:17) because God cannot simply disrupt the entire natural

¹²⁹ In Classical Pentecostalism, the doctrine of divine healing is considered as “guaranteed” for all believers in the Atonement.

order to impose the arbitrary divine will as a reaction to human faith. Process-Relational theists understand prayer for healing as implicit, but not guaranteed, because although God is always at work luring the body to health, there are countless other factors in each occasion of the body's experience that determine its state moment by moment. Nevertheless, "prayer makes a lot of sense in process theology" but it is "not magic or supernatural" nor "an effort change God's mind"; rather, for Process-Relational theists, prayer is "an effort to change ourselves and the world in cooperation with God, to do what God cannot do so that God can do God's work more effectively" (Mesle 1993:116). In other words, the practice of prayer for healing should align the human being with God's best intentions,¹³⁰ which in turn enables God to realize God's purposes; not because God reacts positively to a human request, but because the human being reacts positively¹³¹ to the divine lure. God's interaction with human beings is implicit in every moment of experience so that prayer becomes cooperation with God to do that which God is already and always doing, calling all things, including the human body, to health and wholeness (Mesle 1993:116). Thus, the practice of prayer for healing, when set in terms of implicit *concursum*, led Cobb (2003) to conclude that "there is little doubt that praying for our own healing can help if it is done with that God is already at work in our bodies in a healing way" (Cobb 2003:104).

Finally, prayer is not only personal, but also intercessory. A common practice in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches is intercessory prayer, praying for the healing others who are confronted with illness. Process-Relational theists do not entirely dismiss the practice of intercessory prayer. Praying for the healing of others "is one way of aligning ourselves with the healing work of God" (Cobb 2003:104). For Cobb (2003), the practice of intercession, when understood as "prehending

¹³⁰ God's best would be God's initial or subjective aims for each occasion in Process-Relational terms.

¹³¹ That is to say, positively prehendend.

other people all the time ... if they are directing their positive thoughts about us to God” can “certainly make a difference” in the physical healing of one another (Cobb 2003:104). However, the Process-Relational understanding of how intercessory prayer works is thoroughly distinct from the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of such prayer. Once again, God does not react to pleas for intervention; God is already working for the possibility of wholeness whether human beings apprehend those possibilities or not. Therefore, in implicit *concursum*, the responsibility to act is with human beings, while in reactive *concursum*, the responsibility to act is placed on God. Finally, Process-Relational theists emphasize that while God may not be able to act as a unilateral agent for healing,¹³² “God may be able to call people ... to cure cancer” (Mesle 1993:122). The idea that God’s role is to increase the freedom and responsibility of the creatures is evident in the Process-Relational understanding of healing. Instead of healing unilaterally, God’s power is the power to persuade creatures to act as agents of healing in the human body and in the world as a whole.

7.2.5 Summary

This section comprised an analytical, critical comparison of the concept of *concursum* in Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theologies. The first difference noted was that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents understand *concursum* in operational terms while Process-Relational theists understand *concursum* in philosophical terms. Although Pentecostals and Charismatics perceive divine-human interaction in literal and biblical terms, Process-Relational theists perceive divine-human interaction in conceptual terms. The first subsection includes a comparison of the fundamentalist orientation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements with the liberal orientation of the Process-Relational tradition. The second subsection comprised a comparison of the supernaturalistic perspective of

¹³² Or more specifically, Mesle stated “God may not be able to persuade many cancer cells in many bodies to restructure themselves”.

Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* with the metaphysical naturalistic perspective of Process-Relational *concurus*. “Supernatural”, in Pentecostal-Charismatic terms, means that God has the power to intervene in the natural world and does so regularly, while metaphysical naturalism, in Process-Relational terms, means that any extraordinary events in the world occur through primarily natural means according to metaphysical constructs. The third subsection comprised a comparison of the individualistic and exclusivist inclinations of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements with the universalistic inclinations of the Process-Relational tradition. For Pentecostals and Charismatics, exclusivism is expressed in terms of a personal experience of the Holy Spirit, while for Process-Relational theists, the Spirit’s work is understood as universal. The fourth subsection comprised a comparison of reactive *concurus*, in terms of operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, with implicit *concurus* in terms of philosophical Process-Relational theology. The categories of “reactive” and “implicit” *concurus* are original conclusions drawn from the analysis of the literature in this section. The notion of reactive *concurus* suggests that human beings can petition God to act¹³³ in ways God would not otherwise act. The notion of implicit *concurus* suggests that human beings can only align with what God is already doing in the world. It was concluded that Pentecostals-Charismatic adherents tend toward a reactive understanding of *concurus*, while Process-Relational theists tend toward an implicit understanding of *concurus*.

Ultimately, the differences analyzed in this section are not minimal. The most significant difference between Pentecostal-Charismatic *concurus* and Process-Relational *concurus* is that of supernaturalism versus metaphysical naturalism. The notion that God does not and cannot intervene supernaturally may be thoroughly objectionable to Pentecostals-Charismatic adherents, especially at face value. In like manner, Process-Relational theists are unlikely to accept the

¹³³ In terms of reactive *concurus*, divine action is generally equated with supernatural intervention.

supernaturalistic explanations of Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences. However, common ground may possibly be established in light of a synthesis of similarities between both traditions. According to Lederle (1994:22), charismatic theologians must ultimately “come to grips with the more foundational and philosophical issues raised by thinking charismatically”. Similarly, Process-Relational theists such as Epperly and Cobb have noted that the Process-Relational tradition lacks the spiritual enthusiasm and profound experientialism of the Pentecostal-Charismatic traditions. Therefore, through a synthetic comparison of similarities, differences may be sufficiently leveraged.

7.3 Similarities

While there are significant differences between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concursum*, there are also profound similarities. Although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend toward a more literal biblical interpretation of scripture, Process-Relational theists share a common value of coming to know and understand the God of the Bible. As Cobb (2003:68) noted, “the Bible is unusual, if not unique, in its sustained interpretation of human events in relation to God’s activity in the world... the whole of human history in relation to God’s purposes and actions.” For both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists, the Bible speaks to the universal human experience of *concursum*, a “mutual relationship between the Spirit and the Word” (Kärkkäinen 2002:127). Despite the fact that interpretations of the biblical accounts of the Spirit vary between Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists, it would be one-dimensional to say that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents are naive to the veracity of the biblical accounts of divine-human interaction while Process-Relational theists are more attuned to scientific progress. In reality, both traditions share a common rejection of “naturalism as the view that nature is what there is all that there is” (Mesle 1993:127); neither tradition affirms such a vision of the world.

From the Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective, Wimber (1985:77-78) accuses the Western world of intense secularization and of living as if “material cause and effect explains all of what happens to us”. As noted in Section 7.2, Lederle

(1994:26) argues that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have more intrinsically in common with postmodernism than with modernism. Thus, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements mark a break from the evangelical-fundamentalist alignment with modernist ideals. The formulation of postmodernist thought projected by Bosch and affirmed by Lederle is not anti-modern but “ultra-modern”; a continuation of Enlightenment ideals, not a total upheaval and displacement of them. In like manner, Thomas Oden (1992:11) argues that the values of postmodernism can aid the task of theological development insofar as they can help overcome the limitations of rationalism and atomic reductionism, thereby recovering a “sense of the whole and the interrelatedness of knowledge and experience”. Moreover, Percy (1996:13) notes that such a distinction set the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements apart from reactionary fundamentalism.

In this section, several issues pertaining to the relationship between operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and Process-Relational theology are compared according to similarities and common themes. In the first subsection, the shared value of idealism over determinism is identified and described. Both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists affirm that the human mind and the Spirit of God can influence matter; or in more minimal terms, materialistic determinism is not the only way to describe the world. In the second subsection, the theme of immediacy and synergy is explored in relation to the divine-human relation. The theological attribute of divine immanence is identified as a common conception of the Spirit’s presence in the world in both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions. In the fourth subsection, the themes of dynamism and possibility, especially in relation to spiritual experience, are identified as shared values. Both traditions generally affirm that experiences of the Spirit are not static and that the potential for novelty in the world is not only viable, but also pervasive in human experience. In the final subsection, the operationalization and actualization of spiritual experiences, especially in terms of the *charismata*, are found to be similar in both traditions. The section ends with a summary of the similarities of the four common themes that are identified.

7.3.1 Idealism over Determinism: Mind/Spirit Can Influence Matter

Although neither the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements nor Process-Relational theology can be characterized entirely as “idealists” in the strict philosophical sense,¹³⁴ they share a common rejection of dualistic assumptions about mind, spirit, and matter. However, although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents identify their experiences in terms of supernatural intervention, they certainly do not affirm that the world is entirely mechanistic or deterministic. Similarly, Process-Relational theists affirm that mind and spirit can influence matter, but also reject the notion that such influence insists upon an interruption or subversion of natural laws. Thus, in general, both Process-Relational theologians and Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents deny the “dualistic assumption that physical events could only have physical causes” (Cobb 2003:15). Charismatic Episcopalian¹³⁵ William De Arteaga (1992) contrasts the philosophical natures of realism and idealism. Arteaga (1992:131-212) defines realism as a belief that matter exists entirely independent of the mind, a view that depends on the subject-object dichotomy of modernism and Newtonian physics. Contrariwise, Arteaga defines idealism as a belief that mind can influence matter; this view is contingent upon the concepts of indeterminacy from the New Physics of Heisenberg and Einstein. Pentecostal Charismatic adherents¹³⁶ and Process-Relational theists would generally affirm the

¹³⁴ I use this term very loosely for lack of a better term. Certainly, neither Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents nor Process-Relational theists are entirely monistic in their ontology; they do not firm assert that all of reality is meaningless without mind or that mind is all that exists. However, Process-Relational theology comes close to monism insofar as it favors events over substances. Nevertheless, without a better philosophical category that can be employed for comparative purposes, idealism seems to be the most reasonable fit.

¹³⁵ The Church of England in the United States is the Episcopal Church.

¹³⁶ However, it should be noted that while the two traditions may agree, I am speculating that they would agree. I have not been successful in finding a Pentecostal-Charismatic account of the new physics nor a thorough philosophical case for idealism in Pentecostal-Charismatic theology. This is the primary reason I chose to analyze the “operational” theology of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements rather than professed theology, because professed theology is primarily biblical in nature rather than philosophical. Therefore, this is a significant difference between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions as I noted in Section 7.2.

idealist perspective. Minimally, both traditions agree with Kärkkäinen (2002:159-60) that “through the Spirit, God participates in the destiny of creation; through the Spirit, God suffers with the suffering of creatures. Thus, the immanence of the Spirit undercuts the dualism of God and nature that has characterized the Western tradition.”

Eberhard Jüngel (1971:213-221) maintains that Western civilization focuses too heavily on reality as it appears to be (*Wirklichkeit*) and not enough on what it can be (*Möglichkeit*). Jüngel challenges Western civilization to consider that the “possible” should gain priority over “the actual”. Both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists would agree that this has been an egregious oversight on behalf Western civilization and thus find a common affinity toward postmodernist over modernist epistemology.¹³⁷ For example, Cobb (2006:24) notes a Process-Relational affinity toward the possibility of spiritual influence in the physical world:

We know much about the role of mental states in healing that the flat dismissal of faith-healing is no longer universal. But the healing miracles are still treated peripherally and skeptically for the most part despite their central role in the gospel accounts. Process thought argues that most of these laws are literary generalizations about the habits of nature when primarily physical events are not influenced by primarily mental ones. How mental states affect behavior of physical objects (beginning with human bodies) requires separate investigation. Stories of extraordinary influence deserve respectful consideration.

Process-Relational theists affirm that the mental and the physical aspects of reality are intimately interrelated. Epperly (2006) suggests that an *a priori* limit need not be placed on what people of extraordinary spiritual power may accomplish. Thus by comparing similarities between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational *concurrency*, especially if the language of supernaturalism is revised, the question of miracles may be framed in a new way. For instance, Culpepper (1977:81)

¹³⁷ I thoroughly documented this comparison in the introduction for this chapter (Section 7.1).

notes that those in the Catholic Charismatic movements of the late twentieth century sought to “guard against interpreting the gifts as mere psychological states or sociological functions on one hand and oversupernaturalizing them on the other”. Such middle-ground creates opportunities for dialog between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions. When the simple question is asked, “Can spirit influence matter?”, both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists would agree. Although the metaphysical mechanics involved in the actualization of such a possibility may differ between the two traditions, there is commonality, at least on basic assumptions.

Clayton (1997:177) argues emphatically that naturalists are “wrong about the impossibility of miracles”. Clayton noted that the “space for divine activity” should not “become smaller with each scientific advance” (Clayton 1977:178), and that theologians should embrace science as a means by which divine activity, both in the world and with humankind, may eventually be empirically identified. In like manner, Griffin (1977:16) notes of John B. Cobb, Jr. that “he says he is more empiricist in temper than rationalistic, meaning that he is more impressed by experiential evidence than by formal arguments.” Because both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists value spiritual experience and embrace the idealist possibility of the spiritual influence of matter, dialog is possible as to how and if miracles occur and how God and humanity relate to one another.

Although in the naturalistic tradition, Process-Relational theists affirm that the “greatest casual efficacy in most events derives from their immediate past” (Cobb 2003:16), such an observation is merely a quasi-deterministic concession that indeed has much empirical support. However, Process-Relational theists equally affirm that God and the human mind can both influence the material world, albeit, such influence is not to be confused with coercion or intervention in any way; it is merely intrinsic to the naturalistic processes upon which all of reality is based. Thus while the Process-Relational definition of a miracle may be technically different from the definition articulated by Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, both traditions share in common the possibility of miracles. For Process-Relational

theists, a miracle occurs through divine or human influence, and thus there is an expectation that such influences are “subtle and gradual” (Cobb 2003:15). Further, Cobb (2003:15) notes that “when changes are rapid and dramatic, we are astonished, and, like biblical writers, think that a miracle has occurred.” In other words, “when the influence is very pronounced and has striking consequences, a miracle has occurred” (Cobb 2003:16). God can influence the world in the way that the human mind can influence the body, but the body is also comprised of physically determined causal mechanisms that cannot always be controlled or coerced by the mind. Thus while sickness and disease form part of the reality of the human body, the mind can have profound affects over the body’s condition.

In this way, Process-Relational theists support the possibility for physical healing of the body influenced by the mind or even by God. Mesle (1993:64) argues that “if we see the human mind as intrinsically a part of the human body, and learn that it is one experiencer [sic!] among others in the body, we may learn how the mind and God can cooperate in assisting those healthier cells in their work”. Interrelatedness is a key concept in a Process-Relational theology of miracles and is essential to understanding the possible influence of spirit or mind on matter. As Cobb (2003:16) notes, the possibility of one mind influencing another or God influencing a human body is because of the “interrelation of all things in such a way that [such influence] fits, even if it is surprising.” Thus Cobb can conclude that prayer for healing may be when such influence is “by one person on the body of another” (Cobb 2003:16). Further, Cobb notes that “spiritual disciples have demonstrated that psychic states have a great effect on the condition of the soma. Spiritual healing both of one’s own body and of others is a reality. This makes sense from a process perspective, since there is every reason to engage in spiritual practices that make for a healthy body” (Cobb 2003:101). In other words, Process-Relational theists affirm physical healing through spiritual or psychic influence, but not through supernatural intervention. While Process-Relational theists see the mechanisms for healing in a much different way, there is demonstrable agreement with an operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology of *concursum*. Moreover, Cobb concludes that “if the problem is sickness” in the physical body, then “the

outpouring [of prayer] often helps in the healing process” (Cobb 2003:86). Therefore, an experience as central to Pentecostal-Charismatic theology as prayer and healing shares commonalities with Process-Relational theology. Further, because miraculous occurrences form a central component of operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, the similarity with the Process-Relational perspective is evident. Similarities are identifiable in the literature.

7.3.2 Immediacy and Synergy: Experience of Divine Immanence

Spirituality is the first contact point for reflection about the interaction of God and humanity (McDonnell 1998:219-35). The possibility of direct experiences of divine immanence is a similarity that can be identified in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. Cobb (2003:99) notes that “in philosophical circles, there has been extensive criticism of the idea that there is experience of any kind that is not culturally conditioned. There is true *a fortiori* of religious experience”. Consequently, although the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions differ in many cultural respects, there are similarities in the claims to divine experience in both traditions. While there are differences in the descriptions of such experiences, both traditions understand that God is present in the world and in human beings in an immediate, accessible way.¹³⁸ As noted in section 7.2.6, while Process-Relational theists understand the immanence of God as “implicit” in all things (or more accurately, all things immanent in God as well), Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend toward transactional or “reactive” solicitation of divine action in the world. Nevertheless, while definitions, descriptions, and mechanisms differ between the two traditions, there are common themes that can be traced and documented.

Schner (1992) documents five appeals to experience in religious movements. Of

¹³⁸ The Wesleyan roots of both traditions provide a point of contact for such emphasis on experience. Cobb (2003) notes that “primacy of faith did not exclude direct experience of God, a point that was made in some streams in the Anglican tradition and most effectively by John Wesley” (Cobb 2003:98).

the five appeals, Althouse (2001) identifies the interruptive nature of experience, that is, the disruption and transformation of daily life, as characteristic of early Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality. However, Althouse contends that as the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements traditioned, they saw spiritual encounters not as disruptive and sudden but continuous and normative. Althouse identifies this trend as a shift toward confessional theology in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Accordingly, the Pentecostal-Charismatic experience of the divine has steadily shifted from a transcendent experience of the divine “other” to a consistent, immanent experience of the divine in daily life. It is important to note that although the Pentecostal-Charismatic traditions speak in fundamentalist terms and tend toward conformity to evangelical dogmas, their operational experience of the Spirit has more in common with the liberal tradition (such as Schleiermacher’s description of immediate access to the divine), where immanence is stressed over transcendence. Open-Evangelical theologian Clark Pinnock (1996:25) notes that “liberalism was right to associate spirit with the general presence of God in the world, because it often refers to precisely that and to our experience of communion with God.¹³⁹ As spirit, God inspires, motivates, and empowers people everywhere”. Nevertheless, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents stress on the one hand an “indwelling” of the Holy Spirit at Spirit baptism, but on the other hand, still speak in transcendental terms whereby the Spirit is called to “come down” and intervene rather than work from within. For this reason, perhaps, Lord (2005:86) notes that Pentecostal-Charismatic scholars stress a type of “immanence through transcendence” to describe their experiences. Therefore, to explore the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of divine immanence in *concursum*, the emphasis must remain on operational theology rather than professed theology.

In the transition from modernity to post-modernity, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have, however, succeeded in emphasizing divine immanence far more

¹³⁹ It is important to note that Clark Pinnock has an affinity to both Pentecostalism and aspects of Process theism.

than the Process-Relational tradition. Welker (2004:1), for example, contrasts the “modern consciousness of the distance of God” with the “vivid, almost childlike enthusiasm of God’s presence here and now” of Pentecostals and Charismatics. Welker notes a “disconnect” between modern human experience and the biblical testimonies wherein “action of God’s Spirit” is described in terms of the “Spirit entering into diverse realities of human life” (Welker 2004:6). Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents have been broadly successful in communicating and replicating direct experience of the Spirit in a global context.¹⁴⁰

Further, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents understand the indwelling of the Holy Spirit subsequent to Spirit-baptism as essential to the continuous, personal, direct experience of the Spirit. Williams (1996:142) believes that the promise of the power of the Holy Spirit “must be received if the church is to move with maximum effectiveness in the power of the same Spirit”. Thus, in order for *concursum* to occur immanently in the divine-human relationship, the Spirit must be received in the initiatory experience of Spirit-baptism. Further, Williams (1996) notes the letter of Paul in Acts 15 wherein Paul states that “it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” to indicate a form of synergy between human beings and the work of the Spirit. However, Williams interprets Acts 15 to mean that direction from the Holy Spirit “does not exclude human discussion and decision making” (Williams 1996:145). Thus, while Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents speak of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as an “indwelling”, they do not see their actions as controlled by the Spirit as if they were possessed. Rather, they see their experiences as a direct, ongoing, synergetic exchange between the human being and the Holy Spirit. As Pinnock (1996:44) notes, “God is closer and more intimate than we allow ourselves to believe.” This is certainly the perceived reality for

¹⁴⁰ This should be contrasted with the Process-Relational tradition, which has seen some success in cross-cultural appeal such as interreligious dialog with Buddhism, but has not been a sweeping global movement on the scale of Pentecostalism. It could be argued, however, that Process-Relational theology has succeeded on the other hand to provide a stronger philosophical basis for divine experience in ways that Pentecostal-Charismatic theology remains primitive in comparison.

Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents.

However, such an immanent, synergetic relationship between human beings and the Holy Spirit means more to Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents than the purely subjective experiences of divine immanence described in classical liberal theology. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents understand the immanence of the Holy Spirit as an empowerment and ability to act in the world in ways they may not otherwise be able to act. Althouse (2001), who thoroughly documented Pentecostal-Charismatic experientialism, concludes that such experiences are both transformative and reconstructive. According to Althouse, “the charismatic experiences of the Spirit are transformative in that they create a deeper commitment to Christ through encounter with the divine. They are reconstructive in that they envision a community of God’s people as the context for encountering God” (Althouse 2001:408). Perhaps Althouse’s dual construct of the effects of the Pentecostal-Charismatic experience explains in part the reason for the widespread international growth the movements in the past century.

In like manner, divine immanence is a vital theme in Process-Relational theology, albeit more from a philosophical and scientific perspective than from a biblical and religious perspective. Peacocke (1993:139) concludes that because of scientific advances, “we have to see God’s action as being in the processes themselves, as they are revealed by the physical and biological sciences, and this means we must stress more than ever before, God’s immanence in the world”. Clayton (1997:220) affirms Peacocke’s perspective on divine action through immanence by arguing that his emphasis on emergence is a “result of God’s immanent creative action in the world”. Through dialog with scientists and theologians alike,¹⁴¹ Clayton (1997:147) proposes “holism without transcendence” whereby the immanence of God takes precedence over transcendence by means of emphasizing “the primacy of the whole”; that is, that neither entity, atom, or God

¹⁴¹ Such scientists and theologians include Heisenberg, Bohm, Sharpe, and d’Eslagnat.

has relevance in isolation, but that the process of becoming for all of reality only makes sense in the context of the infinite whole of all that exists. An emphasis on the totality, including all matter, energy, and God, allows for an emphasis on divine immanence in context: God is not external to the world; God is part of the whole. In terms of divine and human power, there is little distinction according to Process-Relational theists; God immanently shares power with the creatures. As Cobb notes (2003:82), “power is the nature of being” and “to be is to have power. To create is to share power with creatures”. God is as much part of the whole as human beings.

Likewise, the Process-Relational tradition affirms divine immanence and the direct experience of God by human beings. The means by which Process-Relational theists articulate such experience of the immanence of God is done in primarily philosophical rather than operational terms. Process-Relational theists conceive of God and the world as “mutually immanent”, that is, God is immanent in the world but the world is also immanent in God.¹⁴² For Process-Relational theists, mutual immanence is genuine participation in one another’s being. Therefore, *concursum* is understood in terms of God genuinely participating in the being of humankind, but humankind also genuinely participating in the being of God. However, mere participation does not fully constitute mutuality. Mellert (1972) argues that genuine mutuality, that is, genuine relations, is the condition for a genuine immanence. Thus, while human beings may participate in the actions of God and God may participate in the actions of human beings, such co-participation does not fully constitute mutuality. In the Process-Relational traditions, and especially in the Whiteheadian sense, there exists in all things “actual immanence, yet each entity, each experience, retains its own subjectivity” (Brown 1971:5). For example, Lampe (1984) equates the human spirit with divine immanence; in Process-Relational terms, the consequent nature of God is

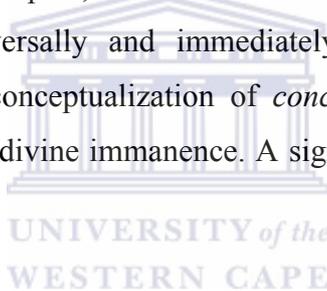
¹⁴² This is why Process-Relational theists embrace the self-descriptive term, *panentheism*.

the basis for human consciousness in the world. Therefore, a Process-Relational conception of *concursum* would entail fully immanent mutuality, but at the same time, preservation of the subjectivity of each entity mutually participating in each event. Cobb (Cobb 1965:6) articulates this notion as follows: “The everlasting nature of God, which in a sense is non-temporal and in another sense is temporal, may establish with the soul a peculiarly intense relationship of mutual immanence.” In other words, the dipolar nature of the Process-Relational God permits such mutuality with temporal human beings because such relations are inherently internal rather than external.

With surprising similarity compared to Pentecostal-Charismatic language, Griffin (2000:26) notes that the “most immediate access to God is God as Holy Spirit acting in our experience”. Thus when conceived in traditional trinitarian terms, Process-Relational theists would agree that immediate access to an experience of God is through the immanence of the Holy Spirit, both in the human being and in the world. Further, Process-Relational theists would also agree with Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents that Holy Spirit is accessible to human beings for synergetic interaction. In emphatic terms, Cobb (2003:99) avows “immediate, personal experience”, declaring that Process-Relational theists affirm “the direct, personal experience of God. Indeed, process theologians believe that we apprehend, or feel, God in every moment”. Like Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, Process-Relational theists such as Cobb affirm the notion that God guides human beings through a direct, immanent relationship. In similar intent but dissimilar language, Cobb agrees with the basic Pentecostal-Charismatic notion of being “filled” and “empowered” by the Holy Spirit to make decisions to act. However, in the immanent relationship between God and human beings, Process-Relational theists are more sensitive to the possibilities of not following the divine call. In this way, Process-Relational theists have more of an awareness of competing factors with a synergetic notion of *concursum*. Cobb (2003:100) notes that “clearly it is important to discern what God is calling us to be and do, to distinguish this lure from the many other impulses and urges that function in our experience”. Further, Cobb (Cobb 2003:89) recognizes that “the divine call would expand our horizons still

further, but social expectations and pressures work against a full response” and such expectations and pressures “blind us to the divine impulse within us”. In Pentecostal-Charismatic terms, even though believers are filled with and guided by the Holy Spirit, other forces in the human being and in the world can conflict with intentions of the Spirit of God.

When evaluated in terms of the human experience of divine immanence, the similarities between Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* and Process-Relational *concursum* are evident. Though Process-Relational theists have formulated a stronger philosophical basis for divine immanence in human experience, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents demonstrate an equally strong operationalization of such experience. It should also be noted that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents understand divine experience as initiated by the event of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, while Process-Relational theists consider divine experience always universally and immediately available. Nevertheless, the common factor in the conceptualization of *concursum* in both traditions relies heavily on the notion of divine immanence. A significant similarity can therefore be identified.



7.3.3 Dynamism and Possibility: Experience of Divine Novelty

Operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and philosophical Process-Relational theology share a common understanding of the dynamic nature of living in relation to the Spirit of God. In both traditions, *concursum* is essentially understood as human participation in and cooperation with divine possibilities as God acts in the world. The value of novelty and dynamism, the potential for reality to be different than it is otherwise determined to be, are also shared values of both traditions. Although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents understand such dynamism and possibility as a result of the infilling of the Spirit at the event of Holy Spirit baptism while Process-Relational theists understand such a possibility and dynamism as fundamentally constitutive of reality, they nevertheless share the common value. Divine novelty therefore functions in tandem with divine immanence; God’s immanence in the world makes possible novelty and creativity

for God, for human beings, and for the universe as a whole.

In the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition, experience of divine novelty occurs in experientially unexpected ways. Spontaneity, new possibilities for action guided by the Spirit, characterize the Pentecostal-Charismatic experience. Pentecostal scholars such as Menzies (2000:186) maintain that the early church eventually “routinized the offices and ministries of the Spirit and rid itself of the spontaneous element of public worship”. However, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents generally eschew such routinization in favor of dynamic experiences of the Spirit. Williams (1996:146) contends that there should always be a “certain spontaneity about acting under the direction of the Spirit”. Protestant Charismatic Thomas Smail notes that “the Holy Spirit is always doing the same things, but he is always doing them differently in an endless creativity that has no need to repeat itself” (Smail¹⁴³ in Taylor 1972:43). Further, for Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, “life with God is a journey into the unknown” (Chan 1998:48). Spontaneous experiences, dynamic divine direction, and unanticipated divine manifestations characterize the expectations of Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents as they experience the Holy Spirit. Common among thoroughly diverse cultures and nationalities, such experiential dynamism can be traced throughout the global Pentecostal-Charismatic movements.

Such a spontaneous, dynamic operationalization of Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology provides an experiential basis for human risk-taking. Mills (1973:140) believes that the evidence of a Spirit-empowered life was the difference between a life “lived always on the edge of caution and a life lived in boldness and dynamic commitment”. Boldness, Mills concludes, is the verifiable evidence of Spirit empowerment whether a person had ever “uttered a word in tongues or not.” Experiential dynamism, full of risk-taking and uninhibited embracement of the unexpected is, perhaps, another viable explanation for the

¹⁴³ Unfortunately, I was unable to locate the primary source for this quotation. The secondary source will therefore have to suffice.

global expansion of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements because it allows for greater contextualization. According to Anderson (2004:197), Pentecostal-Charismatic pneumatology is a “dynamic and contextualized manifestation of biblical revelation”. In other words, because Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents are willing to respond to the call of the Spirit, even if the results are unusual or the demands spontaneous, the movements have been able to expand into new cultures and traditions in unusual ways. For Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, the “action of the Spirit in the church is ongoing and dynamic” (Chan 2001:102).

Although a general affirmation of religious experience exists among Process-Relational theists, they also readily seek to reconcile science and theology in ways that allow for dynamism, spontaneity, and freedom; values that they consider indispensable. On the scientific front, indeterminacy in the quantum world has been heralded as a potential opening for divine action. In such instances, some theologians claim that minute changes at the chaotic, subatomic level, influenced by God, may lead to macrophysical outcomes. However, Clayton (1997:196) warns that if chaos theory turns out to be a “subset of deterministic physics, then the attempt to use it not just as an amplification device but also as an actual opening for divine action would turn out to be another ‘God of the gaps’ strategy”. Clayton’s warns that even though science has not yet fully described what occurs at the subatomic level, it may be unwise to leap to the conclusion that it is precisely at that level and through those causal mechanisms that God works in the world. Nevertheless, Process-Relational theists remain open to dramatic novelty, even “paranormal (or miraculous) phenomena” in way that enlightenment metaphysics was not (Cobb 2006:28).

Process-Relational theists consider novelty and creativity to be a foundational concept in their philosophical and theological formulations. However, Process-Relational theists speak in primarily philosophical terms when describing such novelty. The possibility of novelty, not just in human-divine *concursum* but for all of the created order, is vital to the coherence Process-Relational theology. In Process-Relational thought, “the Spirit is the perfecting source of dynamism evident in the cosmos” (Pinnock 1996:68). Clayton (2008) has engaged the matter

of creation, emergence, and novelty perhaps more than any other Process-Relational theist. According to Clayton, emergent complexity in the world is demonstrable evidence of dynamic novelty in nature.¹⁴⁴ Clayton contends that the emergence of novel, complex structures in nature is a panentheistic manifestation of God. For Clayton, new, dynamic realities that emerge cannot simply be reduced to their causal or physical components because their reality is tied inasmuch to their future as to their immediate and distant past. Clayton notes that such a teleological emphasis is consistent with Pannenberg's future-orientation. Thus, Clayton (2008:137) concludes that "what emerges from nature is genuinely new, a novel express of divine-plus-human creativity." This conception of dynamic, emergent novelty demonstrates the Pentecostal-Charismatic expectation that experiential cooperation with the Spirit by human beings can produce novel, if not surprising, emergent results. In like manner, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents expect that human cooperation with the will of the Spirit is future-oriented, purposeful, and can lead to surprising new possibilities. As Pinnock (1996:57) notes, "creation itself intimates an ultimate power that fosters openness and spontaneity among creatures". In operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, prayer for "miracles and manifestations" are preceded by an expectation of novel possibilities that otherwise seem impossible. Cobb (2003) notes that the dynamic experiences of the Spirit that characterize the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements are not entirely out of the question, noting that "people may be moved by the Spirit in extraordinary ways. They may be so totally caught up in what they are doing that they are not consciously controlling their actions. What results exceeds the best product of their ordinary voluntary acts" (Cobb 2003:71). Such an explanation seems to give a philosophical basis to operational Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences from a Process-Relational perspective.

¹⁴⁴ The most significant example of emergent complexity is the human mind. In Clayton's view, the human mind may be an emergent property of the human brain and all other biological components that make human beings fundamentally human.

Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists share a common faith that a better future is possible, even that healing or other miraculous¹⁴⁵ events are one of many future possibilities that can foster more sensitivity to the immanent call of God. A fatalist surrender of events to “God's will” greatly reduces human freedom, leaving individual lives more and more determined by individual pasts and environmental contexts. If, on the other hand, moment by moment individuals respond to the best possibility God offers, new possibilities open up and novelty is birthed. Humanity thus becomes freer, person by person. The positive response to God’s call becomes increasingly spontaneous and novelty becomes more and more possible (Cobb 2006:31). Similarly, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents do not easily concede to “God’s will”, especially in matters of healing and altering the course of events to achieve a more desirable outcome. Although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents may speak in terms of supernatural interventionism, they nonetheless rarely settle for the status-quo or remain willing to allow events to be determined without an interactive exchange with God. As Cobb (2003:11) notes, “the possibilities and the actualities of our entire lives depend upon our responsiveness to God”. Thus, the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concursum* are similar insofar as they share a common value of dynamic new possibilities for the world through divine-human cooperation. Both traditions affirm that God seeks novelty in the world, human beings seek novelty in the world, and together, such novelty can ultimately be achieved.

7.3.4 Operationalization and Actualization: Experience of the *Charismata*

While the notion of contemporary appropriation and operationalization of the

¹⁴⁵ Note the differing definitions of “miracle” in Section 7.2, but also note that Process-Relational theists such as Clayton emphatically affirm the possibility of miracles, albeit in a more philosophically and scientifically coherent way that does not require unilateral supernatural intervention.

charismata is a primary characteristic of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, notable consideration has been given to the *charismata* by Process-Relational theists as well. Although spiritual gifts are widely recognized as personal and ecclesial functions in both theologically conservative and liberal traditions, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents have distinctively emulated the literal, biblical account of the operation of spiritual gifts. Nevertheless, when taking into account the similarities of idealism, immanence, and dynamic possibility, Process-Relational theology shares with the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements an experiential vision of the *charismata*. For example, Chan (1998:38) asserted that Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences of the Spirit have opened Catholics to the awareness that “God works directly for the ordinary Christian” and reinforced for Protestants the notion of the relational mystical union of believers in the Spirit. The Pentecostal reality draws individuals to a common and steady increase of the experience of God. As Pinnock (2006:171) noted, “no group knows better how to confront the problem of nonrealization” of spiritual experiences than the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements; “they face up to the necessity of fuller actualization and do something about it”. In other words, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents are active, rather than static, in their faith.

The extensive work of Michael Welker (1994) concerning the *charismata* may serve as a viable point of contact between the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. Welker emphasizes the communal nature of spiritual gifts; a theme consistent with the principle of interrelatedness in Process-Relational theology. For Welker (1994:241), the *charismata* are not private gifts for private consumption. Further, Welker (1994:241) suggests that in the experience of the *charismata* “force fields are built up” and emerge in ways to which differently endowed people can attest and “open up the reality of the Spirit to and with each other”, an occasion for divine-human *concursus* to occur. Welker (1994:241) defines the *charisms* as “substantively grounded forms in which the Spirit becomes knowable and effects knowledge; forms in which the manifestation of the Spirit is given to specific people “for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7). Moreover, Welker urges that a theology of the *charisms* should include an

“understanding of the experiences of Spirit that [is] open to sober and realistic perception” instead of “busying itself with unusual, sensational actions of the Spirit” (Welker 1994:15). Generally, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents are prone to overemphasizing such “unusual, sensational actions of the Spirit.”

Further, in Welker’s proposal, the *charismata* are experienced by individuals so that the revelation and attestation of God may be mediated to one another. The *charismata* serve as the means by which inclusion and participation in the knowledge of God is experienced by human beings (Welker 1994:241). The communal-universal nature of the *charismata* may serve as an expression of what Whitehead meant by “creativity”. According to Whitehead, creativity is the ultimate principle by which the “multiplicity of related experiences” becomes one actual occasion; the many enter into complex unity and a new occasion emerges. By participating in the force of the *charismata*, individuals are participating in the universal reality of God as “constituting and constituted” (Welker 1994:242); or, in Whiteheadian terms, being and becoming. Correspondingly, the *charismata* are a public experience into which the Spirit draws individuals. Spiritual experiences that are too privatized, individualized, and irrationalized are disconnected from the broader life of the Spirit. By contrast, the notions of universality, community, and relatedness are of critical value to Process-Relational theology.

Gelpi (1978) conducted one of the seminal Process-Relational interpretations of the *charismata*. Gelpi argues for an epistemology based on human experience and concluded that Process-Relational theology provides the best bases for the kind of experiential theology that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents attempt to articulate. Gelpi considers Tillich’s theology as a possible means by which Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences could be expressed, but rejected it in favor of Process-Relational theology. Gelpi (1978:40) argues that Tillich’s philosophy was given an “aura of holiness that put it beyond the patient critique of other philosophical systems”. Gelpi (1978:40) sees Whitehead and other Process-Relational philosophers and theologians as “personally, even passionately involved in the search for religious meaning”. Similar to Gelpi’s conclusions, Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences of the Spirit demonstrate an “affinity between mystical

ecstasy and the aesthetic experience of Whitehead” (Kärkkäinen 2002:151).

There exists enough common ground between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational notions of the *charismata* to postulate a mutually informative interpretation from both traditions on the basis of *concursum*. In Process-Relational terms, the *charismata* are considered in terms of both the initial aim and the prehensions of God by humankind, the basis of the Process-Relational explanation is the theory of divine immanence. God is immanent to every actual occasion in giving the occasion its initial aim and in the occasion’s own prehensions of the divine. A Process-Relational interpretation of the *charismata* may be defined as expressions of the immanence of God when prehensions of eternal objects are enlightened and the initial aims of God are actualized by human beings. When the immanence of God is personally operationalized by means of the *charismata*, as Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents maintain, the depths of divinity inside each individual flourishes and apparent divine-temporal barriers are broken, allowing for new possibilities.

Accordingly, when the *charismata* are understood in terms of the commonalities of operational experiences of Pentecostal-Charismatic theology and the philosophical categories of Process-Relational theology, the similarities between both traditions are evident. Welker’s argument for the communal nature of the *charismata* helps to strengthen the connection between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions. The work of the Spirit both in the *charismata* and *concursum* becomes recognizable through “the process of human beings receiving a share in the Spirit” (Welker 1994:243). It is in such relational and communal *concursum* that human beings become “aware of the importance of being receptive to God’s empowering and directing presence... opening us to gifts God has always wanted to give” (Cobb 2003:46). As Kärkkäinen (2002:154) notes, “life in the Spirit is not flight from the world but the fullest possible actualization of our capacities for creaturely existence.” Thus, the similarities between operational Pentecostal-Charismatic and philosophical Process-Relational theologies of *concursum* are considerable, especially in relation to the experience of spiritual gifts. As in the conclusions of the previous three sections,

apparent differences are more a matter of language and context than of actual religious values.

7.3.5 The Spirit and the World: Divine Action and Human Responsibility

Finally, the Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists share a common sense of mutuality for both divine action and human responsibility in the world. For both traditions, interactions with the world and in the world are critical not only to human beings, but also to God. Andrew Lord (2005:8) describes the movement of the Spirit between the “particular”, such as individuals and communities, and the “universal”, such as the creation and human interdependences. For example, Lord proposes that Pentecostals view a distinction between the “Spirit of mission” and the “mission of the Spirit”, favoring the former. However, Lord proposes that the mission of the Spirit was to bring “blessing”, the power of love and healing found in the Spirit, into the world, which “yearns” for such interaction. Thus the Lord’s vision of the mission of the Spirit was not only pneumatological, but also eschatological (Lord 2005:33). Although Process-Relational theists would not necessarily affirm a divinely determined *eschaton*, they would affirm that God is luring the world to greater and more intense value. The similarity documented in this section is twofold: first, that both the Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists value diverse experiences for a diverse world, and second, that both traditions tend toward applying spiritual experiences to physical needs in the world.

7.3.5.1 Diverse Experiences for a Diverse World

Both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists recognize the diversity of the experiences of the Spirit in the context of a diverse world. The rapid expansion of global Pentecostalism has drawn countless cultures and traditions together around a common experience of the Spirit. For Process-Relational theists, diversity is inherent in the value God brings to and derives from the world. Both traditions are similar in that they challenge conventional assumptions about tradition, culture, and ultimately divine-human *concursum*, and

by so doing, they recognize the world's diversity, embrace it, and enhance it. For instance, as Process-Relational theist Bruce Epperly (2008) notes, the historical event of Pentecost "calls the world to spiritual stature, the ability to embrace diverse experiences and viewpoints around a common life-giving center of experience". In fact, Epperly identified Pentecost Sunday as "Pluralism Sunday" as well. Thus the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology both affirm the diversity that Pentecost symbolizes in both spiritual experience and in the world as a whole. In like manner, Moltmann (1992:8) notes that the "experience of the Holy Spirit is as specific as the living beings who experience the Spirit, and as varied as the living beings who experience the Spirit are varied."

The relative marginalization¹⁴⁶ of both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology symbolize a detachment from convention, tradition, and uniformity. For instance, Welker (1987:20) notes that "in rituals, human beings abstract from the immediate physical needs of the body, and they detach themselves from their immediate physical environment". According to Chan (1998:48), Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality forces the broader church to "recognize that the Christian life is more than just a predictable pattern subject entirely to human control" such as common to religious ritual. Thus, both the Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists share a "this-worldliness" uncharacteristic of ritualistic movements that allows for a focus on the diverse realities, needs, and experiences not only of the Spirit, but of the world as well. Incidentally, while Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality and Process-Relational philosophy may appear esoteric on the surface, similarity between the perspectives of both traditions exists in relation to an embrace of the diverse realities of the world.

However, in both traditions, diversity is seen primarily in terms of holistic unity.

¹⁴⁶ That is to say, neither the Pentecostal-Charismatic nor Process-Relational tradition is considered "mainline".

In the African Pentecostal context, the notion of “spirit” is typically associated with wind; that is “the personal life force that gives being and life, strength and power, harmonizing a person with the rest of humanity and the universe” (Anderson 2003:179). Thus cultural unity in diversity is a shared value between both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. The “rediscovery of pneumatology” by the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements has to do mainly with the spiritual freedom to “incarnate” the gospel anew into diverse cultures: to believe in the power of the Holy Spirit is to believe that God can and wants to speak to peoples today through cultural mediations other than those of Western Christianity. Being Pentecostal would mean to affirm such spiritual freedom” (Sepulveda 1997:158). Gary Babcock (1997:140) notes that the role of the Spirit in the African Charismatic movement is closely related to the “theme of wholeness, in terms of the perception and realization of the vitalist principle that ultimately binds the whole society and world together, in the normal expectation of healing and visions, in the simple celebration of life.”

Further, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements exhibit a general sensitivity to diversity in the sexes, ages, and spiritual gifting. Sanders (1996:10) notes that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements offer “a model of cooperative ministry and empowerment among the sexes, where authority and recognition are granted to either sex based upon the exercise of spiritual gifts”. Patterson and Rybarczyk (2007:2) describe the populist nature of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements as a conviction that “all believers are given spiritual gifts, *charismata*, for the edification of the church and cooperation with the Spirit of God in establishing the Kingdom of God.” The Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective on mutual cooperation with the Spirit is not considered merely a “democratic affirmation of the rites or equality of all” but a “biblically and theologically based impetus that seeks to involve each believer in the life and work” of the Spirit in the world (Patterson and Rybarczyk 1997:2). In like manner, Catholic Charismatic Cardinal Suenens (1974) compares the operation of the gifts of the Spirit to an organist, wherein the melody that the organist desires cannot be produced unless each key responds properly to the organist’s touch. Suenens believes that the operation of

the gifts of the Spirit is vital to the overall health of the Church (Suenens 1974:109-110). Thus Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents embrace the conviction that “there are as many gifts available as there are needs in the life of the church. God delights to use us to meet these needs” (Menzies 2000:183). In terms of *concursum*, diverse human beings cooperate with the diverse actions of the Spirit to affect change in a diverse world.

From a Process-Relational perspective, Frankenberry (1978:259) proposes that the “empirical dimension of religious experience” is founded in Whitehead’s notion of the “value matrix of existence” and “religious meaning is grasped in the moment of consciousness which fuses the value of the individual for itself, the value of the diverse individuals for each other, and the value of the world-totality”. According to the Process-Relational perspective, the Spirit is cooperating with the world, drawing it toward “greater complexity, deeper intensity, and wider range of contrasts within the organic unity of an individual or society” (Frankenberry 1978:259). The notion of diversity is implicit in Process-Relational theology, especially in terms of the interrelatedness of all things. Diverse experiences of a diverse world are important because they demonstrate the way in which all things are related to one another and to God. Further, Cobb (1965) notes that “most of what is distinctively human is extremely diverse in its human manifestations. This diversity is a matter both of the extent to which the potentialities are developed and of the form which they take in their parallel development” (Cobb 1965). In other words, as human beings realize God’s initial aims for their lives, their diversity of potential and actualization is enhanced and thereby, the world itself and God are also enriched. Such a notion is not altogether dissimilar from the Pentecostal-Charismatic emphasis on the *charismata* as diverse gifts of the Spirit for diverse people to actualize in a diverse world. Therefore, the similar valuation of diversity in both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions is evident, especially in terms of how human beings relate to God in the divine-human *concursum*. God desires diverse human experiences because they enrich the temporal, consequent nature of God; at the same time human beings desire diverse experiences of the Spirit because they

meet immediate human needs.

7.3.5.2 Spiritual Experience applied to Physical Needs

Because the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational traditions value diversity in the world, such diverse experiences are directly applicable to physical needs. As Moltmann (1992:220-21) notes, the work of the Spirit in the world is that of “gathering people experiencing selflessness and without public means of power to the sphere of God’s reign in which people are empowered to be who they are called by God to be; acting as the Spirit of deliverance from human distress and sin; and restoring both solidarity and the capacity for communal action”. Such a conception of *concursum* would be readily embraced by both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists because both traditions comprehend the relationship between spiritual experiences and the alleviation of physical suffering in the world. For instance, Anderson (2000:120-126) notes that Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have come a long way towards “meeting physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people the Majority World, offering solutions to life’s problems and ways to cope in what was often a threatening and hostile world.” In like manner, the holism emphasized in Process-Relational theology correlates with such a vision.

While Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents strongly emphasize pneumatology and the experience of the Spirit, they have been confronted with the realities of physical human needs due to their expansion in the Developing World. Menzies (2000:168) maintains that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements should identify more strongly with the “revealed will of God to move against physical suffering.” The doctrine of healing in the atonement, according to Menzies, “not only calls us to take an aggressive posture toward physical suffering, it also challenges us to see the largeness of God's cosmic plan and concern. God is concerned about the physical dimensions of life, about physical suffering, and about the [created] world.” Healing, therefore, serves as a “catalyst for our involvement in Christ’s ministry to a broken world”. Further, Chilean Pentecostal scholar Juan Sepúlveda (1997:53-68) notes that the blending of Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality

combined with Liberation theology promotes the “rediscovery of pneumatology” and of “the action of the Holy Spirit in the church and the world”. For Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, when divine *concursum* is operationalized, God’s work in human beings is demonstrated in the physical world.

Pentecostal-Charismatic *concursum* is a reminder that the “holistic nature of God’s redemptive purposes” includes the physical body, the environment, and the world in which we live. Thus, “to dismiss the world in which we live, God’s world, as if it held little significance for the Creator. The implications of the foregoing are apparent” (Menzies 2000:166). In the African Pentecostal context, power is conceived as corporate, “where the Holy Spirit is perceived as not for individual empowerment only but for the overall good of the whole community” (Anderson 2003:182); a notion to which the West should take notice, Anderson argues. In like manner, Menzies (2000:183) argues that Pentecostals should “ask for the Lord’s guidance and power; but, by all means, respond to needs”. Moreover, Anderson (2003:179) noted that African Pentecostal churches “presume an interpenetration of physical, spiritual, and social realities”, demonstrating that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents recognize that spiritual reality implicitly converges with physical reality in divine-human *concursum*. However, Culpepper (1977:166) notes that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend to demonstrate “more zeal in ministering to victims of society’s ills than in dealing effectively with the roots of problems by seeking to bring about change in society”. In other words, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents may not be as savvy to the epistemic causes of social and physical problems as other traditions, but their willingness and commitment to address such needs should not be underestimated.

Process-Relational theists similar affirm emphasizing a response to physical needs in the world. For example, Welker (1987:20) interprets Whiteheadian metaphysics in terms of a “actual occasions for a relative actual world”. The reality of the temporal world is not illusory: it is real to human beings and it is real to God. Thus, physical realities are as real inasmuch as spiritual realities are real. When there is human suffering in personal, communal, or global contexts, humanity is compelled to respond to such needs in cooperation with God. Pinnock

(2006:144) views *concurus* in terms of a “holistic mission in the power of God” whereby the Spirit “awakens us to life to enable us to liberate others”; Pinnock’s definition perhaps best represents the similarity between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational views of reality, especially in light of his position as an Open-Evangelical theist. Both traditions converge on a mutual motivation to apply spiritual experiences to the alleviation of the world’s immediate physical needs.

From the Process-Relational perspective, Murray (1988) notes that “in the contemporary world, many people, groups of people, women, blacks, the handicapped, Third World peoples, the earth itself as co-victim” have been denied their rightful place in the world. Griffin (2000:23) notes that theology itself is “a particular way of understanding the things of God makes the most sense, and provides greatest illumination, in the overall context of one's thinking and living”, making most theologies of God thoroughly operational; that is, practical. Both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists seek to apply their spiritual and experiential theologies to address physical needs and physical suffering in the world. Kärkkäinen (2002:129) argues that “*charismata* are not given to us so that we can flee from this world into a world of religious dreams, but [sic!] they are intended to witness to the liberating lordship of Christ in this world’s conflicts”. Furthermore, Moltmann (1992) insists that the Holy Spirit empowers human creatures for service in the world, in prophetic speech, liberation, and ecological movements. While the *charismata* may be interpreted in purely ecclesial terms and for purely ecclesial function, both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists envision the operation of spiritual gifts not only in the church, but in the unremitting transformation of the physical world.

The shared vision for the Spirit’s work in transforming the physical world is evident in both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. According to Pinnock (2006:209-210), the divine-human *concurus* reveals examples of “self-sacrificing love, care about community, longing for justice” thus “wherever people love one another, care for the sick, and make peace not war”, there is evidence that human beings are cooperating with God in the

world. Such values represent common ground upon which Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists would agree. Both traditions would affirm Welker's conviction that the Spirit "heals and revives human hearts and human societies, causing them to grow together anew. The Spirit restores and strengthens communities of creaturely solidarity" (Welker 1992:28). And ultimately, both traditions would agree that if such healing is the primary function of the Spirit's work in the world, then divine-human *concurus* must represent an impetus toward spiritual experience applied to meeting physical needs. The Holy Spirit is immanent in the world and the world is immanent in the Spirit; the Spirit is operational in human experience, drawing creation toward wholeness.

In this section, the similarities between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concurus* were explored and documented. In most cases, there is an opportunity for synthetic interpretation of *concurus* by directly comparing the literature from one tradition with the literature from the other. The major similarity that was noted is experientialism. The section was introduced by noting that the ideals of both Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology have more affinity to postmodernism than modernism insofar as both traditions share a common rejection of naturalistic determinism. Four subsections comprise the documentation of themes that further demonstrate similarities. The first subsection ended with the conclusion that both traditions would more strongly ascribe to some form of idealism rather than dualism; that is, they both affirm that the human mind or the Spirit can influence matter in compelling ways. The reality of prayer is a documented example from both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational literature. The second subsection ended with the conclusion that the common factor in the conceptualization of *concurus* in both traditions is an emphasis divine immanence: God acting from "within rather than from without". The third subsection ended with the conclusion that both traditions affirm that God and human beings together seek novelty in the world. Dynamic, spontaneous experiences and unexpected possibilities for the future are valued by both the Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists. The fourth subsection ended with a conclusion that there are

notable similarities between operational Pentecostal-Charismatic and philosophical Process-Relational theologies of *concursum*, especially in relation to the human experience of spiritual gifts. Finally, the fifth section comprised a documentation of the ways in which both traditions affirm the mutuality of divine action and human responsibility in the world; this ideal was demonstrated through two themes, diverse experiences and experience applied to physical needs. The final subsection ended with a conclusion that both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational similarly conceive of *concursum* in terms of an application of spiritual experiences to the alleviation of physical needs.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter included a critical comparison of the similarities and the differences between the respective theological positions concerning the notion of *concursum* in both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions. The comparison yielded a qualitative analysis and synthesis to establish whether the common ground (similarities) will allow sufficient leverage to address significant differences. The hypothesis proposed for this investigation was that compatibilities will sufficiently leverage incompatibilities between the traditions. In this final section, it is demonstrated that while compatibilities indeed leverage differences, they may not be sufficient to leverage socio-linguistic barriers between the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational relational theology. Many of the differences that were identified in this chapter are superficial rather than substantial. Unfortunately though, such apparent differences can significantly impede the mutual transformation of both traditions. This final section includes an analysis of both apparent and significant differences between the traditions, a synthesis of similarities between the traditions, and a final subsection that includes a brief proposal for mutual transformation through synthesis.

7.4.1 Analysis: Apparent and Significant Differences

In this chapter, four major thematic differences were identified from the literature and five major thematic similarities were identified from the literature. In order to

determine whether or not leverage between compatibilities and incompatibilities is possible, a methodology of ranking is appropriate for comparison. The differences between the corpuses of literature are ranked according to two categories: apparent differences and significant differences. Apparent differences represent superficial, surface-level differences that may appear obvious from a sociological perspective. The category of apparent differences is based primarily on differences in language, terminology, religious expression, and professed theology. However, based on the critical comparison of the literature, the concrete differences are more than a matter of language; rather, they are a matter of philosophical and theological reasoning. Thus, the category of significant differences represents incompatibilities that cannot be easily dismissed or explained merely in terms of language. The interaction of the two categories is important insofar as they illustrate the positional rank of differences when determining whether or not leverage is ultimately possible.

Apparent differences between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational conceptions of *concursum* are ranked as follows: 1) Fundamentalism versus Liberalism, 2) Exclusivism versus Universalism, 3) Supernaturalism versus Metaphysical Naturalism, and 4) Reactive versus Implicit *Concursum*. Significant differences are ranked as follows: 1) Supernaturalism versus Metaphysical Naturalism, 2) Reactive versus Implicit *Concursum*, 3) Exclusivism versus Universalism, 4) Fundamentalism versus Liberalism. The following table represents the ranking of apparent and similar differences visually:

Apparent Rank	Significant Rank	Difference
1	4	Fundamentalism versus Liberalism
2	3	Exclusivism versus Universalism
3	1	Supernaturalism versus Metaphysical Naturalism
4	2	Reactive versus Implicit <i>Concursum</i>

The ranking of differences in apparent and significant categories were not

determined arbitrarily. The ranking of the categories of significant differences are distinct from the categories of apparent differences. The ranks for significant differences are based on the following rationale: When identifying incompatibilities between the operational Pentecostal-Charismatic and philosophical Process-Relational concept of *concurus*, the issue of supernaturalism versus naturalistic determinism is most significant. The issue is not a matter of mere language or terminology, but a definite point of departure between the two traditions, especially in relation to professed beliefs and consequent actions. The reality is that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents fundamentally believe that God supernaturally breaks into the physical world to disrupt natural processes while Process-Relational theists maintain that no such supernatural intervention actually occurs in *concurus*. The second most significant difference between the two traditions is that of reactive versus implicit *concurus*. This incompatibility is a byproduct of the first significant difference. The Pentecostal-Charismatic perspective is based on the rationale that if God can supernaturally intervene to change circumstances in the world, then human beings must be able to solicit such action from God. Process-Relational theists, however, affirm that while human beings can cooperate with the divine will, they simultaneously deny that human beings can effectively beseech God to do something God would not otherwise already do in the world. The third significant difference is that although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents understand the nature of their relation to Spirit as exclusive, Process-Relational theists understand the nature of their relation to the Spirit as universal. This difference may be irreconcilable on soteriological grounds. That is, because Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents align with the evangelical prescription for salvation, they conceive such an initiatory event as a prerequisite to an infilling of the Holy Spirit. Process-Relational theists, however, would see the Spirit's work as universal and without restrictive prerequisites on behalf of human beings. The final significant difference is that of fundamentalism versus liberalism. Though this is an obvious difference between the traditions, it ranks low in comparison with the first three incompatibilities because it is least significant to the theme of *concurus*, which is the focus of this thesis.

The apparent ranks are based on the following rationale: although a fundamentalist orientation seems to intellectually alienate Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents from their more liberal Process-Relational counterparts, such distinctions are primarily a matter of language. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents account for their personal experiences of the Spirit in primarily biblical terms while Process-Relational theists account for their personal experiences of the Spirit in primarily philosophical terms. As the most apparent difference, “fundamentalism versus liberalism” is more a matter of language than substance. Second, the apparent difference between the exclusivity of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and the universality of Process-Relational theology is evident from the literature. The doctrine of the initiatory event of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in operational Pentecostal-Charismatic theology contrasts with the universal Spirit of Process-Relational theology. Third, the Pentecostal-Charismatic emphasis on supernatural intervention compared to the Process-Relational emphasis on metaphysical naturalism is notable, but again, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents rely heavily on biblical language while Process-Relational theists rely primarily on the language of philosophy. Finally, the fourth apparent difference is that of the Pentecostal-Charismatic emphasis on human interaction with God to seek answers for prayer compared to the Process-Relational claim that God always working toward the best possible good and does not require human persuasion, or at the very least, does not directly reward human piety. This apparent difference is ranked last because it is not obvious in the literature; the difference had to be inferred and abstracted based on the described religious behavior, especially prayer, of Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists. Apparent differences should be understood in terms of a linear progression from the most obvious incompatibility to the least obvious incompatibility.

7.4.2 Synthesis: Ranking and Leveraging Similarities

In light of the analysis of differences between the operational Pentecostal-Charismatic and philosophical Process-Relational concept of *concursum*, similarities can be set in context, ranked, and synthesized. Whether or not

incompatibilities between the two traditions can be sufficiently leveraged by compatibilities is the crucial question that has to be addressed in order to test the hypothesis of this study. Ultimately, the synthesis of similarities in light of differences allows for testing such leverage. The methodology employed in this section is that of ranking the compatibilities and comparing the highest ranked similarities with the highest ranked significant differences. Such comparison aids in the determination of whether or not leverage is possible.

There were five themes identified as similarities between the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology. The similarities are ranked in terms of strongest supportive evidence in the literature of both traditions. The similarities are ranked as follows: 1) Spirit and the World, 2) Idealism over Determinism, 3) Immediacy and Synergy, 4) Dynamism and Possibility, and 5) Operationalization and Actualization. Further, a logical sequence is identifiable in the rank of similarities between the two traditions. In effect, both traditions would agree to the following ideal: The world is diverse and full of physical need (1), but both the human spirit and the Holy Spirit can change the world (2) because of the immanence of God in the world (3), which allows for dynamic new possibilities (4) that can be actualized through the *concurrent* actualization of spiritual experience (5). This logical sequence demonstrates the shared theological assumptions upon which both traditions rely. The following chart represents the ranking of apparent and similar differences visually:

Rank	Similarity
1	Spirit and the World
2	Idealism over Determinism
3	Immediacy and Synergy
4	Dynamism and Possibility
5	Operationalization and Actualization

The first similarity indicates that both traditions affirm that the reality of physical needs in the world should not be ignored. Both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents

and Process-Relational theists recognize that the world is not to be escaped from, but transformed by a cooperation of both divine and human agency. The second similarity indicates that both traditions reject the premise that mind or spirit cannot influence matter; although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents affirm language that suggests supernatural intervention, both traditions affirm that the natural world can be changed and affected. The third similarity indicates that both traditions affirm the immediacy of spiritual experience in the world through divine immanence; although Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents at times utilize biblically literal descriptions that suggest transcendence, most of their spiritual experiences of the Spirit more strongly emphasize immanence. In like manner, Process-Relational theists affirm divine immanence, God in the world and the world in God, through an affirmation of *panentheism*. The fourth similarity indicates that both traditions recognize that the world is not as it must be; in other words, possibilities allow for unexpected changes the world. For Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, such changes suggest “miracles”; for Process-Relational theists such changes suggest novelty. The fifth similarity indicates that such changes can be affected in the world through operationalization and actualization of spiritual experiences. For Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents, such actualization occurs through the impartation and application of the *charismata*. For Process-Relational theists, such actualization occurs through responding to the divine lure and exercising freedom in the world.

A direct comparison of the ranked similarities and differences allows for a determination of sufficient leverage. Two of the identified differences, Fundamentalism versus Liberalism and Supernaturalism versus Metaphysical Naturalism, are largely matters of language, tradition, and dogma rather than matters of substantial difference. Conversely, the other two differences, Exclusivism versus Universalism and Reactive versus Implicit *Concursus*, are matters of direct experience and religious behavior; thus, they are not as easily dismissed as matters of language or reconciled in light of similarities. However, the observation that only two of the four differences are more superficial than substantial indicates that there may be sufficient opportunity to leverage such

differences by considering similarities. Although some differences are indeed profound, the similarities documented in the previous sections are of greater intensity and thereby permit opportunities for dialog and mutual transformation. Although Open-Evangelical theism appears to be a bridge between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theology, its adherents also seem to be bound by language and dogma; namely, attempting to maintain Evangelical doctrinal orthodoxy. The barriers of language, tradition, and dogmatism may be too entrenched to permit a fully acceptable Process-Relational interpretation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic experience, or to make Pentecostal-Charismatic claims philosophically acceptable to Process-Relational theists. Ultimately, the research question can be answered affirmatively and conditionally: yes, according to the literature of both traditions, similarities sufficiently leverage differences, but socio-linguistic barriers may obstruct meaningful mutual transformation.

7.4.3 Toward Mutual Transformation: Opportunities for Synthesis

Despite the limitations noted in the previous section, there is a significant opportunity for the mutual transformation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology, especially in terms of each tradition's conception of *concursum*. In this final section, the proposal is made that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements can benefit from the philosophical and scientific sensitivity of Process-Relational theology while Process-Relational theology can benefit from the experiential enthusiasm of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. As Chan (1998:39) notes, Pentecostal spirituality "is not just a twentieth-century reality that has to be reckoned with because it has become so widespread" but "encapsulates an essential component of the Christian tradition". The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements cannot be flippantly dismissed by the academy, nor simply eschewed by intellectuals for their naive spiritual fervor. However, Chan (1998:39) argues that Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality must incorporate into the larger Christian tradition if it is to have long-term viability. Cobb (2003:8) would agree with Chan, especially in light of the notion that many of the promises of power and supernaturalism made by

Pentecostal-Charismatic leaders fall short of reality. Cobb notes that “millions reject Christianity” because they are “encouraged to have unrealistic expectations”. Further, Cobb argues that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents are also “encouraged to think that controlling everything is a supreme virtue to emulate this virtue in finite ways... a very different kind of divine power and Paul’s celebration of God’s weakness, the church continues to worship God’s controlling power and even to remake Jesus in that image.” Further, Process-Relational theists insist that Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents define clearly “what they mean by ‘experience’. Otherwise a vacuous ‘cult of experience’, too much in keeping with the contemporary celebration of ‘feelings’ and the endless search for new sources of arousal and exhilaration” could “undermine the authenticity” of their movements (Schner 1992:41). Although Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality has fueled its global expansion over the past century, the sobering reality of its shortcomings should be taken into account, as noted by Cobb and other Process-Relational theists.

Pentecostal scholar Nañez (2005) defends the cooperative utilization of philosophy and theology. Nañez (2005:176) notes that “the art or practice of philosophizing is meant to lead us away from superficial answers and into more detailed deliberation of why we believe what we claim to believe”. When Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents “fail to engage in serious contemplation of life’s dominant issues” they place themselves and their entire society in “a precarious position” (Nañez 2005:176). That is to say, Pentecostals and Charismatics must engage in the philosophical undertakings of post-modern culture rather than retreat from them. However, Cobb (2003) also notes that a total retreat from biblical spirituality into an uncritical embrace of post-modernity is equally unfavorable. Cobb (2003:57) notes that “in changing, we are cutting off many of our roots rather than sending our roots deeper”. Thus, Process-Relational theists recognize that they too must situate themselves in the context of the historic Christian faith or also face the danger of becoming irrelevant.

The most effective means by which the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have been relevant to the lives of their adherents is by means of operationalizing their

theology; that is, theology that is “lived” not merely professed. As Hauerwas (1989:171) contends, “the challenge facing the church is not theory but practice – not so much showing that Christianity is intellectually plausible but as enacting the gospel in recognizable signs of the Kingdom”. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents have appropriated such an operational theology. Similarly, Process-Relational theists may benefit from candid dialog with Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents in terms of the successful operationalization of their theology. Undoubtedly, the most effective theological operationalization of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements is the actualization and application of the *charismata*.

Due to the strength of similarities between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational emphases on idealism, immanence, dynamism, and actualization, there is potential for a compatible conception of the *charismata*. Hollengweger (2002:665) concludes that the biblical prescription for the operation of the *charismata* was that “love must govern as well the exercise of all spiritual gifts”, a sentiment that both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists would affirm in principle. However, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents do exhibit a tendency toward overemphasizing the spectacular or miraculous aspects of spiritual gifts, thereby accentuating supernaturalism. Contrariwise, Process-Relational theists would caution exaggeration of divine-human *concursum* in the operationalization of spiritual gifts. From a pneumatological perspective, Kärkkäinen (2002:33) concludes that there should be a “balance between not restricting the exercise of the Spirit’s gifts” and not “overemphasizing or abusing them”. While Process-Relational theists may affirm that the *charismata* may be a *concursum* divine-human relation that allows for novelty and new possibilities in the world, they also recognize that “only a few of the pure possibilities are real possibilities for any occasion” (Cobb 2003:25). Nevertheless, both Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational theists would affirm that what the *charismata* truly represent is the interrelatedness of the human spirit and the Holy Spirit. That is, the Spirit can guide and lead human beings in a dynamic experience of novel possibilities in the world. As Cobb (2003:105) notes, when “we live more in harmony with God’s purposes, we will act or pray as we are led, believing that

what we do matters to others and to God as well as to ourselves". In both traditions, the *charismata* ultimately signify that divine-human interaction is not only possible, but mutually significant.

Finally, the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions share the potential to meet the universal need for a meaningful pneumatology, a faith that is not only intellectually plausible but experiential viable. Such a synthesis, both experiential and intellectual religion, is most sought in the post-modern context. As Dryer (1998) observes:

Many faithful desire to encounter a Holy Spirit who brings new life their spirits in the concrete circumstances of their lives and who renews the face of the earth as we approach the third millennium. Not unlike earlier times of perceived crisis, Christians today attempt to reconnect with the wellsprings of the faith, hoping these roots will bring stability, order, and meaning to a postmodern world that is often felt to be hopelessly fragmented. In particular, many seek to retrieve a three-personed God who is related to human community and to the entire universe in love, challenge, and care -- a personal God who identifies with human joys and sorrows.

In other words, post-modern humanity is searching for a meaningful expression of faith, one that is rooted in the biblical tradition but compatible with the realities of science. Moreover, post-modern humanity is looking for the experience of a God who is thoroughly related to the human creatures, a divine-human relationship wherein authentic *concursum* occurs. The synthesis of Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational *concursum* may provide a viable foundation for a meaningful post-modern faith. As Pinnock (1996:137) notes, the best case scenario for an understanding of *concursum* in post-modernity is "God's manifested presence coupled with unrestricted human openness", but the worst case scenario is "withdrawal from God coupled with human indifference". Such withdrawal is a very real possibility, either because faith is experientially deficient or intellectually untenable. However, a meaningful, mutual transformation of both traditions may make possible the realization of a holistic vision for pneumatology wherein "divine revelation and human experience belong together; they are not opposite of one another" (Kärkkäinen 2002:127). Ultimately, the hope for a shared theological

conception of *concurus* in both the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology is the mutual affirmation that “what we do matters to God” (Cobb 2003:77).



CHAPTER 8: Implications

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is intended to be an epilogue that includes very brief explorations of the ecclesial and social implications related to the conclusions in the previous chapter. Compatibility between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational notions of *concursum* effectively opens the door for significant dialog between the two traditions, not only in the church, but in the world as well. This chapter is divided into two primary sections, ecclesial implications and social implications, each with four subsections. Ultimately, the implications noted in this chapter are intended as a starting point for further dialog and research rather than a series of conclusions.

8.2 Ecclesial Implications

There are several ecclesial implications for the compatibility between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational notions of *concursum*, the most significant of which is the possibility for mutual transformation of both traditions. Altizer (1977:3) notes that “pietism was the real source of post- Enlightenment Christian theology, but even pietistic theology has become impossible” in the twentieth and twenty first centuries. While the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements find themselves in the pietistic tradition, their long-term sustainability is questionable. Process-Relational theology, on the other hand, “calls us neither to embrace nor to shut out the modern world” (Griffin 1977:5), which may in effect, prove helpful to providing philosophically sound explanations for Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences. Most importantly, “changes in historical context also lead to changes in [any] belief system, so what seemed beyond all doubt in one generation may cease to be credible in later times” (Cobb 2003:60); these are ecclesial and theological realities with which the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements must eventually come to terms.

Process-Relational theists argue that “for a biblical understanding of the interaction between God and creatures in a real history, [classical theology] substituted the Greek notion of a timeless eternity. It replaced a God of loving

vulnerability with a God who could not be affected by the suffering of the creatures or by their prayers” (Cobb 2003:80). Such concepts of God are not only incompatible with Process-Relational theology, but also incompatible with the operational theology of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. In this section, four ecclesial implications are presented: the renewal of Process-Relational spirituality, the intellectualization of Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences, ecumenical dialog between Evangelical and Mainline denominations, and the tempered operation of the *charismata*. Each of these ecclesial implications is intended to be mutually beneficial to both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions.

8.2.1 Renewal of Process-Relational Spirituality

Pinnock (2006:170) notes that the “problem of Christians who are experientially deficient, who do not know the Spirit’s power”. While many argue that “Pentecostalism is an experience in search of a theology” (Bowdle 2000:14), it may be equally arguable that Process-Relational theology is a theology in search of an experience. The fervent religious enthusiasm evident in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements may serve to inform Process-Relational theists in terms of religious expression of their philosophical, metaphysical, and theological systems.

Cobb (2003) recognizes that Process-Relational theology should not dispense of all biblical language, practices, and rituals. To do so would mean discontinuity with the broader Christian movement. Cobb (2003:60) asks, “What maintains the unity of [a] movement? ... continuation of and development from what has happened before”. For example, Melse (1993) seeks to redefine prayer in terms compatible with Process-Relational theology. Melse (1993:111) notes that “prayer should be an act whereby we center ourselves around and align ourselves with the sacred”. However, while such notions of prayer and religious practice are philosophically and theologically tenable, they are difficult to translate into terms of popular expression, especially at the lay level. Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality may aid in the development of a more enthusiastic, experiential

Process-Relational spirituality. The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have been successful in this regard largely because they have applied biblical imagery, practices, and spirituality to contemporary social and physical needs.

The principal criticisms of contemporary Process-Relational theology are that it is too philosophical, too academic, and too inaccessible at the lay-level. Arguably, such inaccessibility has prevented Process-Relational theology from gaining widespread support and personal appropriation by the laity. Although many Process-Relational theists have formulated a Process-Relational spirituality, the practice of such spirituality has been largely perceived as obscure and impractical by individual Christians. Process-Relational theists may learn from the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements insofar as they have demonstrated how a theological perspective can gain widespread support across countless denominational lines. The Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have shown that such trans-denominational renewal, enthusiasm, and expansion is possible.

8.2.2 Intellectualization of Pentecostal-Charismatic Experience

Pentecostal-Charismatic scholars have noted that “Pentecostalism has been at odds with intellectualism since its inception” (Dirksen 2000:1). Eventually, as the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements continue to expand, they will be confronted by the realities of science, progress, and technology. Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences will have to be reconciled with the truths of science. As Whitehead (1954:23) notes, “mere ritual and emotion cannot maintain themselves untouched by intellectuality”. In due course, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements will have to come to terms with intellectual realities. In sum, “Pentecostals are long overdue for a radical attitude adjustment respecting the academy” (Bowdle 2000:11).

While Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend to emphasize the experience of the Spirit over reason and intellect, Kärkkäinen (2002:118) makes an important observation:

The Spirit of which the New Testament speaks is no ‘haven of ignorance’ (*asylum ignorantiae*) for pious experience, which exempts

one from all obligation to account for its contents. The Christian message will not regain its missionary power... unless this falsification of the Holy Spirit is set aside which has developed in the history of piety.

The pietistic emotionalism that characterizes the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements is not sustainable in the long term. According to Whitehead (1954:28), mass religious movements, such as the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, suffer from an “atavistic relapse into primitive barbarism” by “appealing to the psychology of the herd, away from the intuition of the few”. While such mass movements inevitably devolve into conformity, Process-Relational theology may aid the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements in developing new philosophical insights into their own experiences. As Mesle (1993:44) notes, “one of the great virtues of the process theology is the ability to offer views of God in the world that hang together, that accept and build on what we know of nature through scientific investigation”. Further, Tracy (1977:31) argues that “we should employ Whitehead’s philosophical doctrine not solely because it is useful for articulating the Christian vision and for criticizing classical formulations of Christian cognitive beliefs but because it is coherent, adequate, and appropriate: in a word true.”

Further, Whitehead (1954:76-77) argued the case that theology cannot be sheltered from science, noting that “you cannot shelter theology from science, or science from theology; nor can you shelter either of them from metaphysics, or metaphysics from either of them. There is no shortcut to truth”. Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents should take this principle into consideration as they contend with the realities of a post-modern world. Nevertheless, “Pentecostal scholars have been enriched intellectually by the challenges and engagements from those outside the Pentecostal camp” (Bowdle 2000:18); the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have proven to be resilient, and with a sufficient intellectual basis, could continue to expand in a healthy, sustainable way.

8.2.3 Ecumenical Dialog between Evangelical and Mainline Denominations

Historically, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements and Process-Relational theology represent two ends of the theological spectrum: evangelical pietism and intellectual liberalism. However, the similarities identified in the previous chapter demonstrate that “no church can claim a monopoly of the Spirit, and no tradition is a specifically ‘spirited’ one”; any discussion of the Spirit must always be contextual and therefore culture-specific” (Kärkkäinen 2002:9). Although there are significant differences between the two traditions, the similarities certainly open the door for viable ecumenical dialog between Evangelical and Mainline denominations. The mutual experiences of the Spirit “can be articulated in ways that make sense in changing contexts” (Cobb 2003:59), bridging not only religious barriers, but cultural barriers as well.

While Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents advocate a return to biblically literal spirituality, Process-Relational theists do not altogether advocate an entirely modern or post-modern faith. On this point of contact, ecumenical dialog is possible. As Cobb (2003:60) argues, “the death of one symbol need not be the death of the movement”. As each tradition is mutually transformed through ecumenical dialog, neither tradition must give up its identity in the larger Christian movement. Kärkkäinen (2002:9) asserts that “listening to the voices from places once considered the margins of Christian theology”, which most certainly includes both Process-Relational and Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, “sensitizes us to the necessary pluralism of pneumatologies”. Ultimately, such dialog allows for mutual enrichment, whereby both traditions can “nondefensively embrace the truth and wisdom wherever they are to be found, not by holding fast to its old forms, [so] that the church can be true to its own past and move confidently into the future” (Cobb2003:62).

8.2.4 Tempered Operation of the *Charismata*

Although Process-Relational theologians affirm the possibilities of miracles and genuine novelty, they do not emphasize such statistical improbabilities as normative, nor do they ascribe such events to unilateral divine action. While Process-Relational theists may argue that God may have positively influenced the

occurrence of a miracle, they would in no way affirm that God unilaterally coerced the physical events comprising such a miracle. In other words, Process-Relational theists maintain that God does not supernaturally intervene to disrupt the natural order, even in the case of a miracle. On the other hand, overemphasis on miracles and the ascription of such events to supernatural intervention are characteristic of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. As Mesle (1993:118) notes, “a careless theology of miracles can be cruelly unkind”. Such overemphasis on miracles leads to high expectations and ultimately, disappointments (Anderson 2004:198, Anderson 1991:41-6, 104-20; Anderson 2000:239, 244-55). Such disappointment, especially when amplified on a large scale, cannot be sustained in the long term and will inevitably disrupt the health of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements as a whole. Thus, a Process-Relational reinterpretation of miracles and of the operation of the *charismata* may provide an adequate philosophical basis for Pentecostal-Charismatic claims. Although Process-Relational theology is not the only theological or philosophical system that is compatible with the theology of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements, it has potential to aid in tempering extremist tendencies. The challenges, however, will be in distilling the complex philosophical categories of Process-Relational theology into language compatible with the biblically-oriented language of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Nevertheless, both traditions seek to “increase their ability to minister to the world” (Cobb 2003:87).

8.3 Social Implications

There are several social implications for the compatibility between Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational notions of *concursum*; most significantly, that both traditions affirm the possibility of social change and have a genuine concern for human suffering. Both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists recognize that “it is with human beings that God has the best means of working in the world to bring about healing” (Mesle 1993:121). In fact, Process-Relational theists emphasize that “the more fully God is present, the more fully we are human” (Cobb 2003:39). Four social implications are presented in this section: the possibility for social change, a movement toward positive socio-

religious engagement, a concern for healing and justice, and the development of a cosmic concern and universal pneumatological vision for the world.

8.3.1 Possibility for Social Change

Although many traditions in classical theology, especially in evangelical denominations, are “quick to hold others responsible for their actions and to blame them for their sins in spite of the supposition that God controls everything” (Cobb 2003:7), both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists see themselves as redemptive forces in the world with genuine freedom to effect social change. Both traditions understand that “the world is not the way God wants it to be. Unjust social structures do not reflect God’s vision for us” (Mesle 1993:79). Because both traditions affirm novelty, potentiality, and possibility, the opportunities for positive social change are significant. For Process-Relational theists, the Spirit is “not a miraculous supernatural energy overwhelming and filling up persons ... in contrast, the Spirit denotes the fullest expression of the potentials for creaturely existence” (Kärkkäinen 2002:154). Similarly, Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents have matured and have come to terms with the reality of suffering around them; and consequently believe they can do something to alleviate that suffering (Menzies 2000). In sum, both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists see significant social change as a real possibility; both actively engage in effecting such change.

8.3.2 Movement toward Positive Socio-Religious Engagement

If social change is theologically and sociologically possible, that change must be *salutogenic* (Cobb 2001); it must be a force of healing and wholeness in the world. As Cobb (2003:23) notes, God is calling humanity “toward new contrasts that involve the sacrifice of earlier assurances. To follow God is repeatedly to die to what we have been in order to rise to what is now possible”. If both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists seek positive socio-religious engagement, it must be in terms of “liberating human minds, hearts and bodies” (Mesle 1993:114). Such liberation “also liberates God to act more effectively in the world” (Mesle 1993:114). That is not to say, however, that Process-Relational

theology or the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements should align entirely with liberation theology, although there is some affinity for both traditions. Positive socio-religious engagement simply means the formulation of a theologically sensitive and socially responsible response to “personal injustice and meaningless suffering” (Cobb 2003:5). Both traditions seek to be positive forces of healing in the world and ultimately, both traditions should seek opportunities for tangible cooperation.

8.3.3 Concern for Healing and Justice

Generally, an authentic concern for healing and justice is shared by both Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents and Process-Relational theists. Because of expansion in the Developing World, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements have been confronted with significant human problems, from poverty and disease to violence and war. Although early Pentecostals attempted to withdraw from problems in the world, contemporary Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents are actively involved in seeking solutions to problems related to human suffering (Menzies 2000:182, Anderson 2004:199). Although some religious practices have “admonished people to accept their poverty or their oppression as God’s will” (Mesle 1993:114), Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents do not settle for such a concession to suffering.

In like manner, Process-Relational theists are concerned with the problems of the world and seek to be agents of healing and justice. As Mesle (1993:24) notes, “we should act like the God of process theology, doing what lies within our power to prevent evil and ease suffering”. However, Mesle (1993:79) also contends that major social problems such as “poverty, hunger, and violence are trials intentionally put into the world most effectively, most quickly, through us”. In other words, Process-Relational theists assert that most human suffering is caused by human decisions, or in most cases, human beings inflicting evil on one another. Perhaps the reality of human responsibility on the Process-Relational side can be coupled with religious piety on the Pentecostal-Charismatic side to enable a comprehensive response to social problems.

8.3.4 Cosmic Concern: A Universal Pneumatological Vision

Process-Relational theology can enhance the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements by extending an already strong pneumatology beyond individualism to cosmic concern. While Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents tend to emphasize the human aspect of *concursum*, Process-Relational theists emphasize the cosmological and universal aspect of *concursum*; that is, God's interaction with the universe as a whole. The Spirit "makes it possible to know the creative power of God, which brings the diversity of all that is creaturely into rich, fruitful, life-sustaining relations" (Kärkkäinen 2002:135). Thus, the Spirit's role in creation is universal, larger than mere human-divine relations.

Perspectives on *concursum* from the side of Process-Relational theology can remind Pentecostal-Charismatic adherents that "the divine lure is in the direction of taking more account of others, while the pressure of the past tends to concentrate on one's private future." (Cobb 2003:88-89). Further, because of dipolarity of the nature of God in Process-Relational theology, the value of the universe as a whole is emphasized. From a Process-Relational perspective, human actions are part of the whole: "by changing the world we change the range of possibilities for both God and the world" (Mesle 1993:114). Ultimately, Process-Relational theology can serve as a bridge from personal experiences, as the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements emphasize, to a broader cosmological vision of reality. As Whitehead (1954:83) notes, "religion is the longing of the spirit that the facts of existence should find their justification in the nature of existence".

8.4 Summary

When coupled with the more comprehensive conclusions in the previous chapter, the ecclesial and social implications noted in this chapter should provide sufficient ground for future dialog between the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions. Ultimately, the way in which *concursum* is conceived has immense effect on the way human beings act and the way human beings understand God to act as well. Due to an increase in religious violence and conflict in the world, greater understanding, cooperation, and mutual

transformation can only be a force of healing and peace. Because commonality was found between two very different traditions, the possibility for additional dialog across liberal-evangelical lines is not only possible, but promising.

The implications noted in this chapter should lead individuals from both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions to endeavor to be more active agents of love and peace in the world. Cobb (2003:87) proposes that because we prehend God and all those around us, “we may even rise above the hostile context and forgive those who hate us and persecute us”. While such a vision seems rudimentary to the Christian ideal, it is not always realized; perhaps in part because of a misconception of God’s activity in the world or perhaps because of a misconception of the realities of human responsibility. Nevertheless, continued dialog between both traditions should lead to ecumenical progress and greater compatibility between science and faith. As Whitehead (1954:126) asserts, “progress is truth, truth of science and truth of religion, mainly a progress in the framing of concepts, in discarding artificial abstractions or partial metaphors, and in evolving notions which strike more deeply into the root of reality”. Ultimately, the implication for this doctoral thesis is that both the Pentecostal-Charismatic and Process-Relational traditions may gain a stronger and more holistic sense of humanity, God, and reality.

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